

Dental Dimensions Limited

Vital Dental Service

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 30 August 2018 under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. We planned the inspection to check whether the registered provider was meeting the legal requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations. The inspection was led by a CQC inspector who was supported by a specialist dental adviser.

To get to the heart of patients' experiences of care and treatment, we always ask the following five questions:

- Is it safe?
- Is it effective?
- Is it caring?
- Is it responsive to people's needs?
- Is it well-led?

These questions form the framework for the areas we look at during the inspection.

Our findings were:

Are services safe?

We found that this practice was providing safe care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Are services effective?

We found that this practice was providing effective care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Are services caring?

We found that this practice was providing caring services in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Are services responsive?

We found that this practice was providing responsive care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Are services well-led?

We found that this practice was providing well-led care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Background

Vital Dental Service is in Launceston and provides NHS treatment to adults and children.

The premises are a converted grade 2 listed residential building, which means there are restrictions on alterations that can be made to it. Although there are ground floor treatment rooms, access and facilities for wheelchair users and/or parents with pushchairs is restricted. Car parking spaces, are available near the practice in public car parks.

Summary of findings

The dental team includes two dentists, a dental hygiene therapist, a team of dental nurses/trainee dental nurses, decontamination room operative, receptionists, treatment coordinators and a practice management team. There are four treatment rooms.

The practice is owned by a company and as a condition of registration must have a person registered with the Care Quality Commission as the registered manager. Registered managers have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations about how the practice is run. The registered managers at Vital Dental Service are the principal dentist and the practice manager, who share the role.

On the day of inspection we collected 16 CQC comment cards filled in by patients and spoke with two other patients. This gave us a positive view of the practice.

During the inspection we spoke with all staff on duty. We looked at practice policies and procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

The practice is open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm (closed for lunch 12:30pm – 1.30pm).

Our key findings were:

- The practice appeared clean and well maintained.
- Staff knew how to deal with emergencies. Appropriate medicines and life-saving equipment were available.
- The practice had systems to help them manage risk.
- The practice staff had suitable safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding adults and children.
- The practice had thorough staff recruitment procedures.

- The clinical staff provided patients' care and treatment in line with current guidelines.
- Staff treated patients with dignity and respect.
- The practice was providing preventive care and supporting patients to ensure better oral health.
- The appointment system met patients' needs.
- The practice had effective leadership and culture of continuous improvement.
- Staff felt involved and supported and worked well as a team.
- The practice asked staff and patients for feedback about the services they provided.
- The practice staff dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.
- Information governance processes for the use of CCTV in and at the premises were under review.

There were areas where the provider could make improvements. They should:

- Review the practice's infection control procedures and protocols taking into account the guidelines issued by the Department of Health in the Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices, and having regard to The Health and Social Care Act 2008: 'Code of Practice about the prevention and control of infections and related guidance.' In particular regarding the availability of a hot water for hand washing purposes and tears to the fabric of two dental chairs.
- Review the practice's protocols for audit cycles specifically with the view to include patient record cards and antimicrobial prescribing.

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Are services safe?

We found that this practice was providing safe care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The practice had systems and processes to provide safe care and treatment. They used learning from incidents and complaints to help them improve.

Staff received training in safeguarding and knew how to recognise the signs of abuse and how to report concerns.

Staff were qualified for their roles and the practice completed essential recruitment checks.

Premises and equipment were clean and properly maintained. The practice followed national guidance for cleaning, sterilising and storing dental instruments.

The practice had suitable arrangements for dealing with medical and other emergencies.

No action



Are services effective?

We found that this practice was providing effective care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The dentists assessed patients' needs and provided care and treatment in line with recognised guidance. Patients told us that they were provided with very helpful advice and support about their treatment so they could give informed consent.

The practice had clear arrangements when patients needed to be referred to other dental or health care professionals.

The practice supported staff to complete training relevant to their roles and had systems to help them monitor this.

No action



Are services caring?

We found that this practice was providing caring services in accordance with the relevant regulations.

We received feedback about the practice from 18 people. Patients were positive about all aspects of the service the practice provided. They told us staff were gentle and friendly.

