

**General Dental Practice
Inspection (Announced)**
Cwm Taf University Health
Board, **Llantrisant Dental
Surgery**

4 February 2015

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1. Introduction

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) completed an announced inspection at Llantrisant Dental Surgery, 15 Newbridge Road, Llantrisant, CF72 8EX within the area served by Cwm Taf University Health Board on 4 February 2015.

During the inspection we considered and reviewed the following areas:

- Patient experience
- Delivery of Standards for Health Services in Wales
- Management and leadership
- Quality of environment

2. Methodology

HIW inspections of General Dental Practices seek to establish how well practices meet the standards in *Doing Well, Doing Better: Standards for Health Services in Wales*¹.

During the inspection we reviewed documentation and information from a number of sources including:

- Information held by HIW
- Interviews of staff including dentists and administrative staff
- Conversations with nursing staff
- Examination of a sample of patient medical records
- Examination of practice policies and procedures
- Examination of equipment and premises
- Information within the practice information leaflet and website

¹ Doing Well, Doing Better: Standards for Health Services in Wales came into force from 1st April 2010. The framework of standards sets out the requirements of what is expected of all health services in all settings in Wales. www.weds.wales.nhs.uk/opendoc/214438

- HIW patient questionnaires

At the end of each inspection, we provide an overview of our main findings to representatives of the dental practice to ensure that they receive appropriate feedback.

Any urgent concerns that may arise from dental inspections will be notified to the dental practice and to the health board via an immediate action letter. Any such findings will be detailed, along with any other recommendations made, within Appendix A of the inspection report.

Dental inspections capture a snapshot of the application of standards at the practice visited on the day of the inspection.

3. Context

Llantrisant Dental Surgery provided services to patients in the area of Llantrisant. The practice forms part of dental services available within the geographical area known as Cwm Taf University Health Board. At the time of our inspection, the practice employed a staff team of four which included one dentist, two nurses (one of whom sometimes worked within the reception area) and one part-time reception staff. A range of dental services were provided.

The practice provides care and treatment to NHS patients only.

4. Summary

HIW explored how Llantrisant Dental Surgery meets the standards of care in the Doing Well, Doing Better: Standards for Health Services in Wales.

Without exception patients told us they were extremely satisfied with the services provided. We also observed the warm and professional way that staff spoke with patients. However, the complaints procedure needs to be improved to ensure patients are informed of their rights and to ensure complaints are handled appropriately.

Overall, we found the practice was being run with the intention to provide a safe, high quality service to patients. However, improvements need to be made to some aspects of infection prevention and control to ensure the practice is meeting requirements of the Welsh Health Technical Memorandum (WHTM 01-05). Improvements were also needed with regard to the content of patient records to ensure that information held is sufficiently detailed and accessible.

The practice was well run with a dedicated and motivated staff team. The one practising dentist was also responsible for the day to day management of the practice with the assistance of his wife in the role of part-time practice manager. Staff told us they were well supported in their roles and had access to a range of training opportunities.

The practice premises provided a safe environment for patients to receive treatment. The principal dentist had also invested in the creation of a dedicated decontamination room in accordance with 'best practice'.

5. Findings

Patient Experience

Without exception patients told us they were extremely satisfied with the services provided. We also observed the warm and professional way that staff spoke with patients. However, the complaints procedure needs to be improved to ensure patients are informed of their rights and to ensure complaints are handled appropriately.

We sent HIW questionnaires to the practice and 41 patients had completed these prior to our inspection. Those patients had been registered at the practice between one month and 26 years. We also spoke with three further patients on the day of our visit.

All patients indicated they were highly satisfied with the care they had received at the practice and were made to feel welcome by staff. We also observed the warm and professional way that staff spoke with patients on arrival and departure and via the telephone. The majority of patients who completed a questionnaire stated they had not experienced any delay in being seen by the dentist on the days of their appointment. A sample of patient comments included the following:

'(The dentist) and his team are first class'

'My family and I have been using this practice for the last eight years and have been satisfied with the service'

When we asked patients about treatment information, all patients said the dental team explained the treatment they needed in enough detail. Patients also provided us with additional written comments such as:

'Excellent dentist. Very helpful and informative'

'I am always very happy and satisfied by the very professional service provided by all staff at the service'

'This is a lovely dental practice from the receptionist to the dentist who is very gentle and has exceptional people skills'

Most of the patients who completed one of our questionnaires stated that they knew how to access 'out of hours' dental services. We also checked the practice's answerphone message outside of office hours and found that there was clear information about how to access 'out of hours' dental care and treatment.

