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Devonshire Quarter Dental Practice

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection on 22 November 2016 to ask the practice the following key questions; Are services safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led?

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

Devonshire Quarter Dental Practice is located in Sheffield city centre, South Yorkshire. The practice offers mainly NHS dental treatments to patients of all ages and also offers private options. The services include preventative advice and treatment and routine restorative dental care.

The practice has one surgery, a decontamination suite, two waiting areas and a reception area. The reception area, main waiting area and toilet are on the ground floor. The surgery, decontamination room and a smaller waiting area are on the first floor.

There is one dentist, two dental nurses, two receptionists and a practice manager.

The opening hours are Monday to Wednesday and Friday from 9-00am to 5-00pm and Thursday from 9-00am to 7-00pm.

The principal dentist is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as an individual. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the practice is run.

During the inspection we received feedback from 34 patients. The patients were positive about the care and

Summary of findings

treatment they received at the practice. Comments included staff had a professional manner, were friendly, caring and professional. They also commented they were seen on time, treatment options were discussed and the practice was always clean and hygienic.

Our key findings were:

- The practice was visibly clean and uncluttered.
- The practice had systems in place to assess and manage risks to patients and staff including health and safety and the management of medical emergencies.
- Staff were qualified and had received training appropriate to their roles.
- Patients were involved in making decisions about their treatment and were given clear explanations about their proposed treatment including costs, benefits and risks.
- Dental care records showed treatment was planned in line with current best practice guidelines.
- Oral health advice and treatment were provided in-line with the 'Delivering Better Oral Health' toolkit (DBOH).
- We observed patients were treated with kindness and respect by staff.
- There was a warm and friendly feel to the practice.
- Staff ensured there was sufficient time to explain fully the care and treatment they were providing in a way patients understood.
- The practice had an effective complaints system in place.

- Patients were able to make routine and emergency appointments when needed.
- The governance systems were effective.
- There were clearly defined leadership roles within the practice and staff told us they felt supported, appreciated and comfortable to raise concerns or make suggestions.

We identified the following notable practice:

- The practice was involved in the "Filling Children's Teeth: Indicated Or Not?" (FICTION) trial. The FICTION trial compares alternative methods of managing dental decay in the primary dentition. These methods included purely preventative care, preventative care plus biological intervention (partial decay removal) and preventative care plus surgical intervention (full decay removal). This research could have a major impact on the way dentists treat dental decay in children. We think this is notable practice because it demonstrates a commitment to improving the quality of treatment provided to children by involving themselves in current research.

There were areas where the provider could make improvements and should:

- Review the practice's process to ensure the compressor is serviced at regular intervals.

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.

Staff told us they felt confident about reporting incidents, accidents and the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

Staff had received training in safeguarding at the appropriate level and knew the signs of abuse and who to report them to.

Staff were suitably qualified for their roles and the practice had undertaken the relevant recruitment checks to ensure patient safety.

Patients' medical histories were obtained before any treatment took place. The dentists were aware of any health or medication issues which could affect the planning of treatment. Staff were trained to deal with medical emergencies. All emergency equipment and medicines were in date and in accordance with the British National Formulary (BNF) and Resuscitation Council UK guidelines.

The decontamination procedures were effective and the equipment involved in the decontamination process was regularly serviced, validated and checked to ensure it was safe to use.

There was no evidence of a written scheme of examination for the compressor on the day of inspection. We were later sent evidence this had been done and the compressor was safe to use.

No action



Are services effective?

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

Patients' dental care records provided comprehensive information about their current dental needs and past treatment. The practice monitored any changes to the patient's oral health and provided treatment when appropriate.

The practice followed best practice guidelines when delivering dental care. These included Faculty of General Dental Practice (FGDP), National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and guidance from the British Society of Periodontology (BSP).

The practice provided preventative advice and treatment in line with the 'Delivering Better Oral Health' toolkit (DBOH). This included fluoride application, oral hygiene advice and smoking cessation advice.

Staff had completed training relevant to their roles and were up to date with their continuing professional development (CPD).

Referrals were made to secondary care services if the treatment required was not provided by the practice.

