

247 Dental Limited

the247dentist Southampton

Inspection report

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced comprehensive inspection on 21 November 2023 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 practice was meeting the legal requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations.

The inspection was led by a Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspector who was supported by a specialist dental advisor.

To get to the heart of patients' experiences of care and treatment, we always ask the following 5 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:

- The dental clinic appeared clean and well-maintained.
- The practice had infection control procedures which reflected published guidance.
- Staff were trained in medical emergencies. Appropriate medicines and life-saving equipment were available.
- The practice had some systems to manage risks for patients, staff, equipment and the premises.
- Safeguarding processes were in place and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.
- The practice had staff recruitment procedures which reflected current legislation.

Summary of findings

- Clinical staff provided patients' care and treatment in line with current guidelines.
- Patients were treated with dignity and respect. Staff took care to protect patients' privacy and personal information.
- The appointment system worked efficiently to respond to patients' needs.
- There was effective leadership and a culture of continuous improvement.
- Staff felt involved, supported and worked as a team.
- Staff and patients were asked for feedback about the services provided.
- Complaints were dealt with positively and efficiently.
- The practice had some information governance arrangements.

Background

247 Dentist Southampton is part of 247 Dental Limited, a dental group provider.

247 Dentist Southampton is in Southampton. The practice provides private emergency and out of hours dental care on weekends, evenings and bank holidays for adults and children.

247 Dentist locations use 'host practices' to provide emergency care. During the day, the host practice operates as a general dental practice. Outside of normal practice hours, the 247 Dentist brings in their own dental team to provide the emergency treatment.

247 Dentist provides a temporary reception with their own phone system, card payment machines, computers and dental software. In addition to this, 247 Dentist provide their own dental equipment and materials. This includes all consumables and dental instruments. 247 Dentist requires use of the host practice's dental chair, x-ray facilities and decontamination room.

247 Dentist locations have service level agreements in place with the host practice. A Service Level Agreement is the part of a contract which defines exactly what services a service provider will provide and the required level or standard for those services.

There is step free access to the practice for people who use wheelchairs and those with pushchairs. Car parking spaces, including dedicated parking for disabled people, are available near the practice. The practice has made reasonable adjustments to support patients with access requirements.

The dental team includes 6 dentists, 5 dental nurses and 1 remote call handler. Staff operate on a weekly rota system.

The service uses 1 treatment room at the host practice.

During the inspection we spoke with the clinical manager, the compliance manager and the assistant clinical director. We looked at practice policies, procedures and other records to assess how the service is managed.

The practice is open:

Monday 12am – 4am and 6pm – 11:59pm

Bank Holidays 12am – 11:59pm

Tuesday 12am – 4am and 6pm – 11:59pm

Summary of findings

Wednesday 12am – 4am and 6pm – 11:59pm

Thursday 12am – 4am and 6pm – 11:59pm

Friday 12am – 4am and 6pm – 11:59pm

Saturday 12am – 11:59pm

Sunday 12am – 11:59pm

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

- Improve the practice's systems for assessing, monitoring and mitigating the various risks arising from the undertaking of the regulated activities. In particular, Legionella, fire safety and service level agreements between the provider and host practice.
- Improve the practice's systems for checking and monitoring equipment taking into account relevant guidance and ensure that all equipment is well maintained.
- Implement protocols for the use of closed circuit television cameras taking into account the guidelines published by the Information Commissioner's Office.

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?	No action ✓
Are services effective?	No action ✓
Are services caring?	No action ✓
Are services responsive to people's needs?	No action ✓
Are services well-led?	No action ✓

Are services safe?

Our findings

We found 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)

The practice had safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children. However, the safeguarding policy did not state who the safeguarding lead or the local authority was.

The practice had infection control procedures which reflected published guidance.

The practice had some procedures to reduce the risk of Legionella, or other bacteria, developing in water systems, in line with a risk assessment. 247 Dentist Southampton could not assure themselves that procedures to reduce the risk of Legionella were being managed effectively.

247 Dentist Southampton's Legionella policy stated staff are trained in Legionella management. However, there was no evidence that staff had completed this training.

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

The practice appeared clean. However, 247 Dentist Southampton could not assure themselves that appropriate cleaning protocols were in place.

The practice had a recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff, including for agency or locum staff. These reflected the relevant legislation.

Clinical staff were qualified, registered with the General Dental Council and had professional indemnity cover.

The practice ensured some equipment was safe to use, maintained and serviced according to manufacturers' instructions.

A fire safety risk assessment was carried out in line with the legal requirements. However, fire drills had not been carried out and there were no fire Marshalls. This meant that the provider could not be assured staff working in the evenings would know what to do in the case of a fire.