We held discussions with the dental team and were informed that the practice operated a flexible appointments system, with both routine and emergency treatments being made available. In addition, two patients who spoke with us said that the practice had provided them with prompt emergency appointments at times when they had presented with dental problems/pain. The practice was open until 6.00pm on two of the five days it was open each week. This meant patients who worked could access appointments outside of their working hours.

Although patients indicated that they were satisfied with services provided at the practice and had no complaints, almost a third of the patients questioned did not know how to make a complaint, should the need arise. The practice had a policy in place for patients to raise complaints about their care and treatment and there was a small notice and leaflet available in the reception area. However, both failed to contain information which reflected the current NHS complaints (concerns) arrangements. This meant that complaints information was not easily accessible to patients.

Improvement Needed

The practice should ensure patients are able to easily access information about how to make a complaint.

We looked at the complaints (concerns) policy in detail. As a result, we found that the policy did not specify the correct timescales for NHS complaints handling. We also saw that the policy did not inform patients of their right to receive support with their complaints or concerns from the Community Health Council or of their right to escalate complaints to the Public Services Ombudsman.

Improvement Needed

The practice should ensure that complaints information complies with the NHS 'Putting Things Right' requirements.

Conversations with three patients demonstrated that they felt able to informally raise concerns or provide feedback to the dental team. However, staff told us there was no formal way that patients could provide feedback to the practice through systems such as a suggestions box, comments book or patient surveys.

Improvement Needed

The practice should consider how to capture and use patients' feedback as a means of identifying the need for, and improving the quality of, services.

The dental practice did not have a website. A copy of the practice leaflet was however displayed at the reception desk and was available to patients on request.

We saw that staff were very welcoming and knew patients well within the community the practice served. It was clear that staff took an interest patients' dental care and treatment as well as their general wellbeing, creating a very friendly, inclusive atmosphere. Patient's comments about their experiences of receiving care at the practice included the following:

'I can honestly say that this practice is far superior than any before. I was always very nervous of the dentist, but not anymore'

'Staff are always polite and helpful'

'I am extremely satisfied with every aspect of this dental surgery'

And

'First class treatment in a very friendly atmosphere'

Delivery of Standards for Health Services in Wales

Overall, we found the practice was being run with the intention to provide a safe, high quality service to patients. However, improvements need to be made to some aspects of infection prevention and control to ensure the practice is meeting requirements of the Welsh Health Technical Memorandum (WHTM 01-05). Improvements were also needed with regard to the content of patient records to ensure that information held is sufficiently detailed and accessible.

Patients' records at this dental practice were held on paper only as there was no computer system in place. We looked at a sample of five patient records for the one dentist who works at the practice and found that they generally contained insufficient detail with regard to patients' medical histories (new and revised), treatment options and planned treatment. We were able to find evidence of suitable follow-up arrangements. Discussion with the dentist revealed that sufficient time was always spent on providing patients with information about their care and treatment. This was confirmed through completed HIW patient questionnaires and conversation with three patients on the day of our inspection.

Improvement Needed

The practice is advised of the need to ensure that patients' records contain sufficient detail following dental consultations and treatment. This is in accordance with current NHS standards.

We found suitable arrangements were in place for the safe use of x ray equipment. All mandatory documentation, including safety checks, maintenance and staff training were available and up-to-date. The x ray machine had presented with a fault on the day before our inspection. Conversation with the principal dentist revealed that the maintenance company had been contacted and an urgent visit requested. We were also told that patients' appointments would be adjusted as necessary, to ensure that care and treatment continued to be provided in a safe manner.

Staff had access to resuscitation equipment and drugs in the event of a patient emergency (collapse) at the practice. We saw that weekly audits took place to identify and check expiry dates of drugs so replacements could be ordered when needed.

The records we saw showed staff had received recent training on how to deal with medical emergencies including how to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Conversation with the dental team highlighted that drug prescription pads were kept out of sight, but were not locked away. We were also informed that serial numbers of new prescription pads were not recorded at the point of delivery to the practice as recommended.

Improvement Needed

The practice should ensure that prescription pads are stored in a secure way.

We considered the arrangements for the decontamination of instruments used at the practice and found these to be clear and easy to follow. We observed that the practice staff promptly transported used instruments from the dental surgery in a sealed plastic container (to reduce the risk of cross contamination with other instruments). We also saw that the instruments were initially cleaned manually and then transferred to an ultrasonic bath² for further cleaning. The dental nurse then examined the cleanliness of instruments prior to sterilisation within an autoclave³. We saw that mandatory records had been maintained in relation to checks associated with the use of the autoclave and ultrasonic bath.

