

Dr Payal Sharma

Diamond Dental Group Ltd

Inspection Report

279 Rectory Road
Grays
Essex
RM17 5SW
Tel:01375373409
Website: www.diamonddentalgroup.uk

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 4 July 2019 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

Diamond Dental Group Ltd is in Grays, Essex and provides NHS treatment to adults and children.

The practice is situated above a commercial business and is accessed via a flight of stairs. The practice informs all new patients wishing to register that unfortunately they are not wheelchair accessible and signpost patients that cannot manage the stairs to a nearby practice. There is free car parking available in the streets surrounding the practice.

Summary of findings

The dental team includes four dentists, one lead dental nurse and three dental nurses, two dental hygienists, one administrator, one receptionist and the practice manager. The practice has three treatment rooms.

The practice is owned by an individual who is the principal dentist there. They have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations about how the practice is run.

On the day of inspection, we collected 22 CQC comment cards filled in by patients, however one card was a young child's drawing, and spoke with one other patient.

During the inspection we spoke with three dentists, three dental nurses and the practice manager. We looked at practice policies and procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

The practice is open:

Monday from 8.30am to 5pm.

Tuesday from 8.30am to 6.30pm.

Wednesday from 8.30am to 5.30pm.

Thursday from 8.30am to 5.30pm.

Friday from 8.30am to 5.30pm.

Saturday from 9am to 3pm.

Our key findings were:

- Patients received their care and treatment from staff who were well supported and enjoyed their work.
- The practice appeared clean and well maintained.

- The provider had infection control procedures which reflected published guidance.
- Staff knew how to deal with emergencies. Appropriate medicines and life-saving equipment were available.
- The provider had systems to help them manage risk to patients and staff.
- The provider had suitable safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.
- The practice had thorough staff recruitment procedures. Hepatitis B immunity was not in place for some staff. The practice took immediate action to complete the risk assessments and obtain immunity records.
- The clinical staff provided patients' care and treatment in line with current guidelines.
- Staff treated patients with dignity and respect and took care to protect their privacy and personal information.
- Staff provided preventive care and supported patients to ensure better oral health.
- The appointment system took account of patients' needs.
- Staff felt involved and supported and worked well as a team.
- The provider asked staff and patients for feedback about the services they provided.
- The provider dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.
- The provider had suitable information governance arrangements.
- We received positive comments from patients about the dental care they received and the staff who delivered it.

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.

No action ✓

Are services effective?

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

No action ✓

Are services caring?

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

No action ✓

Are services responsive to people's needs?

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

No action ✓

Are services well-led?

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

No action ✓

Are services safe?

Our findings

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

Safety systems and processes, including staff recruitment, equipment and premises and radiography (X-rays)

Staff 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 provider 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 provider had a system to highlight vulnerable patients and patients who required other support such as with mobility or communication within dental care records.

The provider also had a system to identify adults that were in other vulnerable situations e.g. those who were known to have experienced modern-day slavery or female genital mutilation.

The provider had a whistleblowing policy. Staff felt confident they could raise concerns without fear of recrimination.

The dentists used dental dams in line with guidance from the British Endodontic Society when providing root canal treatment. In instances where the dental dam was not used, such as for example refusal by the patient, and where other methods were used to protect the airway, we saw this was documented in the dental care record and a risk assessment completed.

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

The provider had a recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff and had checks in place for agency and locum staff. These reflected the relevant legislation. We looked at 10 staff recruitment records.

These showed the provider mostly followed their recruitment procedure. There was scope to ensure an induction was undertaken and recorded when new members of staff joined the practice.

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

Staff 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 and firefighting equipment were regularly tested and serviced.

The practice had suitable arrangements to ensure the safety of the X-ray equipment and we saw the required information was in their radiation protection file.

We saw evidence that the dentists justified, graded and reported on the radiographs they took. The provider carried out radiography audits every year following current guidance and legislation.

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

Risks to patients

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

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

We looked at the practice's arrangements for safe dental care and treatment. The staff followed relevant safety regulation when using needles and other sharp dental items. A sharps risk assessment had been undertaken and was updated annually.

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. We found that not all members of the team had the effectiveness of the vaccination recorded on their records. Following the inspection, the provider sent us confirmation that action had been taken to obtain this information and risk assessments implemented in the interim.

Are services safe?

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 medicines were available as described in recognised guidance. We found staff kept records of their checks of these 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 General Dental Council (GDC) Standards for the Dental Team. Following the inspection, we saw evidence that the provider had undertaken a risk assessment for when the dental hygienist worked without chairside support.

There were suitable numbers of dental instruments available for the clinical staff and measures were in place to ensure they were decontaminated and sterilised appropriately.

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

The provider 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 (HTM 01-05) published by the Department of Health and Social Care. Staff completed infection prevention and control training and received updates as required.

The provider had suitable arrangements for transporting, cleaning, checking, sterilising and storing instruments in line with HTM 01-05. The records showed equipment used by staff for cleaning and sterilising instruments was validated, maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance. We found staff had systems in place to ensure that any work was disinfected prior to being sent to a dental laboratory and before treatment was completed.

