

Inspection Report

13 February 2026



Embrace Orthodontics

Type of service: Independent Hospital (IH) – Dental Treatment

Address: 1-3 Bachelors Walk, Lisburn, BT28 1XJ

Telephone number: 028 9267 9060

www.rqia.org.uk

Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care

Information on legislation and standards underpinning inspections can be found on our website <https://www.rqia.org.uk/>, [The Independent Health Care Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2005](#) and the [Minimum Standards for Dental Care and Treatment \(March 2011\)](#)

1.0 Service information

Registered Provider: Miss Grainne McAvinchey and Ms Sinead McAvinchey	Registered Manager: Miss Grainne McAvinchey Date registered: 21 July 2015
Persons in charge at the time of inspection: Miss Grainne McAvinchey and Ms Sinead McAvinchey	Number of registered places: Two
Category of care: Dental Treatment	
Brief description of how the service operates: Embrace Orthodontics is registered with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) as an independent hospital (IH) with a dental treatment category of care. The practice has two registered dental surgeries and provides general dental services, private and health service treatment and does not offer conscious sedation.	

2.0 Inspection summary

This was an announced inspection, undertaken by a care inspector on 13 February 2026 from 10.00 am to 1.30 pm.

It focused on the themes for the 2025/26 inspection year and assessed progress with any areas for improvement identified during the last care inspection.

There was evidence of good practice in relation to staff training; management of medical emergencies; infection prevention and control (IPC); decontamination of reusable dental instruments; radiology and radiation safety; management of complaints and incidents; and governance arrangements.

An area for improvement was identified against the regulations to ensure that an AccessNI enhanced disclosure check is undertaken for all new staff, prior to the staff member commencing employment.

No immediate concerns were identified regarding the delivery of front line patient care.

3.0 How we inspect

RQIA is required to inspect registered services in accordance with legislation. To do this, we gather and review the information we hold about the service, examine a variety of relevant records, meet and talk with staff and management and observe practices on the day of the inspection.

The information obtained is then considered before a determination is made on whether the practice is operating in accordance with the relevant legislation and minimum standards.

Examples of good practice are acknowledged and any areas for improvement are discussed with the person in charge and detailed in the quality improvement plan (QIP).

4.0 What people told us about the care and treatment?

We issued posters to the registered provider prior to the inspection inviting patients and members of the dental team to complete an electronic questionnaire.

No completed staff or patient questionnaires were received prior to the inspection.

5.0 The inspection

5.1 What action has been taken to meet any areas for improvement identified at or since last inspection?

The last inspection to Embrace Orthodontics was undertaken on 15 February 2024; no areas for improvement were identified.

5.2 Inspection findings

5.2.1 Do recruitment and selection procedures comply with all relevant legislation?

There were recruitment and selection policies and procedures in place that adhered to legislation and best practice guidance.

Miss G McAvinchey oversees the recruitment and selection of the dental team and approves all staff appointments.

A review of the staff register evidenced that five new staff had been recruited since the previous inspection. The staff register required a minor amendment and following the inspection Ms S McAvinchey confirmed this matter had been addressed.

A review of two personnel files of newly recruited staff evidenced that AccessNI enhanced disclosure checks had been completed following the start date of employment. An area for improvement against the regulations has been made in this regard.

There was evidence of job descriptions and induction checklists for the different staff roles. A review of records confirmed that if a professional qualification is a requirement of the post, a registration check is made with the appropriate professional regulatory body.

Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey confirmed members of the dental team have been provided with a job description, contract of employment/agreement and received induction training when they commenced work in the practice.

Addressing the area for improvement will ensure that recruitment of the dental team complies with the legislation and best practice guidance.

5.2.2 Is the dental team appropriately trained to fulfil the duties of their role?

The dental team takes part in ongoing training to update their knowledge and skills, relevant to their role.

A record is kept of training (including induction) undertaken by staff, which is overseen by Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey to ensure that the dental team is suitably skilled and qualified. It was identified that one training course was due for renewal by the staff team. This was discussed with Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey and following the inspection RQIA received evidence this matter had been addressed.

Advice was provided to develop a policy and procedure outlining mandatory training requirements for the dental team, in line with any professional requirements and the [training guidance](#) provided by RQIA. Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey were receptive to this advice and following the inspection RQIA received assurance that a training policy was being developed.

The care and treatment of patients is being provided by a dental team that is appropriately trained to carry out their duties.

5.2.3 Is the practice fully equipped and is the dental team trained to manage medical emergencies?

The British National Formulary (BNF) and the Resuscitation Council (UK) specify the emergency medicines and medical emergency equipment that must be available to safely and effectively manage a medical emergency. Systems were in place to ensure that emergency medicines and equipment are immediately available as specified and do not exceed their expiry dates.

There was a medical emergency policy and procedure in place. Protocols were available to guide the dental team on how to manage recognised medical emergencies.

Managing medical emergencies is included in the induction programme and refresher training is undertaken annually.

Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey confirmed members of the dental team were able to describe the actions they would take, in the event of a medical emergency, and were familiar with the location of medical emergency medicines and equipment.

Sufficient emergency medicines and equipment were in place and the dental team is trained to manage a medical emergency as specified in the legislation, professional standards and guidelines.

5.2.4 Does the dental team provide dental care and treatment using conscious sedation in line with the legislation and guidance?

Conscious sedation helps reduce anxiety, discomfort, and pain during certain procedures. This is accomplished with medications or medical gases to relax the patient.

Miss G McAvinchey confirmed that conscious sedation is not offered in Embrace Orthodontics.

5.2.5 Does the dental team adhere to infection prevention and control (IPC) best practice guidance?

The IPC arrangements were reviewed throughout the practice to evidence that the risk of infection transmission to patients, visitors and staff was minimised.

The infection prevention and control measures to prevent transmission of respiratory illnesses in the practice was discussed with Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey. It was confirmed that arrangements are in place in keeping with the Health and Social Care Public Health Agency guidance [Infection Prevention and Control Manual for Northern Ireland](#). Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey confirmed arrangements are in place to check Department of Health (DoH) websites for further advisory information, guidance and alerts in this regard.

There was an overarching IPC policy and associated procedures in place. Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey confirmed there was a nominated lead who had responsibility for IPC and decontamination in the practice. Miss G McAvinchey confirmed the IPC lead had undertaken IPC and decontamination training in line with their continuing professional development and had retained the necessary training certificates as evidence.

During a tour of some areas of the practice, it was observed that clinical and decontamination areas were clean, tidy and uncluttered. All areas of the practice observed were equipped to meet the needs of patients.

The arrangements for personal protective equipment (PPE) were reviewed and it was noted that appropriate PPE was readily available for the dental team in accordance with the treatments provided.

Using the Infection Prevention Society (IPS) audit tool, IPC audits are routinely undertaken by members of the dental team to self-assess compliance with best practice guidance. The purpose of these audits is to assess compliance with key elements of IPC, relevant to dentistry, including the arrangements for environmental cleaning; the use of PPE; hand hygiene practice; and waste and sharps management. This audit also includes the decontamination of reusable dental instruments which is discussed further in the following section of this report. A recent completed IPS audit was available for review however it was evidenced that the audits were not completed at the expected frequency. Advice and guidance was provided to Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey to complete these on a six monthly basis. Assurances were provided that this matter would be addressed following the inspection.

Hepatitis B vaccination is recommended for clinical members of the dental team as it protects them if exposed to this virus. A system was in place to ensure that relevant members of the dental team have received this vaccination. A review of a sample of staff personnel files confirmed that vaccination history is checked during the recruitment process and vaccination records are retained in personnel files.

Discussion with Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey confirmed staff had received IPC training relevant to their roles and responsibilities. Review of training records evidenced that the dental team had completed relevant IPC training and had received regular updates.

Review of IPC arrangements evidenced that the dental team adheres to best practice guidance to minimise the risk of infection transmission to patients, visitors and staff.

5.2.6 Does the dental team meet current best practice guidance for the decontamination of reusable dental instruments?

Robust procedures and a dedicated decontamination room must be in place to minimise the risk of infection transmission to patients, visitors and staff in line with Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices, (HTM 01-05), published by the DoH.

There was a range of policies and procedures in place for the decontamination of reusable dental instruments that were comprehensive and reflected legislation, minimum standards and best practice guidance.

There was a designated decontamination room separate from patient treatment areas and dedicated to the decontamination process. The design and layout of this room complied with best practice guidance and the equipment was sufficient to meet the requirements of the practice. Records evidencing that the equipment for cleaning and sterilising instruments was inspected, validated, maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance were reviewed. Review of equipment logbooks demonstrated that all required tests to check the efficiency of the machines had been undertaken.

Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey confirmed members of the dental team had received training on the decontamination of reusable dental instruments in keeping with their role and responsibilities and that they demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of the decontamination process and were able to describe the equipment treated as single use and the equipment suitable for decontamination.

Decontamination arrangements demonstrated that the dental team are adhering to current best practice guidance on the decontamination of dental instruments.

5.2.7 How does the dental team ensure that appropriate radiographs (x-rays) are taken safely?

The arrangements regarding radiology and radiation safety were reviewed to ensure that appropriate safeguards were in place to protect patients, visitors and staff from the ionising radiation produced by taking an x-ray.

Dental practices are required to notify and register any equipment producing ionising radiation with the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI). A review of records evidenced the practice had registered with the HSENI.

The practice has a separate x-ray room which has an intra-oral x-ray machine and a orthopan tomogram (OPG) machine. The equipment inventory reflected all the radiography equipment in place. A review of documentation evidenced that the x-ray equipment had been serviced and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

A radiation protection advisor (RPA), medical physics expert (MPE) and radiation protection supervisor (RPS) have been appointed in line with legislation.

