

Dr Neil Marshall

Neil Marshall – Mill Dental Centre

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 25 May 2017 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

Mill Dental Centre is in Crawley, West Sussex and provides private and NHS treatment to patients of all ages.

The practice resides in a purpose built premises and has four treatment rooms that are located over two levels.

Summary of findings

There is level access for people who use wheelchairs and pushchairs. Two treatment rooms reside on the ground level to provide access for people with mobility problems. There are car parking spaces available at the rear and front drive of the practice.

The dental team consists of three dentists (including the principal owner), two dental hygienists, four dental nurses, three receptionists and a practice manager (who also works as a dental nurse).

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 71 CQC comment cards filled in by patients. This information gave us an entirely positive view of the practice.

During the inspection we spoke with two dentists (including the practice owner), two dental nurses, two receptionists and the practice manager. We looked at practice policies and procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

Our key findings were:

- The practice was clean and well maintained.
- The practice 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 had suitable safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding adults and children.
- The practice 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 appointment system met patients' needs.
- The practice had effective leadership. 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 dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.

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.

Staff were qualified for their roles and the practice completed essential recruitment checks.

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.

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 kind and caring. The dentists discussed treatment with patients so they could give informed consent and recorded this in their records.

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 71 people. Patients were completely positive about all aspects of the service the practice provided. They told us staff were professional, friendly and caring. They commented that they were given clear explanations of the treatment required and 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



Are services responsive to people's needs?

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

No action



Summary of findings

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. This included providing facilities for disabled patients and families with children. The practice had access to 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.

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 noted 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

Reporting, learning and improvement from incidents

The practice had policies and procedures to report, investigate, respond and learn from accidents, incidents and significant events. Staff knew about these and understood their role in the process.

The practice recorded, responded to and discussed all incidents to reduce risk and support future learning.

The practice received national patient safety and medicines alerts from the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Authority (MHRA). Relevant alerts were discussed with staff, acted on and stored for future reference.

Reliable safety systems and processes (including safeguarding)

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

We looked at the practice's arrangements for safe dental care and treatment. These included risk assessments which staff reviewed every year. The practice followed relevant safety laws when using needles and other sharp dental items. 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 which could disrupt the normal running of the practice.

Medical emergencies

The practice had arrangements in place to deal with medical emergencies at the practice. The practice had an automated external defibrillator (AED).

The practice held emergency medicines in line with guidance issued by the British National Formulary for dealing with common medical emergencies in a dental practice. Medical oxygen and other related items, such as manual breathing aids and portable suction, were available in line with the Resuscitation Council UK guidelines. The emergency medicines were all in date and stored securely with emergency oxygen in a central location known to all staff.

Records completed showed regular checks were done to ensure the equipment and emergency medicine were safe to use. All staff were aware of where medical equipment was kept and knew how to respond if a person suddenly became unwell. We saw evidence that all members of staff completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support in the last 12 months.

Staff recruitment

There was a recruitment policy in place and we reviewed the recruitment files for all staff members. We saw that relevant checks to ensure that the person being recruited was safe and competent for the role had been carried out. This included DBS checks for all members of staff, a check of registration with the General Dental Council (GDC) where appropriate, references, ID checks and employment profiles. All staff were up to date with their Hepatitis B immunisations and records were kept on file. Clinical staff were all registered with the General Dental Council (GDC) and had professional indemnity cover.

Monitoring health & safety and responding to risks

The practice had carried out a range of risk assessments and implemented policies and protocols with a view to keeping staff and patients safe. For example, we saw records of risk assessment for infection control, practice health and safety, fire safety, the safe use of X-ray equipment and disposal of waste.

The practice had carried out a comprehensive risk assessment around the safe use and handling and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health, 2002 Regulations (COSHH). The practice had a well maintained COSHH folder which was up to date. We saw that COSHH products were securely stored.

Are services safe?

The provider was responsible for responding promptly to Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) advice. MHRA alerts, and alerts from other agencies, were received by email. These were disseminated to staff, where appropriate.

The practice had a business continuity plan in place to ensure continuity of care in the event that the practice's premises could not be used for any reason, such as a flood or fire. The plan consisted of a detailed list of contacts and advice on how to continue care without compromising the safety of any patient or member of staff.

Infection control

The practice had an infection prevention and control policy and procedures to keep patients safe. They followed guidance in The Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices (HTM01-05) published by the Department of Health. Staff completed infection prevention and control training every year.

The practice had suitable arrangements for transporting, cleaning, checking, sterilising and storing instruments in line with HTM01-05. The records showed equipment staff used for cleaning and sterilising instruments was maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance.

The practice carried out infection prevention and control audits twice a year. The latest audits showed the practice was meeting the required standards.

The practice had procedures to reduce the possibility of Legionella or other bacteria developing in the water systems, in line with a risk assessment.

We saw cleaning schedules for the premises. The practice was clean when we inspected and patients confirmed this was usual.

Equipment and medicines

We saw servicing documentation for the equipment used, this included sterilisers and X-ray machines. Staff carried out checks in line with the manufacturers' recommendations.

The practice dispensed their own medicines as part of a patients' dental treatment. These medicines were antibiotics. The dispensing procedures were in accordance with current secondary dispensing guidelines. The practice stored and kept records of prescriptions as described in current guidance.

Radiography (X-rays)

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.

We saw evidence that the dentist justified, graded and reported on the X-rays they took. The practice carried out X-ray audits following current guidance and legislation.