We saw staff had procedures to reduce the possibility of Legionella or other bacteria developing in the water systems, in line with a risk assessment. Records of water testing and dental unit water line management were in place, we noted that most recommendations had been actioned, however the nominated lead and other staff had not undergone Legionella training as recommended in the

report. Following the inspection, the practice provided evidence that one member of staff had undertaken legionella training, in addition the provider and practice manager were scheduled to undertake further training.

We saw cleaning schedules for the premises. The practice was visibly clean when we inspected.

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

Staff uniforms were clean and their arms were bare below the elbows to reduce the risk of cross contamination. We noted staff changed out of their uniforms at lunch. The infection control lead 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 complete, legible, were kept securely and complied with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements.

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 provider 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.

We saw staff stored and kept records of NHS prescriptions as described in current guidance.

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

Are services safe?

Antimicrobial prescribing audits were carried out annually. The most recent audit indicated the dentists were following current guidelines.

Track record on safety and Lessons learned and improvements

There were comprehensive risk assessments in relation to safety issues. Staff monitored and reviewed incidents. This helped staff to understand risks, give a clear, accurate and current picture that led to safety improvements.

Where there had been safety incidents we saw these were investigated, documented and discussed with the rest of the dental practice team to prevent such occurrences

happening again in the future. There was scope for the practice to expand this into a more comprehensive educational tool by reviewing a wider range of incidents as events.

There were adequate systems for reviewing and investigating when things went wrong. The practice learned, and shared lessons identified themes and acted to improve safety in the practice.

There was a system for receiving and acting on safety alerts. Staff learned from external safety events as well as patient and medicine safety alerts. We saw they were shared with the team and acted upon if required.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

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

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 patients' needs and delivered care and treatment in line with current legislation, standards and guidance supported by clear clinical pathways and protocols.

The practice offered dental implants. These were placed by the one of the dentists at the practice who had undergone appropriate post-graduate training in this speciality. The provision of dental implants was in accordance with national guidance.

Staff had access to intra-oral cameras to enhance the delivery of care.

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

The dentists/clinicians where applicable, 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.

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

The dentists described to us the procedures they used to improve the outcomes for patients with gum disease. This involved providing patients preventative advice, taking plaque and gum bleeding scores and recording detailed charts of the patient's gum condition

Records showed patients with more severe gum disease were recalled at more frequent intervals for review and to reinforce home care preventative advice.

The practice was working with the centre for sustainable healthcare and was a pilot practice of the Green Impact toolkit, a movement to make the practice of Dentistry more sustainable in the United Kingdom.

Consent to care and treatment

Staff 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 gave patients information about treatment options and the risks and benefits of these, so they could make informed decisions and we saw this documented in patient records. 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 might not be able to make informed decisions. The policy also referred to Gillick competence, by which a child under the age of 16 years of age may give consent for themselves. Staff were aware of the need to consider this when treating young people under 16 years of age.

Staff described how they involved patients' relatives or carers when appropriate and made sure they had enough time to explain treatment options clearly. The practice had processes in place to establish and confirm parental/legal responsibility when seeking consent for children and young people.

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

Effective staffing

The dentists were supported by appropriate numbers of dental nurses and administrative staff and staff told us there were enough of them for the smooth running of the practice. However, the hygienists worked without chairside support, which was not in line with GDC best practice standards.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Staff new to the practice had a period of induction. However, we found this was not clearly evidenced in all the staff records we looked at. The provider told us they were in the process of reviewing this to ensure inductions were based on a structured programme and were suitably recorded in staff records.

We confirmed clinical staff completed the continuing professional development required for their registration with the General Dental Council. There was scope for the provider to ensure they had clear oversight and evidence of this.

Training needs were discussed at annual appraisals and informal one to one meetings. The provider was in the process of undertaking appraisals with all new staff. We saw evidence of recently completed appraisals and how the practice was planning the training requirements of staff.

Co-ordinating care and treatment

Staff worked together and with other health and social care professionals to deliver effective care and treatment.

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

Staff had systems to identify, manage, follow up and where required refer patients for specialist care when presenting with dental infections.

The provider also had systems 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.

Staff monitored urgent referrals to make sure they were dealt with promptly. Following the inspection, the provider sent evidence to CQC to confirm they had introduced a system to ensure they monitored all referrals in future.

Are services caring?

Our findings

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

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 brilliant, lovely and informative. We saw that staff treated patients respectfully, appropriately and kindly and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

Patients said staff were compassionate and understanding. Patients could choose whether they saw a male or female dentist.

Patients told us staff were kind and helpful when they were in pain, distress or discomfort.

Information folders, healthy eating information posters and books including stop smoking advice written by known radio and social media names and patient survey results were available for patients to read. There was a display on the sugar content in popular soft drinks which gave examples of how much sugar was in each drink.

Privacy and dignity

Staff respected and promoted patients' privacy and dignity.

