



Quick Guide: Dental Health Services (DHS)

As the largest public dental health services provider in Western Australia (WA) funded by the state government, DHS can trace its history to 1926 when the first public dentist was employed by the Public Health Department.

Our services

Dental Health Services (DHS) provides dental services to the public of Western Australia by the following service streams.

School Dental Service (SDS)

The School Dental Service (SDS) is a public health programme and provides free general dental care to students attending a Western Australian Department of Education recognised school aged 5 to 16 years or until the end of year 11.

The SDS is delivered state wide through fixed and mobile dental therapy centres (DTC) collocated with some schools.

Students are provided with an initial course of care during the first year of enrolment and are then placed on a waitlist to receive a check-up at a future date subject to their clinical needs. Urgent dental care is provided as required.

General Dental Service

General dental clinics (GDC) operate throughout the metropolitan area and in country Western Australia. They provide subsidised general and urgent dental care for financially and geographically eligible Western Australians. Eligibility requirements to attend a GDC for care include:

- Those who hold a current health care card or pension concession card and are not eligible for the SDS, and
- Children aged 0 to 4 whose name appears on their parent's Health Care or Pension Concession Card.

Urgent care is prioritised and provided as required. All patients requiring urgent care are required to telephone their local public dental clinic and make an appointment. Patients are triaged to assess the urgency of their dental problem so that DHS can prioritise those patients with the most serious issues. Please do not present to clinics without an appointment.

Waitlists for patients requiring non-urgent courses of dental care are used to ensure equity of access as demand for services exceeds available resources. The GDC will advise patients when their name gets to the top of the waitlist. Following the completion of the first course of care, patients are placed on the Recall Waiting List for their subsequent check-up.

Special Dental Services

Subsidised dental care is provided to the following specific patient groups:

- Consenting residents of metropolitan aged care residential facilities receive a free yearly dental screening
- Prisoners in metropolitan and major rural Department of Corrective Services facilities (generally prison - based clinics)
- Eligible individuals who have a developmental disability with an associated intellectual disability or specified acquired brain injuries
- Graylands Hospital in-patients and out-patients referred from eligible psychiatric hostels and hospitals
- Non-ambulant metropolitan patients with a medical referral
- Wheelchair bound individuals with a spinal injury

Dental Subsidy Schemes

DHS also facilitates subsidised general and urgent dental care for financially or geographically eligible people through:

- Country Patients Dental Subsidy Scheme: compliments dental care provided through country public dental clinics and usually operates in locations with no reasonable access to a government dental clinic. Dental care is provided by DHS approved private dental practitioners.
- Metropolitan Patients Dental Subsidy Scheme: when funding permits, eligible metropolitan patients on a public dental waiting list may be issued an authority to undergo a course of non-urgent subsidised general dental care at participating private dental practitioners
- Private Orthodontic Subsidy Scheme – enables eligible country patients contacted by DHS to receive subsidised specialist orthodontic services closer to home, as all subsidised specialist services are currently only available in Perth.

Fees and charges for adults

All dental charges are in line with the Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs schedule of dental fees.

The fees for treatment provided at a public dental clinic or a participating private dental clinic is subsidised by the Western Australian government up to a maximum of 75% of the cost of the treatment, based upon their Centrelink income. The remaining portion of the fee is the responsibility of the patient and an account will be issued. Patients with outstanding accounts will not be placed on a waitlist or be provided appointments for non-urgent care.

Residents in remote locations

In remote locations where DHS is the sole dental provider, all patients can access dental care at the public dental clinic. Those patients not eligible for subsidised care are required to pay the full fee.

Would you like more information or to provide feedback?

This document can be made available in alternative formats such as braille, audio tape or electronically on request.



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