

Rajdeep Koner

# Church Lane Dental Practice

## Inspection Report

9 Church Lane  
Stafford  
ST16 2AW

Tel: 01785 252514

Website: [www.churchlanedentalstafford.co.uk](http://www.churchlanedentalstafford.co.uk)

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### Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 11 July 2018 under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. We planned the inspection to check whether the registered provider was meeting the legal requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations. The inspection was led by a CQC inspector who was supported by a specialist dental adviser.

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

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

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

#### **Our findings were:**

##### **Are services safe?**

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

##### **Are services effective?**

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

##### **Are services caring?**

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

##### **Are services responsive?**

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

##### **Are services well-led?**

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

##### **Background**

Church Lane Dental Practice is in Stafford and provides NHS and private treatment to adults and children. There are two services provided by two different providers at this location. This report only relates to the provision of general dental care and denture domiciliary service provided by Dr Rajdeep Koner. An additional report is available in respect of the general dental care and orthodontic service which is registered under the provider Dr Graeme Manzie.

There is a small step into the practice from the street although a portable ramp can be used if requested for access for people who use wheelchairs and those with pushchairs. Car parking spaces, including several for blue badge holders, are available in car parks near the practice.

# Summary of findings

The dental team includes two dentists and five dental nurses (two of whom are apprentice dental nurses and all of whom also work in reception). The practice has two treatment rooms.

The practice is owned by a partnership 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 Church Lane Dental Practice is Dr Rajdeep Koner.

On the day of inspection we collected 11 CQC comment cards filled in by patients.

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

The practice is open:

Monday to Friday from 9am to 5.30pm. Late evenings and weekends by appointment only.

## **Our key findings were:**

- 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 practice had systems to help them manage risk to patients and staff. There was a process in place for the reporting and shared learning when significant events occurred in the practice.
- The practice staff had suitable safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.
- The provider had thorough staff recruitment procedures.
- The clinical staff provided patients' care and treatment in line with current guidelines.
- Staff treated patients with dignity and respect and took care to protect their privacy and personal information.
- The provider was providing preventive care and supporting patients to ensure better oral health.
- The appointment system met patients' needs. Patients could access treatment and emergency care when required.
- 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 provider dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.
- The provider had suitable information governance arrangements.

# 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 people and knew how to recognise the signs of abuse and how to report concerns. The safeguarding policy with local authority contact details was on display in reception.

The practice held NHS prescriptions which were stored securely. Some improvement was required in ensuring that they could be tracked and monitored. During our inspection, the practice updated their processes to rectify this.

Staff were qualified for their roles and the practice completed essential recruitment checks. There were sufficient numbers of suitably qualified staff working at the practice.

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. Medical scenario training in relation to patient collapse had been completed at a recent staff meeting to ensure staff were kept up to date and had the confidence to respond if required.

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 excellent, outstanding and the best dental experience they had ever had. The dentists discussed treatment with patients so they could give informed consent and recorded this in their records.

The practice provided a domiciliary service to local care homes to support residents with fitting new dentures and replacing broken or lost dentures. This enabled residents to receive denture treatments in the comfort of their care home rather than having to visit the practice.

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. At the time of our visit the practice were supporting two apprentice dental nurses to become qualified dental nurses.

No action



### Are services caring?

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

No action



# Summary of findings

We received extremely positive feedback about the practice from 11 people. Patients were positive about all aspects of the service the practice provided. They told us staff were always friendly, caring and they couldn't ask for a better team.

Several patients told us that this was the best dental service they had ever used, they looked forward to visiting the dentist and that the care received was first class. We were told that the treatment received was gentle and pain free.

Patients repeatedly commented that they were made to feel at ease, especially when they were anxious and that they had complete trust in their 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.

## 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.

The practice was aware of the needs of the local population and took those into account in how it ran. This included providing facilities for disabled patients and families with children where possible. 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 all the staff we met said that they felt supported and the practice was a good place to work.

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. The practice proactively sought feedback from patients, which it acted on to improve its services. We saw that 100% of the patients who responded to the friends and family test survey in April 2018 were likely to recommend the practice to a friend or family member. The results from the practice satisfaction survey were also extremely positive.

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 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. A policy was available to staff to ensure they were aware of the signs and practice procedure should they identify any patients this affected.

The practice had a whistleblowing policy, which included contact details for Public Concern at Work, a charity which supports staff who have concerns they want to report about their workplace. 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. In instances where the rubber dam was not used, such as for example refusal by the patient, and where other methods were used to protect the airway, 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. Electronic copies of this were held off site so they could be accessed easily in the event of an incident.

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

We noted that clinical staff were qualified, 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 and fighting equipment such as extinguishers and smoke detectors were regularly tested and serviced.

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

We saw evidence that the dentists justified, graded and reported on the radiographs they took. The practice carried out radiography audits every year following current guidance and legislation. The latest audit completed in July 2018 required no actions to be completed.

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.

# Are services safe?

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

Staff knew how to respond to a medical emergency and completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support (BLS) every year. Medical scenario training in relation to patient collapse had been completed at a recent staff meeting to ensure staff were kept up to date and had the confidence to respond if a medical emergency occurred.

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

A dental nurse worked with the dentists when they treated patients in line with GDC Standards for the Dental Team.

The practice occasionally used agency staff. We noted that these staff received an induction to ensure that they were familiar with the practice's procedures.

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.

There was a dedicated decontamination room which served both dental treatment rooms and was used for cleaning, sterilising and packing instruments. There was clear separation of clean and dirty areas in all treatment rooms and the decontamination room with signage to reinforce this. Records showed equipment used by staff for cleaning and sterilising instruments was 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 which had been completed in July 2016. 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 four times a year which is double the frequency recommended. The latest audit completed in June 2018 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, (formerly known as the Data Protection Act).