They said that they were given helpful, honest explanations about dental treatment, and said their dentist listened to them. Patients commented that they made them feel at ease, especially when they were anxious about visiting the dentist.

Patients said staff treated them with dignity and respect.

No action



Are services responsive to people's needs?

We found that this practice was providing responsive care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The practice's appointment system was efficient and met patients' needs. Patients could get an appointment quickly if in pain.

No action



Summary of findings

Staff considered patients' different needs. The practice had access to telephone and face to face interpreter services and had arrangements to help patients with sight loss.

The practice took patients views seriously. They valued compliments from patients and responded to concerns and complaints quickly and constructively.

Are services well-led?

We found that this practice was providing well-led care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The practice had arrangements to ensure the smooth running of the service. These included systems for the practice team to discuss the quality and safety of the care and treatment provided. There was a clearly defined management structure and staff felt supported and appreciated.

The practice team kept complete patient dental care records which were, clearly written or typed and stored securely.

The practice monitored clinical and non-clinical areas of their work to help them improve and learn. This included asking for and listening to the views of patients and staff.

No action



Are services safe?

Our findings

Safety systems and processes (including staff recruitment, Equipment & premises and Radiography (X-rays))

The practice had clear systems to keep patients safe.

Staff knew their responsibilities if they had concerns about the safety of children, young people and adults who were vulnerable due to their circumstances. The practice had safeguarding policies and procedures to provide staff with information about identifying, reporting and dealing with suspected abuse. We saw evidence that staff received safeguarding training. Staff knew about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and how to report concerns, including notification to the CQC.

The practice had a whistleblowing policy. Staff told us they felt confident they could raise concerns without fear of reprimand.

The dentists used rubber dams in line with guidance from the British Endodontic Society when providing root canal treatment.

The practice had a business continuity plan describing how the practice would deal with events that could disrupt the normal running of the practice.

The practice had a staff recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff and also had checks in place for agency and locum staff. These reflected the relevant legislation. We looked at three staff recruitment records. These showed the practice followed their recruitment procedure.

We noted that clinical staff were qualified and registered with the General Dental Council (GDC) and had professional indemnity cover.

The practice ensured that facilities and equipment were safe and that equipment was maintained according to manufacturers' instructions, including electrical and gas appliances.

Records showed that fire detection equipment, such as smoke detectors and emergency lighting, were regularly tested and firefighting equipment, such as fire extinguishers, were regularly serviced. On the day of the inspection the practice had only a basic fire risk assessment, which had not fully considered all risks

associated with the premises, including, staff, patients and visitors. We raised this with the practice management team, who took immediate action to book a comprehensive assessment with an outside fire specialist contractor. The practice forwarded us a date and confirmation of booking for this assessment to take place during September 2018.

The practice had suitable arrangements to ensure the safety of the X-ray equipment. They met current radiation regulations and had the required information in their radiation protection file.

The practice carried out radiography audits every year following current guidance and legislation.

Clinical staff completed continuing professional development (CPD) in respect of dental radiography.

The practice also had a laser for the use of dental surgical procedures. A Laser Protection Advisor had been appointed and local rules were available for the safe use for the equipment. Evidence of staff training was also available.

Risks to patients

There were systems to assess, monitor and manage risks to patient safety.

The practice's health and safety policies and procedures were up to date and reviewed regularly to help manage potential risk. The practice had current employer's liability insurance.

We looked at the practice's arrangements for safe dental care and treatment when using sharp instruments, such as needles, scalpels and matrix bands. We discussed the processes and policies with the management team. Following our inspection the practice reviewed these policies and procedures, taking into account individual experience/preferences of the dentists and dental hygienist/therapist. This resulted in a revised practice sharps risk assessment and policy, with an action plan to ensure that the staff followed relevant safety regulation when using needles and other sharp dental items.

The provider had a system in place to ensure clinical staff had received appropriate vaccinations, including the vaccination to protect them against the Hepatitis B virus, and that the effectiveness of the vaccination was checked.

