

Dental Department HMP Maidstone

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.

Overall summary

We carried out an announced focused inspection of dental services provided by Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust at HMP Maidstone on 20 and 21 August 2019.

Following a joint inspection with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) in October 2018, we found that the quality of services provided by Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust at this location required improvement. We issued a Requirement Notice in relation to Regulation 17: Good governance, of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

The purpose of the inspection was to determine if the service provided by Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust was now 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 significantly reduced waiting times for routine dental care.
- Arrangements to support patients experiencing dental pain and those requiring emergency care had improved.
- Systems to assess, monitor and improve the quality and safety of services were now effective. This included improved monitoring processes and performance audits.

Our inspection team

Our inspection was completed by two CQC health and justice inspectors.

Before the inspection we reviewed a range of information that we held about the service. Following the announcement of the inspection we requested additional information from the provider, which we reviewed.

During the inspection we asked the provider to share further information with us. We spoke with healthcare staff, commissioners, and sampled a range of records.

Background to Dental Department HMP Maidstone

HMP Maidstone is a category C prison located in the town centre of Maidstone that holds exclusively foreign national prisoners. The prison accommodates up to 600 adult male prisoners. The prison is operated by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust is contracted to provide dental services at HMP Maidstone.

The provider is registered to provide the following regulated activities at this location: Treatment of disease, disorder or injury, Diagnostic and screening procedures, and Surgical procedures.

Our last joint inspection with HMIP was in October 2018. The joint inspection report can be found at:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/02/Maidstone-Web-2018.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?

Timely access to care and treatment

At our last inspection, we found that some patients waited up to 25 weeks for routine dental care, which was excessive. Triage of dental waiting lists was ineffective, and patients reporting dental pain did not receive adequate support while waiting for an appointment. No regular emergency appointments were available.

During this focused inspection, we found that the provider had significantly improved waiting times for routine care and arrangements to support patients experiencing dental pain and those requiring emergency care:

- As of August 2019, waiting times for routine dental care appointments had reduced to around nine weeks.
- Dental staff now reviewed patients requesting urgent dental care or reporting pain through a triage process, and prioritised them at the next dental session if appropriate.
- Emergency treatment appointment slots were embargoed during each dental session to ensure the service could respond promptly to dental emergencies.
- The provider had delivered basic triage training to other health partners to enable them to respond appropriately to patients' need when the dental team were not on site.
- The provider and the prison had agreed to add dental appointments to the daily activity list, ensuring that patients were reminded of, and prioritised to access their appointments, to reduce non-attendance. Additionally, the provider had produced "did not attend" posters which were displayed on the wings to inform patients of the impact and cost of failures to attend appointments.
- The provider was directly funding additional clinic sessions to help reduce waiting times for dental care, and had recently submitted a business case to NHS England (NHSE) for additional regular dental sessions at HMP Maidstone to better meet the needs of the population.

Are services well-led?

Governance arrangements

At our last inspection, we found that the provider's systems to assess, monitor and improve the quality and safety of services were not always effective. In particular, reporting on waiting times was inaccurate. Service managers believed that waiting times for routine care were around four to five weeks, when some patients actually waited up to 25 weeks.

During this focused inspection, we found that oversight of the service had improved, including accurate reporting on waiting times:

- Patients requesting a routine appointment were now booked directly into an open slot on the SystmOne

electronic recording system, rather than being added to a waiting list. This improved accuracy of waiting time calculations and enabled direct monitoring and reporting by the regional clinical manager.

- Service managers completed monthly performance audits and reported monthly to the trust's Dental Quality Group and Executive Performance Review meeting to provide assurances around performance including waiting times.
- The provider was now included in local partnership board meetings with the prison, NHSE commissioners and other health providers, enabling them to raise risks including access to patients and discuss service improvements with relevant partners.