The reception computer screens were not visible to patients and staff did not leave patients' personal information where other patients might see it. However, the reception area was not particularly private. We found staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality and did not reference patient names when on the telephone. If a patient asked for more privacy, staff would take them into another room. We found that treatment room doors had clear glass panels. Patients could be seen in dental chairs receiving treatment in the treatment rooms when other patients were walking down the corridor to the reception area. We discussed this with

the provider and following the inspection the provider sent CQC evidence that action had been taken to preserve patient's privacy when receiving treatment in the three treatment rooms.

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

Involving people in decisions about care and treatment

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

requirements under the Equality Act and Accessible Information Standards. (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 speak or understand English.
- Staff communicated with patients in a way that they could understand.
- Icons on the practice computer system notified staff if patients had specific requirements or a disability.

The practice gave patients clear information to help them make informed choices about their treatment. Patients stated in CQC comment cards that staff had given them clear information and answered all their questions.

A dentist described the conversations they had with patients to satisfy themselves they understood their treatment options.

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

The dentists described to us the methods they used to help patients understand treatment options discussed. These included photographs, models, videos, X-ray images and an intra-oral camera. The intra-oral cameras enabled photographs to be taken of the tooth being examined or treated and shown to the patient/relative to help them better understand the diagnosis and treatment.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

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

Responding to and meeting people's needs

In addition to general dentistry the practice also provided a hygienist service.

The practice was situated on the first floor of multiorganisational premises. Patients were advised on contacting the practice of the stairs and where applicable were directed to a local practice with level access. A portable hearing loop was available to assist those who wore hearing aids. Staff described how they would also support patients with limited or reduced hearing or vision. A magnifying glass and reading glasses were also available. A disability access audit had been completed and an action plan formulated to continually assess access for patients.

Patients described high levels of satisfaction with the responsive service provided by the practice.

Staff were clear on the importance of emotional support needed by patients when delivering care and described clear examples of how they supported the needs of more vulnerable members of society such as people living with dementia and long-term conditions.

Staff told us that they used text messaging and e-mails to remind patients they had an appointment.

Timely access to services

Patients could 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 them on their website.

The practice had an appointment system to respond to patients' needs. Patients who requested an urgent

appointment were seen the same day. Patients 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 staff took part in an emergency on-call arrangement with another local practice.

The practice's 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 provider/registered manager/practice manager took complaints and concerns seriously and responded to them appropriately to improve the quality of care.

The provider had a 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 would tell the practice manager or principal dentist about any formal or informal comments or concerns straight away so patients received a quick response.

The practice manager and principal dentist 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 had dealt with their concerns.

We looked at comments, compliments and complaints the practice received over the last two years.

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

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

Leadership capacity and capability

We found the principal dentist had the capacity and skills to deliver high-quality, sustainable care. The principal dentist and practice manager had the experience, capacity and skills to deliver the practice strategy and address risks to it.

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

Leaders at all levels were visible and approachable. Staff told us they worked closely with them and others to make sure they prioritised compassionate and inclusive leadership.

We saw the provider had effective processes to develop leadership capacity and skills, including planning for the future leadership of the practice.

Culture

The practice had a culture of high-quality sustainable care.

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

The staff focused on the needs of patients.

We saw the provider took effective action to deal with staff poor performance.

Openness, honesty and transparency were demonstrated when responding to incidents and complaints. The provider was aware of and had systems to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Duty of Candour.

The principal dentist worked closely with staff and others to make sure they prioritised compassionate and inclusive leadership. Staff spoke highly of the dentist, telling us they were approachable and responsive to their ideas. It was clear they worked and communicated well together.

Staff could raise concerns and were encouraged to do so, and 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.

The principal dentist had overall responsibility for the management and clinical leadership of the practice. The practice manager was responsible for the day to day running of the service. 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.

We saw there were clear and effective processes for managing risks, issues and performance.

Appropriate and accurate information

Staff 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 provider 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

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

The provider used patient surveys, comment cards, verbal comments and social media to obtain patients' views about the service. We saw examples of suggestions from patients and staff the practice had acted on.

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, surveys, and informal discussions. Staff were encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements to the service and said these were listened to and acted on. Following patients and staff comments the previous

Are services well-led?

summer, the practice had installed air conditioning. Comments from patients on CQC comment cards and from staff during our inspection showed this had been warmly received.

Continuous improvement and innovation

There were systems and processes for learning, continuous improvement and innovation.

The provider had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement. These included audits of dental care records, radiographs and infection prevention and control. They had clear records of the results of these audits and the resulting action plans and improvements. There was scope to extend the radiography audits to ensure these included all clinicians.

The principal dentist showed a commitment to learning and improvement and valued the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff. One dentist was in the process of completing a master's degree in the

advanced treatment of periodontal conditions and the principal dentist was working towards a Masters in Orthodontics. In addition, the practice were in the process of supporting the practice manager through practice management training.

The whole staff team were in the process of undergoing appraisals. The provider told us that since they had taken over the practice in January 2019 their plan was to discuss learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development with the whole team at appraisals. We saw evidence of some completed appraisals in the staff folders.

Staff completed 'highly recommended' training as per General Dental Council professional standards. This included undertaking medical emergencies and basic life support training annually. The provider supported and encouraged staff to complete CPD.