Staff knew how to respond to a medical emergency and completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support (BLS) every year. Emergency equipment and

Are services safe?

medicines were available as described in recognised guidance. Staff kept records of their checks to make sure these were available, within their expiry date, and in working order.

A dental nurse worked with the dentists when they treated patients in line with GDC Standards for the Dental Team. The dental hygienist therapist normally worked without chairside support. However, a risk assessment was in place for when the dental hygienist therapist worked without chairside support.

The provider had suitable risk assessments to minimise the risk that can be caused from substances that are hazardous to health.

The practice had an infection prevention and control policy and procedures. They followed guidance in The Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices (HTM01-05) published by the Department of Health and Social Care when transporting, checking, cleaning, sterilising and storing dental instruments. Staff completed infection prevention and control training and received updates as required.

The records showed equipment used by staff for cleaning and sterilising instruments were validated, maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance.

The practice had in place systems and protocols to ensure that any dental laboratory work was disinfected prior to being sent to a dental laboratory and before the dental laboratory work was fitted in a patient's mouth.

The practice had an assessment and procedures to reduce the possibility of Legionella or other bacteria developing in the water systems. We queried the current practice of cold water management at the practice, as there was no hot water at the practice. Improvements could be made to provide hot water for hand washing purposes. Following the inspection, the practice wrote to us to inform us of advice they had sought, including a revised dental water line management protocol to demonstrate that professional advice was being followed.

Improvements could be made to ensure tears to the fabric of two dental chairs are repaired.

We saw cleaning schedules for the premises. The practice was clean when we inspected and patients confirmed that this was usual.

The practice had policies and procedures in place to ensure clinical waste was segregated and stored appropriately in line with guidance.

The practice carried out infection prevention and control audits twice a year. The latest audit showed the practice was meeting the required standards.

Information to deliver safe care and treatment

Staff had the information they needed to deliver safe care and treatment to patients.

We discussed with the dentist how information to deliver safe care and treatment was handled and recorded. We looked at a sample of dental care records to confirm our findings and noted that individual records were written and managed in a way that kept patients safe. Dental care records we saw were accurate, complete, and legible and were kept securely and complied with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) protection requirements, (formerly known as the Data Protection Act).

Patient referrals to other service providers contained specific information which allowed appropriate and timely referrals in line with practice protocols and current guidance.

Safe and appropriate use of medicines

The practice had reliable systems for appropriate and safe handling of medicines.

There was a suitable stock control system of medicines which were held on site. This ensured that medicines did not pass their expiry date and enough medicines were available if required.

The practice stored and kept records of NHS prescriptions as described in current guidance.

The dentists were aware of current guidance with regards to prescribing medicines.

The practice had not yet carried out an antimicrobial prescribing audit. However, following the inspection they wrote to us detailing how they would capture greater detailed patient antibiotic prescribing information to inform an audit. The practice also provided us with details of a completed sepsis protocol for staff training and patient educative purposes.

Track record on safety

Are services safe?

There were risk assessments in relation to safety issues. The practice monitored and reviewed incidents. This helped it to understand risks and gave a clear, accurate and current picture that led to safety improvements. In the previous 12 months there had been no safety incidents.

The staff were aware of the Serious Incident Framework and had procedures to respond to/discuss any incidents to reduce risk and support future learning in line with the framework.

There was a system for receiving and acting on safety alerts. The practice learned from external safety events as well as patient and medicine safety alerts.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Effective needs assessment, care and treatment

The practice had systems to keep dental practitioners up to date with current evidence-based practice. We saw that clinicians assessed needs and delivered care and treatment in line with current legislation, standards and guidance supported by clear clinical pathways and protocols.

The dentists assessed nervous patients and made referrals to conscious sedation services where appropriate.

Helping patients to live healthier lives

The practice was providing preventive care and supporting patients to ensure better oral health in line with the Delivering Better Oral Health toolkit.

The dentists told us they prescribed high concentration fluoride toothpaste if a patient's risk of tooth decay indicated this would help them. They used fluoride varnish for children based on an assessment of the risk of tooth decay.

The dentists told us that where applicable they discussed smoking, alcohol consumption and diet with patients during appointments. The practice had a selection of dental products for sale and provided health promotion leaflets to help patients with their oral health.

