

South Devon Dental Ltd

South Devon Dental

Inspection Report

51 Palace Avenue

Paignton

Devon

TQ3 3EN

Tel: 01803 556422

Website: www.torbay-dentist.co.uk

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 25 February 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

South Devon Dental is in Paignton and private treatment to adults and children.

The premises are not suitable for wheelchair users. Potential patients enquiring for treatments are signposted to alternative local dental services. Car parking spaces are available near the practice.

The dental team includes 11 dentists, three dental nurses, three apprentice dental nurses, one reception manager, two receptionists, one nurse/receptionist, one dental hygienist, one dental hygiene therapist and a practice manager (who is also a dental nurse). The practice has four treatment rooms.

Summary of findings

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 manager at South Devon Dental was the principal dentist.

On the day of inspection we collected 40 CQC comment cards filled in by patients. This gave us a positive view of the practice.

During the inspection we spoke with one dentist, one dental nurse, one apprentice dental nurse, the reception manager, one receptionist 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 8am – 6pm. Tuesday 8am – 6pm. Wednesday 8am – 8pm.

Thursday 8am – 8pm. Friday 8am – 5pm. Saturday 9am – 1pm.

Our key findings were:

- The practice appeared clean and well maintained.
- The practice staff had infection control procedures which reflected published guidance.
- 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 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.
- 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.
- The practice staff had suitable information governance arrangements.

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

- Review the practice's recruitment procedures to ensure that appropriate checks are completed prior to new staff commencing employment at the practice.
- Review the prescribing arrangements for medicines in the practice, taking into account the guidelines issued by the British National Formulary and the General Dental Council.
- Review the practice's protocols for completion of dental care records taking into account the guidance provided by the Faculty of General Dental Practice.

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.

Improvements could be made to ensure the practice completes essential recruitment checks.

Staff were qualified for their roles.

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.

Improvements could be made when prescribing medicines.

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 described the treatment they received as professional and efficient. The dentists discussed treatment with patients so they could give informed consent and recorded this in their records. Improvements could be made to ensure patient care records are fully completed.

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 40 people. Patients were positive about all aspects of the service the practice provided. They told us staff were welcoming and courteous.

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.

We saw that staff protected patients' privacy and were aware of the importance of confidentiality. Patients said staff treated them with dignity and respect.

No action



Summary of findings

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.

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

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

No action



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.

There was a system to highlight vulnerable patients on records e.g. children with child protection plans, adults where there were safeguarding concerns, people with a learning disability or a mental health condition, or who require other support such as with mobility or communication.

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

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. We looked at two staff recruitment records and discussed the recruitment procedure with the practice manager. Not all essential recruitment checks were being completed prior to employment. We raised this with the practice manager, who told us that the recruitment process would be reviewed to ensure background checks were received before staff started working in the practice.

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.

The practice had arrangements to ensure the safety of the X-ray equipment. We noticed that isolation switches were mounted within the X-ray beam controlled area, which could put staff at risk. We raised this with the principal dentist, who told us they would review the local rules, in conjunction with the local radiation protection advisor and take their advice regarding re-siting isolation switches. They met current radiation regulations and had the required information in their radiation protection file.

We saw evidence that the principal dentist justified, graded and reported on the radiographs they took every year following current guidance and legislation. They told us they were planning to ensure all dentists completed similar regular audits and showed us paper work that had been prepared to achieve this goal.

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 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. 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.

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.

Not all emergency equipment was available as described in recognised guidance. The practice manager took immediate steps during the inspection to order the required items. Suitable emergency medicines were available. Staff kept records of their checks to make sure these were available and within their expiry date.

A dental nurse worked with the dentists and the dental hygienists/hygiene therapists when they treated patients in line with GDC Standards for the Dental Team.

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. Staff completed infection prevention and control training and received updates as required.

The practice had suitable arrangements for transporting, cleaning, checking, sterilising and storing instruments in line with HTM01-05. 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 procedures to reduce the possibility of Legionella or other bacteria developing in the water systems, in line with a risk assessment. All recommendations had been actioned and records of water testing and dental unit water line management were in place.

