

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM AN INSPECTION

DENTAL PRACTICE INSPECTIONS

Introduction

The 'Health and Care Standards', published in April 2015 are standards which apply to all types and size of NHS health services in Wales. These standards "are designed to help ensure people have positive first and lasting impressions of the health service, that they receive care in safe, supportive and healing environments, and that they understand and are involved in their care" (Health and Care Standards, April 2015).

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) uses these standards to inspect health services, including General Dental Practices.

All dental practices in Wales offering private dental treatment are required to either be registered with HIW or have submitted an application to register before 1 April 2018. Under both circumstances the practice is subject to consideration under the Private Dentistry (Wales) Regulations 2017.

This information sheet is designed to help you understand how we conduct inspections of General Dental Practices.

The inspection team

Our inspections are undertaken by an HIW Inspection Manager together with at least one external reviewer who will be an experienced dentist (dental peer reviewer). The team will usually be on site at the practice for one day.

The focus of our inspections

The inspection will look at policies and procedures in place at the dental practice including provisions for staff; the internal and external premises; equipment including radiographic, extra oral and resuscitation; drugs; decontamination of instruments; hazardous waste; how the practice is adhering to the provisions of WHTM 01-05; and the clinical facilities. Inspectors will also look at a sample of patient records and will seek to speak to patients to ascertain their views as to their experience of the practice. Further information about what we look at during dental inspections can be found on HIW's website – www.hiw.org.uk/dental-services

Our inspections are announced. Dental practices receive up to twelve weeks notice of an inspection. This is so that arrangements can be made to ensure that the practice is running as normal, and that the inspection causes as little disruption to patients as possible.

Before an inspection

HIW will write to the practice to inform them of the date of the inspection.

HIW will enclose a **pre-inspection booklet which we expect practices to complete prior to our inspection**. The booklet includes an audit of staff files, policies and procedures and a checklist of other key documents that our inspection team will need to access. The practice must complete the booklet and ensure it is ready for the inspection team on arrival.

The inspection team will need to spend time on the day of the inspection with a variety of members of the practice team who will be able to answer our questions and direct us to the policies and procedures that we need to see and discuss, although each staff member will only need to be available to the inspection team for a part of the day.

If some key members of staff are not available on the day of our proposed inspection visit, the inspection will still proceed as planned. If the practice is providing private dentistry, the registered manager, as specified under the Private Dentistry (Wales) Regulations 2017, must be present and available to meet with us for part of the day.

We expect that clinical staff will still be running surgeries on the day of the inspection. The dental peer reviewer will need to look at each surgery and any other clinical facilities, including the area (s) used for decontamination. Therefore, please ensure availability of each of these areas, on a staggered basis at some point **during the morning** of our inspection visit.

The dentist in the inspection team will need to look at patient records as part of the inspection and arrangements should be made to facilitate this. We will need access to a computer if records are digital and may need a member of staff to help us to access the records. If records are paper, we will need access to them and sufficient space to enable us to review them.

HIW will send the practice bilingual copies of our patient questionnaire for you to distribute to patients so that they have the opportunity to complete the questionnaire before and on the inspection date. Where possible, HIW will also spend time on the day of the inspection talking to patients to listen to their views. We will include patient comments in our feedback and in our inspection report.

Please provide a box for patients to place their completed questionnaires in. A poster is enclosed which can be displayed at the practice notifying patients of our upcoming inspection and asking them to complete a questionnaire.

Where possible, the practice should make a suitable room/space available for the inspection team to use during the inspection.

Approximately one week before the inspection, the HIW Inspection Manager who will be leading the inspection will contact the practice to answer any questions and to check arrangements for the day of inspection.

During an inspection

When we arrive we will introduce ourselves and show our identification.

We will spend some time initially speaking with the practice manager to get an overview of the practice and have a tour of the premises.

During the course of the inspection we will spend time observing and speaking to management and staff of all levels, clinical and non clinical. As it is important that the practice continues to run as normal, staff should continue to work as normal where possible. We will cross check what we see and hear against policies and procedures in place at the practice; patient records and other information as necessary.

We will look for evidence of how the practice is complying with the Private Dentistry (Wales) regulations and if NHS dental care is provided, how well you are meeting the Health and Care Standards. Where we see evidence of good practice or evidence that standards are not being met, we will record this to include in our report.

Once inspectors have finished gathering evidence, the HIW Inspection Manager will arrange a verbal feedback session. The HIW Inspection Manager will summarise the findings from the inspection and provide high level feedback. The practice should decide whom they would like to be present at this session. This session is an opportunity to discuss and clarify any recommendations the practice is unsure about. The practice is advised to fully engage in this feedback session. Urgent and non urgent issues will (as far as possible) be identified to you during this session.

After an inspection

We will raise any immediate concerns relating to patient safety with the practice on the day of inspection. We may also write to the practice within 2 days of the inspection requiring them to submit an immediate improvement plan detailing the action they have taken/are taking within one week of this letter. Where private dentistry is provided, a non-compliance letter and notice will be issued. The purpose of this is to require the practice to address our concerns immediately or to put interim measures in place to ensure that patients are protected. A copy of this letter is sent to the local health board and the quality and safety division of Welsh Government (if there is an NHS dental contract).

A draft report will be written and forwarded to the practice via the NWIS secure portal approximately one month following the inspection visit. If the practice does not have email, alternative arrangements will be made. The practice is expected to check this report for factual accuracy. This is not an opportunity for the practice to challenge any conclusions we reach in the report but a chance to ensure the report is factually correct. The report should contain no surprises, as you will have had chance to discuss the issues raised/recommendations during the feedback session at the end of the inspection day.

If recommendations are made in the report, you will be asked to complete an improvement plan to tell us how you will address the issues raised by the inspection. It is important this document is completed fully and returned to us within two weeks. HIW will assess whether the actions you propose to take provide us with sufficient assurance, and we will confirm this to you.

We require all completed improvement plans and immediate assurance responses to be submitted to us electronically in **Word format**. This enables the information to be published to our website alongside the report we have written.

The inspection report will then be finalised and a copy sent to the health board.

The final report will be published on HIW's website in English and in Welsh, alongside the completed improvement plan provided by you, three months following the inspection date.