The practice was aware of national oral health campaigns and local schemes available in supporting patients to live healthier lives. For example, local stop smoking services. They directed patients to these schemes when necessary.

The dentists and dental hygiene therapist described to us the procedures they used to improve the outcome of periodontal treatment. This involved preventative advice, taking plaque and gum bleeding scores and detailed charts of the patient's gum condition.

Patients with more severe gum disease were recalled at more frequent intervals to review their compliance and to reinforce home care preventative advice.

Consent to care and treatment

The practice obtained consent to care and treatment in line with legislation and guidance.

The practice team understood the importance of obtaining and recording patients' consent to treatment. The dentists told us they gave patients information about treatment options and the risks and benefits of these so they could make informed decisions. Patients confirmed their dentist listened to them and gave them clear information about their treatment.

The practice's consent policy included information about the Mental Capacity Act 2005. The team understood their responsibilities under the act when treating adults who may not be able to make informed decisions.

Staff described how they involved patients' relatives or carers when appropriate and made sure they had enough time to explain treatment options clearly.

Monitoring care and treatment

The practice kept detailed dental care records containing information about the patients' current dental needs, past treatment and medical histories. The dentists assessed patients' treatment needs in line with recognised guidance.

We saw that the practice audited patients' dental care records to check that the dentists recorded the necessary information.

Effective staffing

Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles.

Staff new to the practice had a period of induction based on a structured induction programme. We confirmed clinical staff completed the continuing professional development required for their registration with the General Dental Council.

Staff told us they discussed training needs at annual appraisals or during clinical supervision. We saw evidence of completed appraisals and how the practice addressed the training requirements of staff.

Co-ordinating care and treatment

Dentists confirmed they referred patients to a range of specialists in primary and secondary care if they needed treatment the practice did not provide.

The practice had systems and processes to identify, manage, follow up and where required refer patients for specialist care when presenting with bacterial infections.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

The practice also had systems and processes for referring patients with suspected oral cancer under the national two

week wait arrangements. This was initiated by NICE in 2005 to help make sure patients were seen quickly by a specialist. The practice monitored all referrals to make sure they were dealt with promptly.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Kindness, respect and compassion

Staff treated patients with kindness, respect and compassion.

Staff were aware of their responsibility to respect people's diversity and human rights.

Patients commented positively that staff were gentle and polite. We saw that staff treated patients respectfully, appropriately and kindly and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

Information folders, patient survey results and thank you cards were available for patients to read.

Privacy and dignity

The layout of reception and waiting areas provided privacy when reception staff were dealing with patients. Staff told us that if a patient asked for more privacy they would take them into another room. The reception computer screens were not visible to patients and staff did not leave patients' personal information where other patients might see it.

Staff password protected patients' electronic care records and backed these up to secure storage. They stored paper records securely.

The practice had CCTV, both in external and internal public areas of the premises. We raised concerns that CCTV recording was also in place in one of the treatment rooms

recording both images and sound. We questioned the rationale for this and how patient consent was obtained. Following the inspection, the practice wrote to us to tell us that the camera in the treatment room had been covered and improved signage was in place to tell patients that there was recording in some corridors and waiting areas. The practice also told us that they were reviewing CCTV policies and protocols with reference to relevant guidance, including sector specific advice.

Involving people in decisions about care and treatment

Staff helped patients be involved in decisions about their care and were aware of the

Accessible Information Standard (a requirement to make sure that patients and their carers can access and understand the information they are given). Interpretation services were available for patients who did not have English as a first language.

The practice gave patients clear information to help them make informed choices. Patients confirmed that staff listened to them, did not rush them and discussed options for treatment with them. A dentist described the conversations they had with patients to satisfy themselves they understood their treatment options.

The practice's website/information leaflet provided patients with information about the range of treatments available at the practice.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting people's needs

The practice organised and delivered services to meet patients' needs. It took account of patient needs and preferences.

Staff were clear on the importance of emotional support needed by patients when delivering care, such as patients with dental phobia, adults and children with a learning difficulty and those living with dementia and other long-term conditions.