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. Washing and sterilising procedures and processes observed in the decontamination room and treatment rooms were to a high standard.

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 systems for appropriate and safe handling of medicines but improvements could be made.

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 noted that pain relieving medicine issued following post dental implant procedures were not prescribed in a way that met prescribing guidelines. Medicines were not labelled giving clear instructions to patients. We raised this with the principal dentist and practice manager, who told us that appropriate labels would be ordered and completed for each future prescription.

Are services safe?

The principal dentist had carried out an antimicrobial prescribing audit. They were aware of the associated risks of sepsis and staff had received sepsis awareness training. A number of sepsis awareness posters were in the practice in both patient and staff areas.

Lessons learned and improvements

There were comprehensive 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.

The practice learned and made improvements when things went wrong.

The staff were aware of the Serious Incident Framework and recorded, responded to and discussed all incidents to reduce risk and support future learning in line with the framework.

We discussed with the practice manager the added value of including any learning event in the practice safety improvement policies. The practice manager told us that all learning events would be included in future staff meetings.

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. We looked at a sample of patient care records and discussed our findings with the principal dentist and the practice manager. Improvements could be made as there was inconsistent recording of patient lifestyle information (for example, regarding smoking status, alcohol and recreational drug use), which dentists use as information regarding preventative advice regarding oral health.

The practice offered dental implants. These were placed by one of the visiting 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.

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 dentist 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. The policy also referred to Gillick competence, by which a child under the age of 16 years of age can consent for themselves. The 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.

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.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

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 and 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. We looked at referral letters and discussed with the principal dentist the content of clinical information in the letters. They told us they would revise the referral letter template to include a synopsis of medical history, smoking history and oral health in the letter.

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

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.

The practice was a referral clinic for implants and minor oral surgery. They monitored and ensured the clinicians were aware of all incoming referrals on a daily basis.

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 welcoming and courteous. We saw that staff treated patients respectfully, appropriately and kindly and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone. One patient told us that their dentist spoke simply and clearly about technical procedures, helping them to understand their treatment needs and options.

Patients said staff were compassionate and understanding and they told us they 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, patient survey results and thank you cards were available for patients to read.

Privacy and dignity

The practice respected and promoted patients' privacy and dignity.

Staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality. 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.

CCTV in the practice was in corridor and waiting areas only and its use was supported by suitable practice policies and procedures.

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. We saw notices in the reception areas, including in languages other than English, informing patients this service was available. Patients were also told about multi-lingual staff that might be able to support them.

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.

The dentist described to us the methods they used to help patients understand treatment options discussed. The practice had access to intra-oral cameras and microscopes to enhance the delivery of care. We saw how the provision of large screen TVs in the treatment rooms assisted to enhance the education of patients regarding oral health and potential treatment plan options. Images from the intra-oral cameras and radiographs were displayed on the TVs providing clear images for patients to understand their dental diagnosis and/or treatment.

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 and people living with long-term health conditions.

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

The practice was not suitable for wheelchair users. A Disability Access audit had been completed and an action plan formulated in order to continually improve facilities for patients. Reasonable adjustments included a hearing loop, a magnifying glass and reading glasses for patients.

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 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.

They took part in an emergency on-call arrangement with some other local practices.

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 or the relevant dental practitioner 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 of the principal dentist and the practice manager had the capacity and skills to deliver high-quality, sustainable care.

Leaders at all levels were visible and approachable. They worked closely with staff and others to make sure they prioritised compassionate and inclusive leadership.

Culture

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

The practice focused on the needs of patients.

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.

Staff told us they could 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.

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.

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 and staff to support high-quality sustainable services.

The practice used patient surveys and verbal comments to obtain patients' views about the service. We saw examples of suggestions from patients the practice had acted on. For example, boosting the Wi-Fi signal in the practice for patient use.

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 dental care records, radiographs and infection prevention and control. The practice had completed one audit of some clinical areas; therefore, the data was of limited value. The dentist told us he planned to repeat audits including all dentists within an audit cycle to provide more meaningful quality improvement information.

The management team 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.

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.