A dedicated radiation protection file containing the relevant local rules, employer's procedures and other additional information was retained.

A review of the file confirmed that the Employer had entitled the dental team to undertake specific roles and responsibilities associated with radiology and ensured that these staff had completed appropriate training. The RPS oversees radiation safety within the practice and regularly reviews the radiation protection file to ensure that it is accurate and up to date.

The appointed RPA must undertake a critical examination and acceptance test of all new x-ray equipment; thereafter the RPA must complete a quality assurance test every three years as specified within the legislation.

Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey confirmed that no new radiology equipment had been installed since the previous RQIA inspection.

The most recent report generated by the RPA during July 2024 evidenced that the x-ray equipment had been examined and any recommendations made had been actioned.

A copy of the local rules was on display near the x-ray machine observed and appropriate staff, with the exception of one staff member, had signed to confirm that they had read and understood these. This matter was discussed with Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey and following the inspection RQIA was provided confirmation this matter had been addressed.

Quality assurance systems and processes were in place to ensure that all matters relating to x-rays reflect legislation and best practice guidance. It was evidenced that all measures are taken to optimise radiation dose exposure. This included the use of x-ray audits and digital x-ray processing.

The radiology and radiation safety arrangements evidenced that procedures are in place to ensure that appropriate x-rays are taken safely.

5.2.8 Are complaints and incidents being effectively managed?

The arrangements for the management of complaints and incidents were reviewed to ensure that they were being managed in keeping with legislation and best practice guidance.

The complaints policy and procedure provided clear instructions for patients and staff to follow. Patients and/or their representatives were made aware of how to make a complaint by way of the patient's guide and information on display in the practice.

Arrangements were in place to record any complaint received in a complaints register and retain all relevant records including details of any investigation undertaken, all communication with complainants, the outcome of the complaint and the complainant's level of satisfaction.

A review of records concerning complaints evidenced that complaints had been managed in accordance with best practice guidance. A review of records confirmed that no complaints had been received since the previous inspection.

Discussion with Miss G McAvinchey confirmed that an incident policy and procedure was in place which includes the reporting arrangements to RQIA. Miss G McAvinchey confirmed that incidents are effectively documented and investigated in line with legislation. All relevant incidents are reported to RQIA and other relevant organisations in accordance with legislation and [RQIA Statutory Notification of Incidents and Deaths](#). Arrangements are in place to audit adverse incidents to identify trends and improve service provided.

Miss G McAvinchey confirmed the dental team was knowledgeable on how to deal with and respond to complaints and incidents in accordance with legislation, minimum standards and the Northern Ireland Public Ombudsman (NIPSO).

Arrangements were in place to share information with the dental team about complaints and incidents including any learning outcomes, and also compliments received.

Systems were in place to ensure that complaints and incidents were being managed effectively in accordance with legislation and best practice guidance.

5.2.9 How does a registered provider who is not in day to day management of the practice assure themselves of the quality of the services provided?

Where the business entity operating a dental practice is a corporate body or partnership or an individual owner who is not in day to day management of the practice, unannounced quality monitoring visits by the registered provider must be undertaken and documented every six months; as required by Regulation 26 of The Independent Health Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.

Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey are in day to day management of the practice, therefore the unannounced quality monitoring visits by the registered provider are not applicable.

5.3 Does the dental team have suitable arrangements in place to record equality data?

The arrangements in place in relation to the equality of opportunity for patients and the importance of staff being aware of equality legislation and recognising and responding to the diverse needs of patients was discussed with Miss Grainne McAvinchey and Ms Sinead McAvinchey.

6.0 Quality Improvement Plan/Areas for Improvement

Areas for improvement have been identified where action is required to ensure compliance with [The Independent Health Care Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2005](#)

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of Areas for Improvement	1	0

Areas for improvement and details of the QIP were discussed with Miss G McAvinchey and Ms S McAvinchey, Registered Person, as part of the inspection process. The timescales for completion commence from the date of inspection.

Quality Improvement Plan	
Action required to ensure compliance with The Independent Health Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005	
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Regulation 19 (2) schedule 2, as amended Stated: First time To be completed by: 13 February 2026	The registered person shall ensure that an AccessNI enhanced disclosure check is sought and reviewed with the outcome recorded prior to any member of staff commencing employment in the future. Ref: 5.2.1 Response by registered person detailing the actions taken: We will continue to always apply for access NI enhanced disclosure on offering a candidate a position. However, we will ensure that their start date will not be confirmed until the completed check has been returned with the outcome. The outcome will then be recorded and the start date confirmed.

Please ensure this document is completed in full and returned via Web Portal



The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
James House
2-4 Cromac Avenue
Gasworks
Belfast
BT7 2JA

Tel 028 9536 1111
Email info@rqia.org.uk
Web www.rqia.org.uk
 [@RQIANews](https://twitter.com/RQIANews)

Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care