The practice held a contract to provide a denture domiciliary service to local care homes. The practice had appropriate risk assessments in relation to transporting dental instruments, relevant insurances, provision of emergency medicines and equipment. They ensured appropriate capacity assessments and arrangements were in place.

## **Safe and appropriate use of medicines**

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

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

# Are services safe?

The practice held NHS prescriptions which were stored securely. Some improvement was required in ensuring that they could be tracked and monitored. During our inspection, the practice updated their processes to rectify this.

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

## **Track record on safety**

The practice had a good safety record.

The practice's health and safety policies and risk assessments were up to date and reviewed to help manage potential risk. These covered general workplace and specific dental topics.

The practice protected staff and patients with guidance available for staff on the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002. Copies of manufacturers' product safety data sheets and risk assessments were held for all materials and substances. This information and a COSHH policy were stored in a designated COSHH file.

## **Lessons learned and 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.

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

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.

[SK1]Helen – not sure if this could be worded better or if I need to add / change anything here.



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

The provider took into account guidelines as set out by the British Society for Disability and Oral Health when providing dental care in domiciliary settings such as care homes.

### 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 partners 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

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 give 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. For example, two apprentice dental nurses were being supported to complete their dental nurse qualifications. All of the dental nurses were multi skilled and also carried out reception duties.

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

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

### Co-ordinating care and treatment



# Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

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

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

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

The practice 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.

The practice monitored all referrals to make sure they were dealt with promptly.

# Are services caring?

## Our findings

### Kindness, respect and compassion

Staff treated patients with kindness, respect and compassion.

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

Patients commented positively that staff were always friendly, caring and they couldn't ask for a better team.

Feedback we received was very positive with several patients telling us that this was the best dental service they had ever used, they looked forward to visiting the dentist and that the care received was first class. We were told that the treatment received was gentle and pain free.

Patients repeatedly commented that they were made to feel at ease, especially when they were anxious and that they had complete trust in their dentist.

We saw that staff treated patients respectfully and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

There was an information board, patient survey results and practice policies which 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 as the waiting rooms were situated in different areas of the building. 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.

### 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. Patients were also told about multi-lingual staff that might be able to support them.
- Staff communicated with patients in a way that they could understand and communication aids and easy read materials were available.
- Staff helped patients and their carers find further information and access community and advocacy services. They helped them ask questions about their care and treatment.

The practice gave patients clear information to help them make informed choices about their treatment. 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 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 for example, photographs, models and X-ray images.

# 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.

For example, several patients had built strong relationships with particular dental nurses and preferred for these nurses to assist the dentist when they received treatment.

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

Staff told us that they currently had some patients for whom they needed to make adjustments to enable them to receive treatment. We were told that some patients had medical conditions which had been discussed and arrangements were in place to ensure that the chair headrest was always altered and that the chair was never fully reclined to ensure patient comfort.

The practice had made reasonable adjustments where possible for patients with disabilities. There was a small step into the practice from the street although a portable ramp could be used if requested for access for people who use wheelchairs and those with pushchairs. The patient toilet was not wheelchair accessible although it was on the ground floor and could be used by patients with limited mobility. The practice had a magnifying sheet and could arrange for large print documents if requested. The practice had two patients that might benefit from a hearing induction loop, following an audit it was decided that patients did not wish to use this and therefore one was not purchased although this was being monitored.

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

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

### Timely access to services

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

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

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

The staff took part in an emergency on-call arrangement with some other local practices for private patients and signposted NHS patients to the NHS 111 out of hour's service.

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

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

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

We looked at comments, compliments and complaints the practice received over the past five 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

### Leadership capacity and capability

Leaders had the capacity and skills to deliver high-quality, sustainable care. They had the experience, capacity and skills to deliver the practice strategy and address risks to it.

They were 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. They worked closely with staff and others to make sure they prioritised compassionate and inclusive leadership.

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

### Vision and strategy

There was a clear vision and set of values. The practice had a realistic strategy and supporting business plans to achieve priorities. The practice mission statement was 'to provide all patients with the highest quality of care in a friendly, professional and holistic environment, helping patients to achieve great oral health' was displayed in the reception area.

### 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 practice focused on the needs of patients.

Leaders took effective action to do deal with 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.

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

### Governance and management

There were clear responsibilities, roles and systems of accountability to support good governance and management.

The partners had overall responsibility for the management and clinical leadership of the practice and 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.

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

### Appropriate and accurate information

The practice acted on appropriate and accurate information.

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

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

### Engagement with patients, the public, staff and external partners

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

The practice used patient surveys, verbal comments and appraisals to obtain staff and patients' views about the service. We saw examples of suggestions from patients the practice had acted on. For example, an additional handrail was placed on the stairs following patient feedback.

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. Results received in April 2018 showed that 100% of the 11 respondents were extremely likely or likely to recommend this practice.

A patient satisfaction survey had been conducted in 2016 after the provider had joined the practice to ascertain whether patients were happy with treatment received.

## Are services well-led?

Results from 115 respondents were very positive and showed that patients felt the transition had been handled well. Comments received stated that the dentist was thorough, friendly, caring and happy.

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. We were told that staff uniforms had recently been changed as a result of staff feedback.

### **Continuous improvement and innovation**

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

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. They had clear records of the results of these audits and the resulting action plans and improvements.

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

The dental nurses had annual appraisals. They discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development. We saw evidence of completed appraisals in the staff folders.

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.