We found that the majority of the dental instruments had been sterilised in packaging (in-keeping with the type of autoclave used at the practice). Following sterilisation, the packages had been sealed and date stamped to show when they were sterilised and the 'use by' date, to ensure patients' safety. However, we found that packaging was not always applied to instruments before they were placed in the autoclave. Sterilised, non-packaged instruments, whilst ready for use, were then stored in a cupboard in the dental surgery in an open tray for a number of days. This means that there was a risk such instruments could potentially become contaminated at times when members of the dental team added/removed other items to the cupboard during each day. We therefore spoke with the dental team who agreed to ensure that any instruments not packed prior to sterilisation would be used on the same day, or would be re-sterilised at the end of each working day.

² An **ultrasonic bath** cleans items using ultrasound (usually from 20–400 kHz) and an appropriate cleaning solvent.

³ An **autoclave** is a pressure chamber used to sterilize equipment and supplies by subjecting them to high pressure saturated steam.

Improvement Needed

The dental practice is advised of the need to ensure that unpacked instruments are cleaned and sterilised at the end of each operational day to minimise the risk of cross contamination.

Discussion with the dental team revealed that the hand held equipment used for dental scaling was only wiped after each use.

Improvement Needed

The practice should ensure that the hand-piece used for scaling, is sterilised between each use.

A separate decontamination room had been created by the current dentist at the practice in order to meet WHTM 01-05 requirements⁴. The room was seen to be clean, generally well designed and free from clutter. However, whilst the room contained one sink with two bowls incorporated for washing and rinsing instruments, no additional hand washing sink was available as recommended.

Improvement Needed

The practice should consider how to provide additional hand washing facilities in the decontamination room as a means of meeting the requirements for best practice.

Hand washing facilities were available in other key areas at the practice (such as the dental surgery, staff/patient toilet and staff room in the basement of the premises). We also saw that disposable dental items were available to reduce the risk of cross infection.

The practice had completed a thorough infection, prevention and control audit during January 2015 for the first time. The audit had led to the identification of some improvements which were being considered by the principal dentist. Conversation with the dental team also revealed an emphasis on promoting a safe, good quality service through daily and weekly checks with regard to the use of dental equipment.

⁴The WHTM 01-05 document provides professionals with guidance on decontamination in primary care practices and community dental practices.

We saw quarterly records which confirmed that there was a contract in place for the disposal of hazardous waste. We also saw that hazardous waste was stored securely away from areas occupied by patients and other members of the public. However, discussion with the dental team highlighted that the practice did not have access to containers for the specific disposal of some hazardous substances. The practice expressed a willingness to address this matter promptly.

Improvement Needed

The practice is advised of the need to ensure that hazardous waste is segregated for disposal, in accordance with current guidelines.

We looked at the clinical facilities of each surgery within the practice and these contained relevant equipment for the safety of patients and staff. For example, we saw that patients and staff were provided with suitable eye protection as well as personal protective equipment such as gloves and aprons.

Management and Leadership

The practice was well run with a dedicated and motivated staff team. The one practising dentist was also responsible for the day to day management of the practice with the assistance of his wife in the role of part-time practice manager. Staff told us they were well supported in their roles and had access to a range of training opportunities.

The practice consisted of a small team, all of whom had worked at the practice for the past nine years. This meant that patients received care from staff who were familiar with the service and ethos of the practice. The dentist's wife worked at the practice primarily as a part-time practice manager. However, there were occasions when she also worked as a dental nurse or within the reception area.

The dentist took overall responsibility for managing the practice with assistance from each member of the team. Staff told us they felt well supported in their roles by the dentist. They also told us they would be comfortable raising any work related concerns they may have with the dentist.

We found that the practice had not employed any new staff in recent years. However, we saw an example of a suitable induction programme (in a staff member's file) which would be used if the staff team were to be increased, or if the practice needed to use agency nurses.

We saw that staff had a contract of employment and records showed that they also had access to regular training opportunities relevant to their work. Conversations with staff however revealed that there was no system in place for staff appraisals which would encourage two way discussions about clinical practices, as well as providing the opportunity to determine the effectiveness of training received and that which may be required for the future.

Improvement Needed

Staff should have access to timely appraisals to ensure they are supported in their roles and any training or performance needs can be identified and addressed.

Examination of staff records revealed that the practice had current evidence of Hepatitis B vaccination for all relevant members of staff. Discussion with the practice manager also confirmed that the practice had a formal agreement with the Health Board for any occupational health issues (such as immunisations, or support/advice in the event of a needle stick injury). This ensured that both staff and patients were protected from cross infection.

Staff were able to access suitable updated policies within the practice which supported them in their work.

Staff told us they did not hold formal team meetings; choosing instead to discuss changes to practices and new ways of working on a regular informal basis.

We saw a variety of maintenance certificates held at the practice which demonstrated that there were, overall, suitable systems and processes in place to ensure that equipment was inspected in a timely way and in accordance with mandatory requirements. However, we were unable to find evidence of a current gas safety record. We therefore spoke with the dentist who agreed to arrange for an external contractor to visit the premises as soon as possible.