A Disability Access audit had been completed and an action plan formulated to continually consider access for patients.

Staff told us that they telephoned some older patients on the morning of their appointment to make sure they could get to the practice.

Timely access to services

Patients were able to access care and treatment from the practice within an acceptable timescale for their needs.

The practice displayed its opening hours in the premises, and included it in their practice information leaflet and on their website.

The practice had an efficient appointment system to respond to patients' needs. Staff told us that patients who requested an urgent appointment were seen the same day. Patients told us they had enough time during their appointment and did not feel rushed. Appointments ran smoothly on the day of the inspection and patients were not kept waiting.

The practice website, information leaflet and answerphone provided telephone numbers for patients needing emergency dental treatment during the working day and when the practice was not open. Patients confirmed they could make routine and emergency appointments easily and were rarely kept waiting for their appointment.

Listening and learning from concerns and complaints

The practice took complaints and concerns seriously and responded to them appropriately to improve the quality of care.

The practice had a complaints policy providing guidance to staff on how to handle a complaint. The practice information leaflet explained how to make a complaint.

The practice manager was responsible for dealing with these. Staff told us they would tell the practice manager about any formal or informal comments or concerns straight away so patients received a quick response.

The practice manager told us they aimed to settle complaints in-house and invited patients to speak with them in person to discuss these. Information was available about organisations patients could contact if not satisfied with the way the practice dealt with their concerns.

We looked at comments, compliments and complaints the practice received in the last 12 months.

These showed the practice responded to concerns appropriately and discussed outcomes with staff to share learning and improve the service.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

Leadership capacity and capability

The management team had the experience and skills to deliver high-quality, sustainable care.

They were knowledgeable about issues and priorities relating to the quality and future of services. They understood the challenges and were addressing them.

Staff told us that the management team were visible and approachable.

Culture

Staff stated they felt respected, supported and valued. They were proud to work in the practice.

Openness, honesty and transparency were demonstrated when responding to incidents and complaints. For example, all complaints were reviewed for learning opportunities and the practice's social media policy had been recently discussed and reviewed by the staff team. The provider was aware of and had systems to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Duty of Candour.

Staff told us they were able to raise concerns and were encouraged to do so. They had confidence that these would be addressed.

Governance and management

There were clear responsibilities, roles and systems of accountability to support good governance and management. Staff knew the management arrangements and their roles and responsibilities.

The provider had a system of clinical governance in place which included policies, protocols and procedures that were accessible to all members of staff and were reviewed on a regular basis.

There were clear processes for managing risks, issues and performance.

Appropriate and accurate information

The practice acted on appropriate and accurate information.

Quality and operational information was used to ensure and improve performance. Performance information was combined with the views of patients.

The practice had information governance arrangements and staff were aware of the importance of these in protecting patients' personal information.

Engagement with patients, the public, staff and external partners

The practice involved patients, the public, staff and external partners to support high-quality sustainable services.

The practice used patient surveys, comment cards and verbal comments to obtain patients' views about the service. We saw examples of suggestions the practice had acted on. For example, in refitting the reception area to provide more space and comfort.

Patients were encouraged to complete the NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT). This is a national programme to allow patients to provide feedback on NHS services they have used.

The practice gathered feedback from staff through meetings and informal discussions. Staff were encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements to the service and said these were listened to and acted on.

Continuous improvement and innovation

There were systems and processes for learning and continuous improvement.

The practice had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement. These included audits of radiographs and infection prevention and control. They had clear records of the results of these audits and the resulting action plans and improvements. The practice hadn't completed a recent record card audit and we noted in patient care records that x-rays were not always fully reported on. Improvements could be made to learning and continuous development by further development of audit cycles to include patient record cards and antimicrobial prescribing.

The registered managers showed a commitment to learning and improvement and valued the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff.

The whole staff team had annual appraisals. They discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development.

Are services well-led?

Staff told us they completed 'highly recommended' training as per General Dental Council professional standards. This included undertaking medical emergencies and basic life support training annually.

The General Dental Council also requires clinical staff to complete continuing professional development. Staff told us the practice provided support and encouragement for them to do so.