No action



Summary of findings

The practice was involved in the “Filling Children’s Teeth: Indicated Or Not?” (FiCTION) trial. The FiCTION trial compares alternative methods of managing dental decay in the primary dentition. These methods included purely preventative care, preventative care plus biological intervention (partial decay removal) and preventative care plus surgical intervention (full decay removal). This research could have a major impact on the way dentists treat dental decay in children. We think this is notable practice because it demonstrates a commitment to improving the quality of treatment provided to children by involving themselves in current research.

Are services caring?

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

During the inspection we received feedback from 34 patients. Comments included staff had a professional manner and were friendly, caring and respectful. They also commented dentist was patient and gentle.

We observed the staff to be welcoming and caring towards the patients.

We observed privacy and confidentiality were maintained for patients using the service on the day of the inspection.

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 had an efficient appointment system in place to respond to patients’ needs. There were vacant appointments slots for urgent or emergency appointments each day. There were clear instructions for patients requiring urgent care when the practice was closed.

There was a procedure in place for responding to patients’ complaints. This involved acknowledging, investigating and responding to individual complaints or concerns. Staff were familiar with the complaints procedure.

Due to the nature of the premises wheelchair access was not possible and patients were signposted to a more suitable practice. Patients were made aware of this in the practice information leaflet.

No action



Are services well-led?

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

There was a clearly defined management structure in place and staff felt supported and appreciated in their own particular roles. The practice manager and the principal dentist were responsible for the day to day running of the practice.

Effective arrangements were in place to share information with staff by means of quarterly practice meetings which were well minuted for those staff unable to attend.

The practice regularly audited clinical and non-clinical areas as part of a system of continuous improvement and learning.

No action



Summary of findings

The practice carried out patient satisfaction surveys in order to seek feedback from patients. They also conducted the NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT).

Devonshire Quarter Dental Practice

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check whether the registered provider was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

The inspection was led by a CQC inspector who was supported by a specialist dental adviser.

We informed local NHS England area team and Healthwatch that we were inspecting the practice. We did not receive any information of concern from them.

During the inspection received feedback from 34 patients. We also spoke with the dentist, one dental nurse, one

receptionist and the practice manager. To assess the quality of care provided we looked at practice policies and protocols and other records relating to the management of the service.

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 therefore formed the framework for the areas we looked at during the inspection.

Are services safe?

Our findings

Reporting, learning and improvement from incidents

The practice had clear guidance for staff about how to report incidents and accidents. Staff were familiar with the importance of reporting significant events. We reviewed the significant events which had occurred in the last 12 months. These had been well documented, analysed and action taken to prevent reoccurrence. Any accidents or incidents would be reported to the practice manager or principal dentist and would also be discussed at staff meetings in order to disseminate learning. If the issue was more urgent then this would be discussed on the day.

The practice manager understood the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) and what notifications need to be made to the CQC.

The practice received national patient safety and medicines alerts from the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Authority (MHRA) that affected the dental profession. These were actioned if necessary and were stored for future reference.

Reliable safety systems and processes (including safeguarding)

The practice had child and adult safeguarding policies and procedures in place. These provided staff with information about identifying, reporting and dealing with suspected abuse. The policies were readily available to staff. Staff had access to contact details for both child protection and adult safeguarding teams. The principal dentist was the safeguarding lead for the practice and all staff had undertaken level two safeguarding training. Staff were aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and described a situation when the local safeguarding team were contacted. This ended up with a positive result for the patient and family in question.

We spoke with staff about the use of safer sharps in dentistry as per the Health and Safety (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013. A safer sharps system was not in use but a thorough risk assessment was seen to mitigate risk of sharps injury. We were told that the clinician was responsible for handling local anaesthetic syringes and a re-sheathing device was also used.

The dentist told us they routinely used a rubber dam when providing root canal treatment to patients in line with guidance from the British Endodontic Society. A rubber dam is a thin, rectangular sheet, usually latex rubber, used in dentistry to isolate the operative site from the rest of the mouth and protect the airway. Rubber dams should be used when endodontic treatment is being provided. On the rare occasions when it is not possible to use rubber dam the reasons is recorded in the patient's dental care records giving details as to how the patient's safety was assured.

We saw patients' clinical records were computerised and password protected to keep personal details safe. Any paper documentation relating to patients' records were stored in lockable cabinets.

