

Dental Department HMP Swaleside

Inspection report

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This report describes our judgement of the quality of care at this service. It is based on a combination of what we found when we inspected, information from our ongoing monitoring of data about services and information given to us from the provider, patients, the public and other organisations.

Ratings

Overall rating for this location

Are services safe?

Are services effective?

Are services caring?

Are services responsive?

Are services well-led?

Overall summary

We carried out a focused desktop inspection of healthcare services provided by Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT) at HMP Swaleside in October 2019.

Following our last joint inspection with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) in December 2018, we found that the quality of healthcare provided by KCHFT at this location required improvement. We issued a Requirement Notice in relation to Regulation 9, Person-centred care, of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

The purpose of this desktop inspection was to determine if the healthcare services provided by KCHFT were meeting the legal requirements of the above regulations, under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

We do not currently rate services provided in prisons.

At this inspection we found that the provider had made the following improvements:

- Additional dentist treatment and dental nurse triage sessions had been held to mitigate for sessions cancelled in 2018.

- The provider had scheduled training for prison-based healthcare staff in dental triage to reduce the need for unnecessary urgent referrals.
- Dental appointments had been added to the prison's daily activity list to improve patients' access to the service.
- The waiting list management process had been changed to enable waiting times to be monitored more accurately.
- The impact of failures to attend appointments was being promoted within the prison to reduce the number of missed appointments which would then require rebooking.
- The waiting times for routine dental appointments had reduced significantly, although they still remained too high.
- The provider had submitted a business case to NHS England for additional regular sessions at HMP Swaleside to support ongoing patient need.

The areas where the provider **should** make improvements are:

- Continue to work to reduce the waiting time for routine dental appointments.

Our inspection team

A CQC health & justice inspector undertook a desk-based review of a range of information we held about the service, including action plans and associated documentary evidence of the provider's response to the Requirement Notice issued in May 2019. This evidence

included an action plan updated in August 2019. We talked to the provider's managerial team in relation to this action plan during an inspection of a neighbouring prison in September 2019. We did not visit HMP Swaleside on this occasion.

Background to Dental Department HMP Swaleside

HMP Swaleside is Category B training prison on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent, holding up to 1,111 convicted adult male prisoners, mainly serving very long sentences, either of 10 years or more, or life and other indeterminate sentences. The prison is operated by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT) is contracted to provide dental services to men held at the prison. KCHFT is registered with the CQC to provide the following regulated activities at this location: Diagnostic and screening procedures, Surgical procedures and Treatment of disease, disorder or injury.

We undertook a joint inspection of HMP Swaleside with HMIP between 10 and 13 December 2018. During the inspection, we determined if KCHFT was meeting the legal requirements and regulations under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008, and that men in the prison were receiving safe care and treatment. This report can be found at:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/05/Swaleside-Web-2018-1.pdf>

Are services safe?

We did not inspect the safe key question at this inspection.

Are services effective?

We did not inspect the effective key question at this inspection.

Are services caring?

We did not inspect the caring key question at this inspection.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

This report focusses only on concerns mentioned in the Requirement Notice we issued on May 8, 2019. At the time, we found that dental staff shortages and equipment breakdown during 2018 had caused a significant delay to patients receiving initial and routine dental care. While additional sessions were helping to clear the backlog, we found a significant number of patients who were yet to receive a routine appointment after an extended wait of between 32 and 49 weeks since their initial request.

At this desk based review we found that the provider had addressed the issue of concern we had identified in the Requirement Notice, and was now compliant with the requirements of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 in relation to the responsive key question.

Timely access to services

KCHFT had undertaken a number of improvements to reduce the waiting time for routine dental treatment. These included:

- The trust had scheduled triage training for all prison-based healthcare staff to enable them to effectively deal with dental issues when the dental team were not on site. This was intended to reduce the number of unnecessary referrals for urgent appointments, thereby allowing the dentist to see more routine patients.
- The trust had reaffirmed with the prison that dental appointments were added to the daily activity list, ensuring that patients were reminded of, and prioritised to access their appointments, to reduce failures to attend.
- Patients requesting a routine appointment were now booked directly onto the dental appointment system,

rather than being held initially on a central waiting list on the healthcare database. This improved accuracy of waiting time calculations, reduced data transfer errors, and enabled direct monitoring and reporting by the regional clinical manager.

- The practice manager was providing “did not attend” rate posters monthly to prisoner healthcare representatives who were displaying them on residential wings, to promote the impact of failures to attend on the dental service, and cost to the NHS.
- The dental service was now a standing item on the quarterly partnership board meetings between commissioners, healthcare and the prison, to discuss service risks and barriers to providing effective dental treatment within the prison.

In addition to these improvements, KCHFT continued to provide additional dental treatment and dental nurse triage sessions, to mitigate for cancelled sessions in 2018 and work through the backlog of patients awaiting appointments. Sixty additional sessions have been agreed, with 11 still to be delivered. KCHFT had also submitted a business case to NHS England for additional regular dental sessions at HMP Swaleside to support ongoing patient need.

As of September 2019, waiting times for routine appointments had reduced significantly since December 2018, but still remained too high at up to 14 weeks for an initial examination and up to 16 weeks for treatment. However, the improvements put in place by KCHFT to address this, the provision of additional sessions and the submission of a business case for increased regular dental sessions, demonstrated that the provider was working to address the issues of concern.

Are services well-led?

We did not inspect the well-led key question at this inspection.