

The Square Dental Clinic

Assessment report

38 Woodburn Square

Douglas

Isle of Man

IM1 4DD

Tel no: 01624 621440

Date of assessment: 13 July 2022

Website: www.thesquare.im

Date of publication: 24 August 2022

Our findings

Overall summary

We carried out this announced assessment on 13 July 2022. The assessment was led by a Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspector who was supported by a specialist dental adviser.

The CQC does not have statutory powers with regard to improvement action for services on the Isle of Man, and services on the island are not subject to CQC's enforcement powers. This assessment is one of a programme of assessments that the CQC is completing at the invitation of the Isle of Man Government's Department of Health and Social Care (IOMDHSC) in order to develop an ongoing approach to providing an independent regime of health and social care services delivered or commissioned by IOMDHSC and Manx Care.

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 assessment.

Our key findings were:

- The practice appeared to be visibly clean, tidy and well-maintained.

- The service had infection control procedures which reflected published guidance. Some adjustment was needed to the decontamination workflow.
- Staff knew how to deal with emergencies. Appropriate medicines and life-saving equipment were available.
- The service had systems to help them manage risk to patients and staff. Improvements could be made to assess the risks from fire safety.
- The service had safeguarding policies and processes. Improvements could be made to ensure staff know their responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.
- The service had 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.
- Staff provided preventive care and supported patients to ensure better oral health.
- The appointment system took account of patients' needs.
- The service had effective leadership and a culture of continuous improvement.
- Staff felt involved and supported and worked as a team.
- The service asked staff and patients for feedback about the services they provided.
- The service dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.
- The service had information governance arrangements.

We found areas where the practice could make improvements. CQC recommends that the practice:

- Take action to ensure that all the staff are aware of the scope of and referral pathways for safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
- Improve the practice's infection control procedures and protocols taking into account the guidelines issued by the Department of Health in the Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices, and having regard to The Health and Social Care Act 2008: 'Code of Practice about the prevention and control of infections and related guidance' (In particular, reviewing the decontamination workflow)
- Take action to implement any recommendations in the practice's fire safety risk assessment and ensure ongoing fire safety management is effective
- Ensure there are systems in place to track and monitor the use of NHS prescription pads

We have also identified areas we have escalated to the IOMDHSC.

- Implement amalgam waste handling protocols to ensure the amalgam waste is disposed of, is in compliance with the relevant regulations and take into account the guidance issued in the Health Technical Memorandum 07-01.

- Review the need to undertake a Legionella risk assessment, taking into account the guidelines issued by the Department of Health in the Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices, and having regard to The Health and Social Care Act 2008: 'Code of Practice about the prevention and control of infections and related guidance.
- Take action to ensure that all staff have received training and are aware of the scope of and referral pathways for safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

Background to assessment

The Square Dental Clinic is in Douglas and provides NHS and private dental care and treatment for adults and children. The practice provides additional specialist implant, endodontic and periodontal services.

There is level access to the ground floor of the practice for people who use wheelchairs and those with pushchairs. The toilets are not accessible to wheelchair users. Time-restricted on street parking, including dedicated parking for people with disabilities, is available near the practice.

The dental team includes seven dentists, six dental nurses and one receptionist. The practice has four treatment rooms.

The practice is open

Monday to Thursday 9am to 1pm and 1.30pm to 5pm

Friday 9am to 2pm

On the day of the assessment, we spoke with three dentists, three dental nurses and a receptionist and the practice manager. We looked at practice policies and procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

You can find information about how we carry out our assessments and inspections on our website: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/what-we-do/how-we-do-our-job/what-we-do-inspection>.

Is the service safe?

We found this practice was providing safe care in accordance with CQC's inspection framework.

Safety systems and processes, including staff recruitment, equipment and premises and radiography (X-rays)

Staff had clear systems to keep patients safe.

We were not assured that all 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 service had safeguarding policies and procedures to provide staff with information about identifying, reporting and dealing with suspected abuse. We saw evidence staff had received some safeguarding training although this was not always to the correct level for their role. Discussions highlighted that staff did not always know about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and how to report concerns.

The service had a system to highlight vulnerable patients and patients who required other support such as with mobility or communication, within dental care records.

The service had an infection prevention and control policy and procedures. Staff completed infection prevention and control training and received updates as required.

The service had arrangements for transporting, cleaning, checking, sterilising and storing instruments. The records showed equipment used by staff for cleaning and sterilising instruments was validated, maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance. The service had suitable numbers of dental instruments available for the clinical staff and measures were in place to ensure they were decontaminated and sterilised appropriately.

The staff carried out manual cleaning of dental instruments prior to them being cleaned in an automated ultrasonic device. We advised the service that manual cleaning first carries an increased risk of injury from a sharp instrument.

A wire bur brush was used to remove debris from instruments. We discussed how these cause damage to instruments and encourage bacterial and proteinaceous adhesion.

The staff had systems in place to ensure that patient-specific dental appliances were disinfected prior to being sent to a dental laboratory and before treatment was completed.

We saw staff had procedures to reduce the possibility of Legionella or other bacteria developing in the water systems. There was no requirement for them to undertake a risk assessment. Records of water testing and dental unit water line management were maintained.

We saw effective cleaning schedules to ensure the practice was kept clean. When we carried out our assessment, we saw the practice was visibly clean.

The Isle of Man provided blanket waste management collection provision and the practice staff had policies and procedures in place to ensure clinical waste was segregated and stored appropriately. We were told there was no provision to remove waste dental amalgam from the Isle of Man. We found the waste amalgam and capsules were stored safely. This had been escalated.

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

The service had a Speak-Up policy and staff felt confident they could raise concerns without fear of recrimination.

The dentists used dental dams in line with appropriate guidance when providing root canal treatment to patients. In instances where a dental dam was not used, for example refusal by the patient, and where other methods were used to protect the airway, we saw this was documented in the dental care record and a risk assessment completed.

The service had a recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff. We looked at staff recruitment records. These showed the practice staff had followed their recruitment procedure.

We observed clinical staff were qualified and registered with the General Dental Council and had professional indemnity cover.

Staff ensured facilities and equipment were safe, and that equipment was maintained according to manufacturers' instructions, including electrical and gas appliances.

A fire risk assessment was carried out in line with the legal requirements, but we were not assured of the competency of the risk assessor. They were not aware to risk assess the presence of powder fire extinguishers. We saw there were fire extinguishers and fire detection systems throughout the building and fire exits were kept clear.

The practice had arrangements to ensure the safety of the X-ray equipment and we saw the required radiation protection information was available.

We were shown evidence the dentists justified, graded and reported on the radiographs they took. The service carried out radiography audits every year following current guidance and legislation.

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

The practice had a cone beam computed tomography (CBCT) X-ray machine. Staff had received training in the use of it and appropriate safeguards were in place for patients and staff. The provider sought advice from their radiation protection adviser in relation to the use and quality assurance of this. They were in the process of establishing service level agreements with providers who referred patients for this service.

Risks to patients

The service had implemented systems to assess, monitor and manage risks to patient safety. The practice health and safety policies, procedures and risk assessments were reviewed regularly to help manage potential risk. The service had current employer's liability insurance.

We looked at the practice arrangements for safe dental care and treatment. The staff followed the relevant safety regulation when using needles and other sharp dental items. A sharps risk assessment had been undertaken and was updated annually.

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

Staff had completed sepsis awareness training. Sepsis prompts for staff and patient information posters were displayed throughout the practice. This helped ensure staff made triage appointments effectively to manage patients who presented with a dental infection and where necessary refer patients for specialist care.

Staff knew how to respond to a medical emergency and had completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support every year.

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

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

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

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 dental care records with clinicians to corroborate our findings and observed that individual records were typed and managed in a way which kept patients safe. Dental care records we saw were complete, legible, were kept securely.

The service had systems for referring patients with suspected oral cancer to help make sure patients were seen quickly by a specialist.

Safe and appropriate use of medicines

The service had systems for appropriate and safe handling of medicines.

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

We saw staff stored NHS prescriptions as described in current guidance. The practice had previously maintained logs of NHS prescriptions that would highlight any unauthorised use, but these had lapsed. The practice manager confirmed these would be reinstated without delay.

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

Track record on safety, and lessons learned and improvements

The service had implemented systems for reviewing and investigating when things went wrong.

There were comprehensive risk assessments in relation to safety issues. Staff monitored and reviewed incidents. This helped staff to understand the potential risks and led to effective risk management systems in the practice as well as safety improvements.

In the previous 12 months there had been one safety incident. We saw this was investigated, documented and discussed with the rest of the dental practice team to prevent such occurrences happening again. We reviewed a previous sharps incident. The documentation of this did not demonstrate the practice sharps procedures had been followed. It was noted the Isle of Man does not have consistent sharps injury management processes for primary care providers to follow and support them in this process.

The service had a system for receiving and acting on safety alerts. Staff learned from external safety events as well as patient and medicine safety alerts. We highlighted that a system should be in place to demonstrate any action taken after the receipt of these.

Is the service effective?

We found this practice was providing effective care in accordance with CQC's inspection framework.

Effective needs assessment, care and treatment

The practice had systems to keep dental professionals up to date with current evidence-based practice. We saw 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 practice offered dental implants. These were placed by one of the dentists at the practice who had undergone appropriate post-graduate training in the provision of dental implants. We saw the provision of dental implants was in accordance with appropriate guidance.

Staff had access to equipment available in the practice e.g. intra-oral cameras, three dimensional scanners, microscopes and dynamic guided navigation systems for dental Implants and endodontics to enhance the delivery of care. Two of the dentists had an interest in endodontics, (root canal treatment). The dentists used operating microscopes to assist in carrying out root canal treatment.

Helping patients to live healthier lives

The practice provided preventive care and supported patients to ensure better oral health.

The dentists prescribed high concentration fluoride products if a patient's risk of tooth decay indicated this would help them.

The dentists where applicable, discussed smoking, alcohol consumption and diet with patients during appointments. The practice had a selection of dental products for sale and provided leaflets to help patients with their oral health.

Staff were aware of and involved with oral health campaigns and schemes which supported patients to live healthier lives, for example, stop smoking services. They directed patients to these schemes when appropriate.

The dentists described to us the procedures they used to improve the outcomes for patients with gum disease. This involved providing patients with preventative advice, taking plaque and gum bleeding scores and completing detailed charts of the patient's gum condition.

Records showed patients with severe gum disease were recalled at more frequent intervals for review and to reinforce preventative advice.

Consent to care and treatment

Staff 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 gave patients information about treatment options and the risks and benefits of these, so they could make informed decisions. We saw this documented in patients' records. Patients confirmed their dentist listened to them and gave them clear information about their treatment.

The practice team understood their responsibilities when treating adults who might not be able to make informed decisions, and that children under 18 years of age may give consent for themselves in certain circumstances. Staff were aware of the need to consider this when treating young people.

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 patient's current dental needs, past treatment and medical history. The dentists assessed patient's treatment needs in line with recognised guidance.

The service had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement. Staff kept records of the results of these audits, the resulting action plans and improvements.

Effective staffing

Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles.

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

Co-ordinating care and treatment

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

The dentists confirmed they referred patients to a range of specialists in primary and secondary care for treatment the practice did not provide.

The practice was a referral clinic for cone beam computed tomography scans, dental implants and endodontics. We saw staff monitored and ensured the dentists were aware of all incoming referrals daily. Staff monitored referrals through an electronic referral and tracking system/manual postal system to ensure they were responded to promptly.

Is the service caring?

We found this practice was providing caring services in accordance with CQC's inspection framework.

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

Patients said staff were compassionate and understanding.

Information folders, patient survey results and thank you cards were available for patients to read.

Privacy and dignity

Staff 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. If a patient asked for more privacy, the practice would respond appropriately. 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 to be involved in decisions about their care.

- Interpreter services were available for patients who did not speak or understand English. Patients were also told about multi-lingual staff that might be able to support them. A member of staff could also use sign language.
- Staff communicated with patients in a way 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.

Staff gave patients clear information to help them make informed choices about their treatment. Patient feedback 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.

The practice website and information leaflet 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, videos, X-ray images, intra-oral camera and scanners and smile design software shown to the patient or relative to help them better understand the diagnosis and treatment options available.

Is the service responsive?

We found this practice was providing responsive care in accordance with CQC's inspection framework.

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 about the importance of emotional support needed by patients when delivering care. They conveyed a good understanding of supporting more vulnerable members of society such as patients with dementia, and adults and children with a learning difficulty.

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

The practice had made reasonable adjustments to support disabled patients to receive treatment as far as the building would permit. Dentists would move rooms as necessary to accommodate patients with impaired mobility or offer to see them at their accessible sister practice in Port Erin.

Timely access to services

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

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

The practice had an appointment system to respond to patients' needs. Patients who requested an urgent appointment were offered an appointment the same day. Patients had enough time during their appointment and did not feel rushed. Appointments ran smoothly on the day of the assessment and patients were not kept waiting.

The staff took part in an emergency on-call arrangement with all other local practices and patients were directed to the appropriate out of hours service. This was also published on the Isle of Man Government website.

The practice's website, information leaflet and answerphone provided telephone numbers for patients needing emergency dental treatment during the working day and when the practice was closed. 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

Staff told us the practice took complaints and concerns seriously and responded to them appropriately to improve the quality of care.

The service had a policy providing guidance to staff about how to handle a complaint. The practice information leaflet explained how to make a complaint.

The practice manager was responsible for dealing with complaints. Staff told us they would tell them about any formal or informal comments or concerns straight away so patients could receive a quick response.

The practice manager 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 manager had dealt with their concerns.

We looked at comments, compliments and complaints the practice had received in the last 12 months.

These showed the practice responded to concerns appropriately and discussed outcomes with staff to share learning and improve the service.

Is the service well-led?

We found this practice was providing well-led care in accordance with CQC's inspection framework.

Leadership capacity and capability

We found leaders had the capacity, values and skills to deliver high-quality, sustainable care.

Leaders were knowledgeable about issues and priorities relating to the quality and future of the service. They understood the challenges and were addressing them.

Leaders at all levels were visible and approachable. Staff told us they worked closely with them to make sure they prioritised compassionate and inclusive leadership.

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

The service had a strategy for delivering the service which was in line with health and social priorities across the island. Staff planned the services to meet the needs of the practice population.

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.

Staff discussed their training needs informally, at annual appraisals and one to one meetings. They also discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development. We saw evidence of completed appraisals in the staff folders.

The staff focused on the needs of patients.

We saw the service had systems in place to deal with staff poor performance.

Openness, honesty and transparency were demonstrated when responding to incidents and complaints.

Staff could raise concerns and were encouraged to do so. They had confidence these would be addressed.

Governance and management

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

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

The service 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 regularly.

We saw there were clear and effective processes for managing risks, issues and performance. We highlighted some additional minor risks in relation to decontamination workflow, fire safety and safeguarding. The provider confirmed these areas would be addressed.

Appropriate and accurate information

Staff 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 service 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

Staff involved patients, the public, staff and external partners to support the service. The service used patient surveys and encouraged verbal comments to obtain staff and patients' views about the service.

Patients were encouraged to complete the NHS Friends and Family Test. This is a national programme to allow patients to provide feedback about NHS services they have used. We reviewed five responses received through this process in the last year. All these described the service as very good. In particular, they praised the staff and the welcome they received at the practice.

The service gathered feedback from staff through meetings and informal discussions. Staff were encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements to the service and said these were listened to and acted upon.

Continuous improvement and innovation

The service had systems and processes for learning, continuous improvement and innovation.

The staff were involved in quality improvement initiatives including peer review and mentoring as part of their approach in providing high quality care. The dentists with special interests also provided educational study sessions for other clinicians.

The service had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement. These included audits of dental care records, radiographs and infection prevention and control. Staff kept records of the results of these audits and the resulting action plans and improvements.

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

Staff completed 'highly recommended' training as stated in the General Dental Council professional standards. The service supported and encouraged staff to complete continuing professional development.