Medical emergencies

The practice had procedures in place which provided staff with clear guidance about how to deal with medical emergencies. Staff had completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support within the last 12 months.

The practice kept an emergency resuscitation kit, medical emergency oxygen and emergency medicines. Staff knew where the emergency kits was kept. We checked the emergency equipment and medicines and found them to be in date and generally in line with the Resuscitation Council UK guidelines and the BNF. On the day of inspection we noted there was no portable suction available. This issue was raised with the practice manager and principal dentist and we were told one would be ordered.

The practice had an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to support staff in a medical emergency. (An AED is a portable electronic device that analyses life threatening irregularities of the heart and delivers an electrical shock to attempt to restore a normal heart rhythm.).

Records showed weekly checks were carried out on the AED, emergency medicines and the oxygen cylinder. These checks ensured the oxygen cylinder was full and in good working order, the AED battery was charged and the emergency medicines were in date.

Staff recruitment

The practice had a policy and a set of procedures for the safe recruitment of staff which included seeking references, proof of identity, checking relevant qualifications and

Are services safe?

professional registration. We reviewed a sample of staff files and found the recruitment procedure had been followed. The practice manager told us they carried out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all newly employed staff. These checks identify whether a person has a criminal record or is on an official list of people barred from working in roles where they may have contact with children or adults who may be vulnerable. We reviewed records of staff recruitment and these showed all checks were in place.

All clinical staff at this practice were qualified and registered with the General Dental Council (GDC). There were copies of current registration certificates and personal indemnity insurance (insurance professionals are required to have in place to cover their working practice).

Monitoring health & safety and responding to risks

A health and safety policy and risk assessments were in place at the practice. This identified the risks to patients and staff who attended the practice. The risks had been identified and control measures put in place to reduce them.

There were policies and procedures in place to manage risks at the practice. These were both practice specific and those which are general to the dental environment.

The practice maintained a file relating to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002 (COSHH) regulations, including substances such as disinfectants, and dental materials in use in the practice. The practice identified how they managed hazardous substances in its health and safety and infection control policies and in specific guidelines for staff, for example in its blood spillage and waste disposal procedures.

Infection control

There was an infection control policy and procedures to keep patients safe. These included hand hygiene, safe handling of instruments, managing waste products and decontamination guidance. The practice followed the guidance about decontamination and infection control issued by the Department of Health, namely 'Health Technical Memorandum 01-05 -Decontamination in primary care dental practices (HTM 01-05)'. The principal dentist was the infection control lead and was responsible for overseeing the infection control procedures within the practice.

Staff had received training in infection prevention and control. We saw evidence staff were immunised against blood borne viruses (Hepatitis B) to ensure the safety of patients and staff.

We observed the treatment room and the decontamination suite to be clean and hygienic. Work surfaces were free from clutter. Staff told us they cleaned the treatment areas and surfaces between each patient and at the end of the morning and afternoon sessions to help maintain infection control standards. There was a cleaning schedule which identified and monitored areas to be cleaned. There were hand washing facilities in the treatment rooms and staff had access to supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) for patients and staff members. Posters promoting good hand hygiene and the decontamination procedures were clearly displayed to support staff in following practice procedures. Sharps bins were appropriately located, signed and dated and not overfilled. We observed waste was stored securely for disposal by a registered waste carrier and appropriate documentation retained.

Decontamination procedures were carried out in a dedicated decontamination room then passed through a hatch to a dedicated sterilisation room. This is considered best practice in HTM 01-05. An instrument transportation system had been implemented to ensure the safe movement of instruments between treatment rooms and the decontamination room which minimised the risk of the spread of infection.

We found instruments were being cleaned and sterilised in line with published guidance (HTM01-05). The dental nurse was well-informed about the decontamination process and demonstrated correct procedures.

The practice had systems in place for daily and weekly quality testing of the decontamination equipment and we saw records which confirmed these had taken place. There were sufficient instruments available to ensure the services provided to patients were uninterrupted.

The practice carried out an Infection Prevention Society (IPS) self- assessment audit every year relating to the Department of Health's guidance on decontamination in dental services (HTM01-05). This is designed to assist all registered primary dental care services to meet satisfactory levels of decontamination of equipment. The audit showed

Are services safe?

the practice was meeting the required standards. This audit should be completed on a biannual basis. This was raised with the practice manager on the day of inspection and we were told this would be done.