The practice had arrangements to ensure the safety of the X-ray equipment and the required radiation protection information was available. However, 247 Dentist Southampton was not

aware outstanding actions had not been completed from the x-ray critical exam test.

Risks to patients

The practice had implemented systems to assess, monitor and manage risks to patient and staff safety. This included sharps safety, sepsis awareness and lone working.

Emergency equipment and medicines were available and checked in accordance with national guidance.

Staff had completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support every year.

The practice had risk assessments to minimise the risk that could be caused from substances that are hazardous to health.

Information to deliver safe care and treatment

Are services safe?

Patient care records were complete, legible, kept securely and complied with General Data Protection Regulation requirements.

Safe and appropriate use of medicines

The practice had systems for appropriate and safe handling of medicines. Antimicrobial prescribing audits were carried out.

Track record on safety, and lessons learned and improvements

The practice had systems to review and investigate incidents and accidents. The practice had a system for receiving and acting on safety alerts.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

We found 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 professionals up to date with current evidence-based practice.

Consent to care and treatment

Staff obtained patients' consent to care and treatment in line with legislation and guidance. They understood their responsibilities under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

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 patient care records in line with recognised guidance.

We saw evidence the dentists justified, graded and reported on the radiographs they took. The practice carried out radiography audits six-monthly following current guidance.

Effective staffing

Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles. However, call handlers had not completed training in sepsis and safeguarding children and adults.

Newly appointed staff had a structured induction and clinical staff completed continuing professional development required for their registration with the General Dental Council.

Co-ordinating care and treatment

Any patients that attend for emergency treatment and are not registered with a dentist are encouraged to register as a new patient at the host practice.

Are services caring?

Our findings

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

Kindness, respect and compassion

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

Patients said staff were compassionate and understanding when they were in pain, distress or discomfort.

Privacy and dignity

Staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality.

The host practice had installed closed-circuit television to improve security for patients and staff. However, 247 Dentist Southampton had not completed data protection impact assessments.

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

Involving people in decisions about care and treatment

Staff helped patients to be involved in decisions about their care and gave patients clear information to help them make informed choices about their treatment.

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

The dentist/s explained the methods they used to help patients understand their treatment options. These included photographs and X-ray images.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

Our findings

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

Responding to and meeting people's needs

The practice organised and delivered services to meet patients' needs and preferences.

Staff were clear about the importance of providing emotional support to patients when delivering care.

The practice had made reasonable adjustments, including a ramp and designated disabled parking bays, for patients with access requirements. Staff had carried out a disability access audit and had formulated an action plan to continually improve access for patients.

Timely access to services

The practice displayed its opening hours and provided information on their website.

Patients who needed an urgent appointment were offered one in a timely manner.

Listening and learning from concerns and complaints

The practice responded to concerns and complaints appropriately. Staff discussed outcomes to share learning and improve the service.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

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

Leadership capacity and capability

The provider demonstrated a transparent and open culture in relation to people's safety.

There was strong leadership with emphasis on peoples' safety and continually striving to improve.

Systems and processes were embedded, and staff worked together in such a way that the inspection did not highlight any significant issues or omissions. All the issues found during the inspection were raised with the assistant clinical director and compliance manager; they stated the issues will be rectified in the upcoming weeks.

The information and evidence presented during the inspection process was clear and well documented.

Culture

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

The provider did not carry out regular appraisals, one to one discussions and practice meetings due to staff working on an on call basis. However, the provider stated staff are encouraged to contact the provider if there any issues.

The practice had arrangements to ensure staff training was up-to-date and reviewed at the required intervals.

Governance and management

Staff had clear responsibilities, roles and systems of accountability to support good governance and management.

The practice had a governance system which included policies, protocols and procedures that were accessible to all members of staff and were reviewed on a regular basis. However, some policies did not reflect the service level agreement held with the host practice. It was hard to determine who was responsible for what action.

We saw there were some processes for managing risks, issues and performance. Risk assessments were submitted by the host practice to 247 Dentist Southampton. However, further checks had not been carried out to ensure the actions had been completed by the host practice.

Appropriate and accurate information

Staff acted on appropriate and accurate information.

The practice had information governance arrangements and staff were aware of the importance of protecting patients' personal information. However, data protection impact assessments for surveillance cameras had not been carried out.

Engagement with patients, the public, staff and external partners

Staff gathered feedback from patients, the public and external partners and demonstrated a commitment to acting on feedback.

Continuous improvement and innovation

The practice had systems and processes for learning, quality assurance, continuous improvement. These included audits of patient care records, disability access, radiographs, antimicrobial prescribing, and infection prevention and control. Staff kept records of the results of these audits and the resulting action plans and improvements.