Clinical staff completed continuous professional development in respect of dental radiography.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Monitoring and improving outcomes for patients

The practice kept detailed dental care records containing information about the patients' current dental needs, past treatment and medical histories. The dentist assessed patients' treatment needs in line with recognised guidance. Dental care records we saw showed that the findings of the assessment and details of the treatment carried out were recorded appropriately. This included details of the condition of the gums using the basic periodontal examination (BPE) scores and soft tissues lining the mouth. These were carried out where appropriate during a dental health assessment.

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

Health promotion & prevention

The practice believed in preventative care and supporting patients to ensure better oral health in line with the Delivering Better Oral Health toolkit.

Appropriate information was given to patients for health promotion. There was information available in the practice relating to health promotion including tooth brushing, caring for children's teeth and erosion.

Staff we spoke with told us patients were given advice appropriate to their individual needs such as dietary advice and smoking cessation. Dental care records we checked confirmed this; for example we saw that the dentist had discussions with patients about gum disease and smoking.

Staffing

The practice was well staffed and there was flexibility among staff members to cover for holidays and sickness. Many of the staff had been with the practice for over 10 years which demonstrated continuity of care for patients. We confirmed clinical staff completed the continuous

professional development required for their registration with the General Dental Council. Staff told us they discussed training needs at annual appraisals. We saw evidence of completed appraisals. We reviewed staff training records and saw that staff had attended a range of courses and conferences for their development.

We saw evidence of training in medical emergencies, infection control, radiography and radiation protection. Staff we spoke with confirmed that they had access to opportunities for development.

Working with other services

Dentists confirmed they referred patients to a range of specialists in primary and secondary care if they needed treatment the practice did not provide. This included 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 urgent referrals to make sure they were dealt with promptly.

Consent to care and treatment

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 commented 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. Staff were aware of the need to consider Gillick competence when treating young people under 16. Staff described how they involved patients' relatives or carers when appropriate and made sure they had enough time to explain treatment options clearly.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Respect, dignity, compassion and empathy

Patients were complimentary of the care, treatment and professionalism of the staff and gave a positive view of the service. Patients commented that the team were courteous, friendly and kind. During the inspection we observed staff in the reception area. They were polite, courteous, welcoming and friendly towards patients.

The practice had a confidentiality policy which was reviewed recently. Staff explained how they ensured information about patients using the service was kept confidential. Patients' dental care records were stored securely. Staff told us patients were able to have confidential discussions about their care and treatment in one of the treatment rooms or the office.

The provider told us that consultations were in private and that staff never interrupted consultations unnecessarily. We observed that this happened with doors being closed so that the conversations could not be overheard whilst patients were being treated. The environment of the treatment rooms was conducive to maintaining privacy.

CQC comment cards completed by patients reflected that the dentists and dental nurses had been very mindful of the patients' anxieties when providing care and treatment. They indicated the practice team had been very respectful and responsive to their anxiety which meant they were no longer afraid of attending for dental care and treatment.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

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. The dentists described the conversations they had with patients to satisfy themselves they understood their treatment options. Patients commented staff were kind and helpful when they were in pain, distress or discomfort.

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Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting patients' needs

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

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.

Staff told us they would make reasonable adjustments for patients with disabilities as much as possible to enable them to receive treatment.

Promoting equality

Staff told us they treated everybody equally and welcomed patients from a range of different backgrounds, cultures and religions. The provider told us if there was a need for a translation service they would use a telephone translation line.

Staff demonstrated an awareness of and were able to explain to us how they would provide support for patients with hearing and eye-sight difficulties.

The practice made reasonable adjustments for patients with disabilities. These included step free access and hand rails.

Access to the service

The practice displayed its opening hours in the practice leaflet and on their website.

We confirmed the practice kept waiting times and cancellations to a minimum.

The practice was committed to seeing patients experiencing pain on the same day and kept appointments free for same day appointments. The 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.

Concerns & complaints

There was a complaints policy which provided staff with information about handling formal complaints from patients. We looked at the practice's procedure for acknowledging, recording, investigating and responding to complaints, concerns and suggestions made by patients and found there was an effective system in place which ensured a timely response.

The practice manager 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.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

Governance arrangements

The principal dentist and practice manager had overall responsibility for the management and clinical leadership of the practice. They were jointly responsible for the day to day running of the service. Staff knew the management arrangements and their roles and responsibilities.

The practice had robust policies, procedures and risk assessments to support the management of the service and to protect patients and staff. These included arrangements to monitor the quality of the service and make improvements.

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

Leadership, openness and transparency

Staff were aware of the duty of candour requirements to be open, honest and offer an apology to patients if anything went wrong.

Staff told us there was an open, no blame culture at the practice. They said the principal dentist and practice manager encouraged them to raise any issues and felt confident they could do this. They knew who to raise any issues with and told us the practice manager was approachable, would listen to their concerns and act appropriately. The practice manager discussed concerns at staff meetings and it was clear the practice worked as a team and dealt with issues professionally.

The practice held meetings where staff could raise any concerns and discuss clinical and non-clinical updates. Immediate discussions were arranged to share urgent information.

Learning and improvement

The practice had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement. These included audits of dental care records, X-rays and infection prevention and control. They had clear records of the results of these audits and the resulting action plans and improvements.

The provider showed a commitment to learning and improvement and valued the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff. The dental nurses and receptionist had annual appraisals. They discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development.

Staff told us they completed mandatory training, including medical emergencies and basic life support, each year. The General Dental Council requires clinical staff to complete continuous professional development. Staff told us the practice provided support and encouragement for them to do so.

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

The practice used the NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT) to obtain views. This is a national programme to allow patients to provide feedback on NHS services they have used. They were all positive comments about the caring and friendly service received. The practice manager told us they took patients views into consideration when developing and improving the quality of the service. They had improved parking and disability access for patients over the last 18 months.