Records showed a risk assessment process for Legionella had been carried out (Legionella is a term for particular bacteria which can contaminate water systems in buildings). The practice undertook processes to reduce the likelihood of legionella developing which included running the water lines in the treatment rooms at the beginning and end of each session and between patients, monitoring cold and hot water temperatures each month and the use of a water conditioning agent in the dental unit.

Equipment and medicines

The practice had maintenance contracts for essential equipment such as X-ray sets and the autoclaves. The practice manager had a process in place to check when equipment required servicing. There was no evidence of a written scheme of examination for the compressor. We were told the engineer was aware of this issue. We were later sent evidence this had been done and the compressor was safe to use.

Portable appliance testing (PAT) had been completed in June 2016 (PAT confirms that portable electrical appliances are routinely checked for safety).

We saw the practice was storing NHS prescription pads securely in accordance with current guidance. Prescriptions were stamped only at the point of issue.

Radiography (X-rays)

The practice had a radiation protection file and a record of all X-ray equipment including service and maintenance history. Records we viewed demonstrated the X-ray equipment was regularly tested, serviced and repairs undertaken when necessary. A Radiation Protection Advisor (RPA) and a Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) had been appointed to ensure the equipment was operated safely and by qualified staff only. We found there were suitable arrangements in place to ensure the safety of the equipment. Local rules were available in the surgery and within the radiation protection folder for staff to reference if needed. We saw a justification, grade and a report was documented in the dental care records for all X-rays which had been taken.

The practice used an automated X-ray developing machine. X-ray developing fluids were regularly changed to ensure X-rays which were developed were of optimum quality. These measures reduce the likelihood of having to retake X-rays due to developing issues.

X-ray audits were carried out every year. This included assessing the quality of the X-rays which had been taken. The results of the most recent audit undertaken confirmed they were compliant with the Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations 2000 (IRMER).

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Monitoring and improving outcomes for patients

The practice kept up to date detailed electronic dental care records. They contained information about the patient's current dental needs and past treatment. The dentist carried out an assessment in line with recognised guidance from the Faculty of General Dental Practice (FGDP). This was repeated at each examination in order to monitor any changes in the patient's oral health. The dentist used NICE guidance to determine a suitable recall interval for the patients. This takes into account the likelihood of the patient experiencing dental disease.

During the course of our inspection we discussed patient care with the dentist and checked dental care records to confirm the findings. Clinical records were comprehensive and included details of the condition of the teeth, soft tissue lining the mouth, gums and any signs of mouth cancer. Records showed patients were made aware of the condition of their oral health and whether it had changed since the last appointment. If the patient had more advanced gum disease then a more detailed inspection of the gums was undertaken.

Medical history checks were updated every time they attended for treatment and entered in to their electronic dental care record. This included an update on their health conditions, current medicines being taken and whether they had any allergies.

The practice used current guidelines and research in order to continually develop and improve their system of clinical risk management. For example, following clinical assessment, the dentist followed the guidance from the FGDP before taking X-rays to ensure they were required and necessary. Justification for the taking of an X-ray, quality assurance of each X-ray and a detailed report was recorded in the patient's care record.

Health promotion & prevention

The practice had a strong focus on preventative care and supporting patients to ensure better oral health in line with the 'Delivering Better Oral Health' toolkit (DBOH). DBOH is an evidence based toolkit used by dental teams for the prevention of dental disease in a primary and secondary care setting. For example, the dentist applied fluoride

varnish to children who attended for an examination. Fissure sealants were also applied to children at high risk of dental decay. High fluoride toothpastes were recommended for patients at high risk of dental decay.

The practice had a selection of dental products on sale in the reception area to assist patients with their oral health.

The medical history form patients completed included questions about smoking and alcohol consumption. We were told by the dentist and saw in dental care records that smoking cessation advice and alcohol awareness advice was given to patients where appropriate. Patients were made aware of the ill effects of smoking on their gum health and the synergistic effects of smoking and alcohol with regards to oral cancer. There were health promotion leaflets available in the waiting room to support patients.

The practice was involved in the "Filling Children's Teeth: Indicated Or Not?" (FiCTION) trial. The FiCTION trial compares alternative methods of managing dental decay in the primary dentition. These methods included purely preventative care, preventative care plus biological intervention (partial decay removal) and preventative care plus surgical intervention (full decay removal). This research could have a major impact on the way dentists treat dental decay in children. We think this is notable practice because it demonstrates a commitment to improving the quality of treatment provided to children by involving themselves in current research.

Staffing

New staff to the practice had a period of induction to familiarise themselves with the way the practice ran. The induction process was role specific and included the fire evacuation process, infection control and issues surrounding confidentiality. We saw evidence of completed induction checklists in the personnel files.

Staff told us they had good access to on-going training to support their skill level and they were encouraged to maintain the continuous professional development (CPD) required for registration with the General Dental Council (GDC). The practice organised and paid for all core CPD to ensure staff keep up to date. Records showed professional registration with the GDC was up to date for all staff and we saw evidence of on-going CPD.

Staff told us they had annual appraisals and training requirements were discussed at these. We saw evidence of

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

completed appraisal documents. Staff also felt they could approach the principal dentist or practice manager at any time to discuss continuing training and development as the need arose.

Both dental nurses had extended duties. One in fluoride application and the other in dental radiography.

Working with other services

The practice worked with other professionals in the care of their patients where this was in the best interest of the patient and in line with current guidance. For example, referrals were made to hospitals and specialist dental services for further investigations or specialist treatment including orthodontics, oral surgery and sedation. Patients would be given a choice of where they could be referred and the option of being referred privately for treatment.

The dentist completed detailed proformas or referral letters to ensure the specialist service had all the relevant information required. A copy of the referral letter was kept in the patient's dental care records. Letters received back relating to the referral were first seen by the dentist to see if any action was required and then stored in the patient's dental care records.

The practice had a procedure for the referral of a suspected malignancy. This involved sending an urgent letter the same day and a telephone call to confirm the letter had arrived. The dentist would also pursue the hospital to ensure timelines were met.

The dentist maintained a log of all referrals which had been sent. They would also advise patients to report back if they had not heard from the hospital within four weeks.

Consent to care and treatment

Patients were given information to support them to make decisions about the treatment they received. Staff were knowledgeable about how to ensure patients had sufficient information and the mental capacity to give informed consent. The dentist described to us how valid consent was obtained for all care and treatment and the role family members and carers might have in supporting the patient to understand and make decisions. The dentist was familiar of the concept of Gillick competency clear about involving children in decision making and ensuring their wishes were respected regarding treatment.

Staff had completed training in and had a good understanding of the principles of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 and how it was relevant to ensuring patients had the capacity to consent to their dental treatment. The dentist was familiar with the principle of best interest decisions. They described to us a situation where they were involved in a best interest meeting. All staff were aware of the need to assess patient capacity and this begun at the reception desk. If the receptionist was unsure whether a patient had capacity they would inform the dentist who would further assess the patient to determine whether they deemed the patient had capacity. The patient's GP would also be contacted if appropriate.

Staff ensured patients gave their consent before treatment began. We were told that individual treatment options, risks, benefits and costs were discussed with each patient. Patients were given a written treatment plan which outlined the treatments which had been proposed and the associated costs. For more complex treatments a letter would be sent to the patient outlining the risks associated with the proposed treatment in more detail. Patients were given time to consider and make informed decisions about which option they preferred. The dentist was aware that a patient could withdraw consent at any time.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Respect, dignity, compassion & empathy

Feedback from patients was positive and they commented they were treated with care, respect and dignity. Staff told us they always interacted with patients in a respectful, appropriate and kind manner. We observed staff to be friendly and respectful towards patients during interactions at the reception desk and over the telephone.

We observed privacy and confidentiality were maintained for patients who used the service on the day of inspection. This included ensuring dental care records were not visible to patients, speaking quietly and not discussing any personal details at the reception desk.

We observed staff to be helpful, discreet and respectful to patients. Staff told us if a patient wished to speak in private an empty room would be found to speak with them.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

The practice provided patients with information to enable them to make informed choices. Patients commented they felt involved in their treatment and it was fully explained to them. Staff described to us how they involved patients' relatives or carers when required and ensured there was sufficient time to explain fully the care and treatment they were providing in a way patients understood.