Improvement Needed

The practice is advised of the need to provide HIW with evidence of a valid and current gas safety record.

Given the number of recommendations identified during this inspection, consideration should be given to ensuring that the arrangements in place at the practice to monitor compliance with relevant standards are effective.

Quality of Environment

Overall, the practice premises provided a safe environment for patients to receive treatment. The principal dentist had also invested in the creation of a dedicated decontamination room in accordance with 'best practice'.

Llantrisant Dental Surgery is situated in a converted terraced property at 15 Newbridge Road, Llantrisant. The practice had been established for many years; however it was purchased by the current principal dentist/owner during 2005. Since that time, the practice building has undergone a major refurbishment which included the provision of a dedicated decontamination room. There were no car parking spaces at the practice, however visiting patients were able to park in the streets nearby or in a free car parking facility situated a short distance from the practice.

The existing layout of the building did not enable patients who use a wheelchair to receive treatment. This is because the one dental surgery available is situated on the first floor. Discussions with the dental team revealed that one or two patients who used a wheelchair had been able to access the practice for dental advice on occasions; however they had subsequently been referred to local community dental services for treatment.

The practice had a reception area on the ground floor, and two waiting areas arranged over two floors (the area located on the first floor only able to accommodate one person at a time), Observations made during the inspection confirmed the size of the waiting areas was appropriate for the one dental surgery at the premises.

Patients and staff were provided with a toilet on the first floor which was clearly signposted as a dual gender facility. We also saw a toilet facility for the sole purpose of staff in the basement. Both areas were clean, hygienic and equipped with hand soap and paper hand towels.

A tour of the premises confirmed that the public liability insurance certificate on display was valid. There was only one fire exit at the premises; that being the front entrance. Fire extinguishers had been checked by an external body during 2014.

We found there was no radiation warning sign displayed at the entrance of the dental surgery to alert patients or members of the public to the use of x ray equipment.

Improvement Needed

The practice is advised of the need to display appropriate warning signs in the area of the practice where x ray equipment is used.

All areas within the building were clean, welcoming, fresh and tidy. We also found that the practice was adequately heated, ventilated and had suitable lighting.

The name and qualifications of the owner/principal dentist were clearly displayed on the front of the building.

Posters were displayed within the ground floor waiting area which provided patients with a guide about NHS treatment charges.

6. Next Steps

This inspection has resulted in the need for the dental practice to complete an improvement plan in respect of Patient Experience, The Delivery of Standards for Health Services in Wales, Management and Leadership and Quality of Environment. The details of this can be seen within Appendix A of this report.

The improvement plan should clearly state when and how the findings identified at the Llantrisant Dental Surgery will be addressed, including timescales.

The improvement plan, once agreed, will be published on HIW's website and will be evaluated as part of the ongoing dental inspection process.

Appendix A

General Dental Practice: Improvement Plan

Practice: Llantrisant Dental Surgery

Date of Inspection: 4 February 2015

Page Number	Recommendation	Practice Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale
	Patient Experience			
Page 7	The practice should ensure patients are able to easily access information about how to make a complaint.			
Page 7	The practice should ensure that complaints information complies with the NHS 'Putting Things Right' requirements.			
Page 8	The practice should consider how to capture and use patients' feedback as a means of identifying the need for, and improving the quality of, services.			

Page Number	Recommendation	Practice Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale
Delivery of Standards for Health Services in Wales				
Page 9	The practice is advised of the need to ensure that patients' records contain sufficient detail following dental consultations and treatment. This is in accordance with current NHS standards.			
Page 10	The practice should ensure that prescription pads are stored in a secure way.			
Page 10	The dental practice is advised of the need to ensure that unpacked instruments are cleaned and sterilised at the end of each operational day to minimise the risk of cross contamination.			
Page 11	The practice should ensure that the hand-piece used for scaling, is sterilised between each use.			
Page 11	The practice should consider how to provide additional hand washing facilities in the decontamination room as a means of meeting the requirements for best practice.			

Page Number	Recommendation	Practice Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale
Page 11	The practice is advised of the need to ensure that hazardous waste is segregated for disposal, in accordance with current guidelines.			
Management and Leadership				
Page 12	Staff should have access to timely appraisals to ensure they are supported in their roles and any training or performance needs can be identified and addressed.			
Page 13	The practice is advised of the need to provide HIW with evidence of a valid and current gas safety record.			
Quality of Environment				
Page 15	The practice is advised of the need to display appropriate warning signs in the area of the practice where x ray equipment is used.			

Practice Representative:

Name (print):

Title:

Signature:

Date: