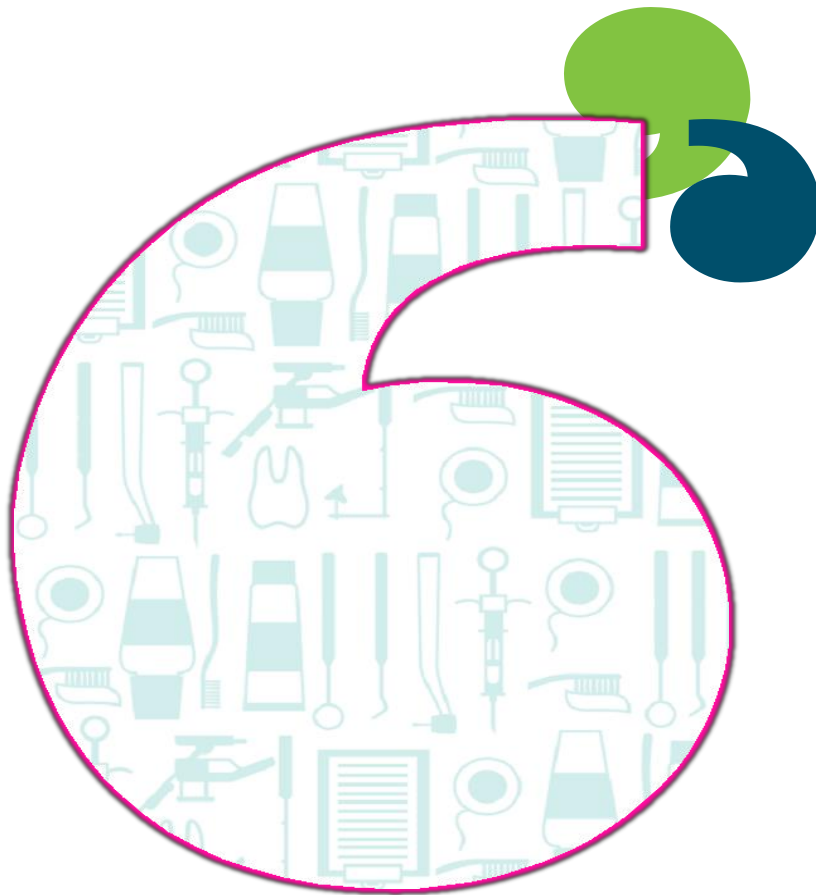


Access to NHS Dental Services in Hertfordshire Enter and View visit report



Market Street Dental Practice
4a Market Street, Watford WD18 0PD
Watford Area

Premises visited: Market Street Dental Practice

Date and Time of Visit: 22.01.19 10.45

Visit Conducted By: Jane Brown, Colin Stodel

NHS Contract Holder: Mr D Ghamari Sair

Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank the staff member we spoke to on the visit.

Purpose for the Visit:

Healthwatch Hertfordshire (HwH) is conducting an Enter and View visiting programme into Dental Practices in Hertfordshire following the outcomes of a joint project between HwH and Public Health locally. For further information our report can be found here:

<http://www.healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Access-to-NHS-Dental-Services-in-Hertfordshire-2016.pdf>

The focus of the visits is to look at the:

- Environment
- Physical Access
- Information Access
- Equality and Diversity
- Complaints Handling

We are working with Public Health East of England and have informed NHS England locally. We are also working closely with the Central Region Inspection Manager - Dentistry at the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The Local Dental Committee has also been informed and has been very supportive of this work.

Methodology:

Healthwatch Hertfordshire (HwH) is the independent health and social care champion. Local Healthwatch is in place to gather the views and experiences of people accessing services, to use this information to influence decisions and to provide information and advice to the local community about health and social care services.

Legislation allows HwH authorised representatives to ‘Enter and View’ health and social care premises to see and hear for themselves how services are provided.

We are focussing on one area at a time that has been randomly selected. We began with a pilot in Welwyn and Hatfield, where 50% of the practices were randomly selected for an Enter and View visit; the summary report of our findings for the district can be found here:

<https://www.healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/WelHat-Summary-Report-FINAL.pdf>

We have visited 25% of practices in the St Albans and Harpenden, East Herts and Stevenage Districts and are now focussing on 25% of dental practices with NHS contracts in the Watford area.

These Enter and View visits are ‘announced/unannounced’ visits where we notify the practice of our intention to visit within the next 4 weeks but do not give a specific date or time. Authorised HwH representatives use an observational checklist to record their findings and have thirteen specific subject areas to ask the person on duty at the Reception desk about.

Desktop research is carried out on the website of the dental practice and the practice’s entry in NHS Choices.

Disclaimer

The report relates only to a specific visit (a point in time) and the report is not representative of all service users (only those who contributed within the restricted time available).

1. Introduction

Market Street Dental Practice is in a central location in Watford in a shopping area with bus stops across the road and a cycle lane directly outside the practice. The practice is situated on the first and second floors above a row of shops with no lift access.

There are three dentists who are supported by a team of hygienists, dental nurses, a practice manager, business manager and receptionist. We spoke to the receptionist on this visit.

Travel links to the practice are good as it is close to the main shopping area. The Sapphire 320/321 (Hemel Hempstead/Luton) as well as the 635 (Hatfield) buses stop at the Market Street bus stop (J). The nearest railway station is Watford High Street which is a 7 minute walk to the practice.

2. Environment

2.1 Signage

There is a hanging sign advertising the practice which is to the far right of the entrance and a large banner immediately above the 'Flower Shop' signage with an additional portable sign on the pavement in front of the entrance. There are also posters on the glass front door that leads up to the Reception area as well as a fixed sign on the pillar to the right of the doorway.

The practice provides a Google embedded map on the 'Contact Us' page of their website for patients convenience.

2.2 Car Parking

There is a car park directly behind the practice (Wellstones), as advised by the receptionist. Blue Badge parking is available in the car park. There is also a multi storey car park (CitiPark Church Street) a short walk from the practice (though you do need to be familiar with the one way system to access it). We could see no safe drop off point as the practice is on a busy road.

2.3 Visible External Information

The signage used on the information panels and main door indicates NHS treatment is available. The 111 out of hours /emergency number is also displayed. The posters

on the door show the opening times (including lunch time closure), the 111 emergency number and the names of the staff at the practice.

2.4 First impressions

Access to the practice is by a flight of stairs to a small Reception area which is bright and functional. There is a multi-level reception desk and padded bench seating on the 2 walls. The space was well heated (it was a cold day but quite hot in the practice).

Treatment rooms are on the first and second floors.

The receptionist was warm and friendly and well informed. It felt very welcoming.

3. Physical Access

3.1 Facilities

As the practice is up a flight of stairs and one of the treatment rooms is up another flight of stairs, it is not accessible for anyone with mobility issues. Space is very limited in the reception/ waiting room and this means that the seating is functional, with no arm rests, to make the best of the space available. The area is well lit with a mix of natural and electric light.

There are no notice boards as patient information is contained in a folder on the reception desk. The only poster is behind the reception desk and this is about claiming for free dental care. We were told that the Practice Manager felt that the wall space was too limited to use for displaying patient information and the folder was to improve access to all the dental practice information for patients.

However there are also leaflets (including the NHS dental services in England leaflet) available at the top of the stairs as you enter the reception area.

Magazines are available for patients.

A TV is on the wall above the Reception desk which was not on at the time of our visit but we were told it would normally display oral health information on a loop.

No staff photographs were on display.

There is a toilet available for patients which is approached by a short flight of steps. This is not an accessible toilet and does not have an emergency red cord installed for patient safety. There is some colour contrast between walls/floors and sanitary ware for people with dementia or sight problems but this could be improved when

any refurbishment takes place. The bin was overflowing even though it was only 11 am.

4. Information Access

4.1 NHS Charges

The NHS dental costs poster is within the patient folder on the reception desk but there are also leaflets available for patients to take away. The Receptionist confirmed that charges are explained to the patient and care is taken to ensure that patients are clear as to whether they are entitled to free dental care or not.

4.2 Complaints

The complaints policy is available for patients in the information folder and a copy can be taken away. The practice has a detailed policy that gives clear guidelines on how a complaint will be dealt with and by whom which gives assurance that this is taken seriously. The practice does however need to include information for patients about complaining directly to NHS England if they would rather not talk to the practice and available external support for making a complaint through POhWER and/or Healthwatch Hertfordshire as recommended by the Regulation of Dental Services Programme Board.

Summary of the Practice's Complaints Policy:

Named Responsible person	Acknowledgement Of complaint	Clear timescales for complaint	Additional information about organisations to take complaint to?	Support for complaints? POhWER or Healthwatch?
Yes (2 named persons)	Yes (within 3 working days)	Yes (ten working dates and contact if this takes longer)	PHSO DCS CQC	No

PHSO	Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman
DCS	Dental Complaints Service (private treatment)
CQC	Care Quality Commission

There is a NHS Friends and Family Test feedback box on the Reception desk and the practice has recently introduced their own feedback book (November 2018) which had some entries in.

4.3 Promoting oral health

We did not see much information available on promoting oral health but space is limited in the reception area. The TV may provide this information when it is on.

4.4 Dental Practice and the NHS¹ website

On the NHS website the practice's entry is under the principal dentist's name **Dr D Sair & Associates** rather than Market Street Dental Practice which could be confusing. The entry has not been updated within the required 90 days (NHS England requirement) and therefore patients cannot check whether the practice is accepting NHS patients or not. Additionally the opening times are different to the ones advertised on the practice's door.

The practice's own website is bright and easy to find , however although there is an NHS logo on the Home page there was not much evidence of information for NHS patients.

It was good to see that the complaints policy was available on the website but this appeared to be an old version (pre 2016) and needs replacing. The privacy and Cookies tabs also appeared not to be working.

¹ From September 2018, the NHS Choices website is now known as the NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/> The NHS website (www.nhs.uk) contains information to help people manage their health and care online

5. Supporting Patients

5.1 Communication

When patients register at the practice, their communication needs will be logged on the database so that a 'yellow flag' will identify what the patient requires when they book an appointment. This may be communication needs or to support a patient with a neck problem for example.

There is no hearing loop available although we were told that the practice was looking into this.

Although patients who are deaf or those that cannot speak or understand English are often accompanied by a family member or friend, the receptionist did not seem to be aware that an interpreter could be booked to support the communications needs of patients.

A private space would be made available if a patient needed to discuss anything confidential or to recover from treatment.

5.2 Patients with specific requirements

People who are physically unable to access the practice are referred to their sister practice in Borehamwood (Leeming Dental Clinic) or for those requiring a Watford practice, Blue Cross Dental Care (we do not know how accessible this practice is for wheelchair users).

The practice does treat patients with learning disabilities who generally come with a carer. They are aware of the Purple Folder (records the individual's health information over a range of services).

Patients with dementia or visual impairments may struggle to access the practice without considerable support from carers.

Safeguarding training does not appear to have been completed recently and is not routinely discussed at team meetings. We did not see any Herts Safeguarding Adults Board posters in the patient folder. This is expected to be addressed now that the new Practice Manager is in post.

5.3 Medical Emergencies

All staff receive First Aid training which is updated annually and the Principal Dentist or Receptionist are the designated leads. The First Aid cupboard is located on the first floor and contains portable medical emergency kits and a defibrillator.

6. Summary of Findings

The Market Street Dental Practice has many areas of good practice, and overall provides good local service as highlighted below:

1. Clean, organised and welcoming environment.
2. Clear emergency procedures, with named first aid staff.
3. Good initial complaints handling

We also found the following areas for improvement:

1. Website (NHS and own website)
2. Safeguarding training
3. Additional support for patients with specific needs.

7. Recommendations

1. Review arrangements for those with specific needs to cover:
 - a) Provision of a hearing loop
 - b) Awareness of interpreting services for deaf patients and those that cannot speak or understand English
2. Add NHS England and Healthwatch Hertfordshire to the complaints policy in line with the recommendations from the Regulation of Dental Services Programme Board.
3. Update the NHS website entry so that patients have accurate information.
4. Add more information on the practice's own website for NHS patients or provide a link to the updated NHS website entry.
5. Update the Complaints document on the Practice's website.
6. Consider installing an emergency red cord in the toilet for patient safety.
7. When next refitting/redecorating the toilet take account of colour contrasts and best practice to be more dementia friendly.
8. Ensure that safeguarding is discussed regularly so that that staff are confident to identify and raise issues.

Response from Market Street Dental Practice



Dear Jane and Colin,

Thank you for visiting our practice on 22nd January, It was pleasure having you. I am glad to hear that you felt welcome.

Thank you for the report. We are pleased to inform you that we took on board all your recommendations and have done the following:

- 1) We have reviewed our arrangements for patients with specific needs.
 - a) We have ordered Digiteck CT20- PORTABLE INDUCTION LOOP KIT for patients with hearing problems and we are now awaiting its delivery.
 - b) We have arranged for interpreting services with Language Line Solutions. We can now offer patients translating service within minutes.
- 2) I have updated our complaint policy and both NHS England and Healthwatch Hertfordshire have now been added to the policy. Please find attached.
- 3) Our NHS website has now been updated and we will be checking it for future updates. Please follow the link below.
<https://www.nhs.uk/Services/dentists/Overview/DefaultView.aspx?id=26284>
- 4) A link has now been provided on our website to the updated NHS website. Please follow the link below.
<https://www.marketstreetdentalpractice.co.uk/>
- 5) The complaint policy had been updated on our website. Please follow the link below.
<https://www.marketstreetdentalpractice.co.uk/contact-us/>
- 6) Emergency red cord has been installed in patient's toilet.
- 7) We will look into to changing the bathroom colouring scheme on next decorating session.
- 8) We have arranged for all our staff to have Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults and Child Protection level 2 courses with Course Kings LTD. That took place on Saturday 16th February 2019. We will also be discussing safeguarding on our monthly staff meetings.