There was a good selection of leaflets in the waiting room regarding different treatments which were available at the practice.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting patients' needs

We found the practice had an efficient appointment system in place to respond to patients' needs. Staff told us patients who requested an urgent appointment would be seen the same day. We saw evidence in the appointment book there were dedicated emergency slots available each day for each dentist. If the emergency slots had already been taken for the day then the patient was offered to sit and wait for an appointment if they wished. We observed the clinics ran smoothly on the day of the inspection and patients were not kept waiting. Patients commented they were not kept waiting for appointments.

Tackling inequity and promoting equality

The practice had equality and diversity, and disability policies to support staff in understanding and meeting the needs of patients. A DDA audit had been completed as required by the Disability Act 2005. Due to the nature of the building wheelchair access was not possible. We were told that wheelchair users could be signposted to another local practice which was accessible. The practice also had a hearing loop and access to translation services for patients whose first language was not English. There was a magnifying glass at the reception desk for patients who struggled with small print and they were able to print documents in a larger font if needed.

Access to the service

The practice displayed its opening hours on the premises, in the practice information leaflet and on the practice website. The opening hours are Monday to Wednesday and Friday from 9-00am to 5-00pm and Thursday from 9-00am to 7-00pm.

Patients could access care and treatment in a timely way and the appointment system met their needs. Where treatment was urgent patients would be seen the same day. The practice had a system in place for patients requiring urgent dental care when the practice was closed. Information about the out of hours emergency dental service for both NHS and private was available on the telephone answering service, displayed in the waiting area, on the practice website and in the practice information leaflet.

Concerns & complaints

The practice had a complaints policy which provided staff with clear guidance about how to handle a complaint. There were details of how patients could make a complaint displayed in the waiting room. The practice manager was responsible for dealing with complaints when they arose. Staff told us they raised any formal or informal comments or concerns with the practice manager to ensure responses were made in a timely manner. Staff told us they aimed to resolve complaints in-house initially. The practice had received one complaint in the last 12 months and we saw they had analysed the complaint to see if any improvements could be made as a result of it.

We looked at the practice procedure for acknowledging, recording, investigating and responding to complaints, concerns and suggestions made by patients. We found there was an effective system in place which helped ensure a timely response.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

Governance arrangements

The practice manager and the principal dentist were responsible for the day to day running of the service. There was a range of policies and procedures in use at the practice. We saw they had systems in place to monitor the quality of the service and to make improvements. The practice had governance arrangements in place to ensure risks were identified, understood and managed appropriately.

There was an effective management structure in place to ensure responsibilities of staff were clear. Staff told us they felt supported and were clear about their roles and responsibilities.

Leadership, openness and transparency

Staff told us they were aware of the need to be open, honest and apologetic to patients if anything was to go wrong; this is in accordance with the Duty of Candour principle.

Staff told us there was an open culture within the practice and they were encouraged and confident to raise any issues at any time. These would be discussed openly at staff meetings where relevant and it was evident the practice worked as a team and dealt with any issue in a professional manner.

The practice held quarterly staff meetings. These meetings were minuted for those who were unable to attend. During these staff meetings topics such as significant events, infection control and safeguarding.

Learning and improvement

Quality assurance processes were used at the practice to encourage continuous improvement. The practice audited areas of their practice as part of a system of continuous improvement and learning. This included audits such as X-rays, infection prevention and control, referrals and dental care records. We looked at the audits and saw the practice was performing well.

Staff told us they had access to training and this was monitored to ensure essential training was completed each year; this included medical emergencies and basic life support. Staff working at the practice were supported to maintain their continuous professional development as required by the General Dental Council (GDC). The practice paid for staff to attend training which covered the core CPD as required by the GDC.

Practice seeks and acts on feedback from its patients, the public and staff

The practice had systems in place to involve, seek and act upon feedback from people using the service including carrying out patient satisfaction surveys. The satisfaction survey included questions about whether the dentist discussed treatment options, whether staff were polite and whether they were happy with the facilities at the practice. The results of the last survey was positive.

The practice also undertook the NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT). The FFT is a feedback tool which supports the fundamental principle that people who use NHS services should have the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience. The latest results showed that 100% of patients asked said they would recommend the practice to friends and family.