



Dental Health Services

Country Patients' Dental Subsidy Scheme

Information for Dental Practitioners

Effective 12 July 2023

The Government of Western Australia subsidises the cost of dental care provided by Dental Health Services (DHS) for eligible patients (patients).

In country areas where there are no DHS General Dental Clinics (DHS clinics), the Country Patients' Dental Subsidy Scheme (CPDSS) allows patients to access subsidised dental care from participating private dental practitioners (CPDSS clinics)

Under the scheme, DHS directly reimburses CPDSS clinics for the subsidised value (up to 75% of the total value of treatment) of dental care provided to patients.

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1 Treatment Covered by the CPDSS

Patients can access subsidised emergency, general and prosthodontic dental care using the CPDSS.

However, there are restrictions on the types of treatment, total value of treatment, and frequency of items that will be subsidised under the scheme.

DHS use Department of Veterans' Affairs Fee Schedules to determine the value of treatment.

1.1 Emergency Treatment

Under the CPDSS, patients can access emergency dental care for relief of pain, trauma and infection associated with a single tooth per emergency episode, or some prosthodontic issues.

A list of emergency treatment items that are subsidised under the scheme (and other limits) can be found in the latest CPDSS Emergency Fee Schedule.

Emergency dental care will only be subsidised up to a total value of treatment of \$600 per emergency episode, and only for two emergency episodes within a 12-month period per patient.

1.2 General Treatment

Under the CPDSS, patients can access general dental care, which includes periodic 12-month examinations.

The list of general treatment items that are subsidised under the scheme (and other limits) can be found in the latest CPDSS General Fee Schedule.

General dental care will only be subsidised up to a total value of treatment of \$2000 within a 12-month period per patient.

1.3 Prosthodontic Treatment

Under the CPDSS, patients can access prosthodontic dental care once their general dental care has been completed.

The list of prosthodontic treatment items that are subsidised under the scheme (and other limits) can be found in the latest CPDSS General Fee Schedule (700 series items).

Prosthodontic dental care is not subject to the limits for general dental care. However, the following limits apply:

- Full subsidy for denture items will only be available once every 6-year period per patient.
- Full subsidy for reline items will only be available once every 2-year period per patient.

Otherwise, the amount of subsidy paid by DHS will be on a pro rata/proportional basis.

Cast-metal dentures (not listed in the CPDSS General Fee Schedule) may be also performed but will only be subsidised to the value of the equivalent acrylic denture.

2 Operation of the CPDSS

2.1 Patient Eligibility

Patients wishing to access dental care under the CPDSS must:

- Reside in a suburb which is more than 25 kilometres from their nearest DHS clinic.
- Have a current Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card (or be a dependant of a card holder); or already have an active CPDSS record on DHS systems.

Children turning 5 through to those aged 16 who attend a Department of Education recognised school should be directed to the DHS School Dental Service (SDS) for free general dental care.

2.2 Patient Administration

CPDSS clinics may use an online portal to check if patients are already registered and have an active CPDSS record on DHS systems.

Otherwise, new CPDSS patients will need to complete a Client Details form (DS03), which will need to be forwarded by the CPDSS clinic to the DHS Subsidy Department.

Health Care Card and Pensioner Concession Card holders and their dependants automatically qualify for a 50% subsidy on the cost of dental care.

A 75% subsidy is available where patients meet the criteria outlined in the Assessing Reference. CPDSS clinics are to perform these assessments themselves.

2.3 Responsibilities of CPDSS Clinics

Prior to the commencement of **any** treatment under the CPDSS, it is the responsibility of the CPDSS clinic to advise each patient of:

- The total value of their treatment (CPDSS amount limits are based on this).
- The amount of subsidy that will be paid by DHS.
- Any treatment items that will not be subsidised by DHS (i.e., are not available under the CPDSS or are in excess of any CPDSS limits).
- The remaining amount that will have to be paid to the CPDSS clinic by the patient. This is a matter between the CPDSS clinic and the patient. Patients with private health insurance may claim for these remaining amounts.

Where CPDSS clinics charge the wrong amount to a patient (e.g., incorrect patient assessment, incorrect CPDSS Fee Schedule/item being applied) they must either:

- Reimburse the patient and/or DHS for any overpayment.
- Seek further payment from the patient for any underpayment.

2.4 Patients Accessing Emergency Treatment

CPDSS clinics use the Country Immediate Treatment Authority form (DS68C) to record treatment performed during emergency visits for patients.

If further non-emergency treatment is required, patients will be placed on the waiting list for the CPDSS clinic by DHS for that care.

2.5 Patients Accessing General and Prosthodontic Treatment

CPDSS clinics use the Country Immediate Treatment Authority form (DS68C) to record treatment performed during periodic general examinations.

If further treatment is required, patients will be placed on a waiting list for their CPDSS clinic by DHS.

Once funding is available for patients to be removed from CPDSS clinics' waiting lists, DHS will issue Country Treatment Authority forms (DS70C) to the CPDSS clinics.

CPDSS clinics then arrange appointments for their patients and use the DS70C form to record general treatment provided to each patient.

Each DS70C form has a fixed expiry date. Treatment needs to be completed and the form returned to DHS by this date for the CPDSS clinic to be reimbursed.

Before commencing **any** prosthodontic treatment for a patient, CPDSS clinics are to contact the DHS Subsidy Department to obtain a quote for the amount of subsidy that will be paid by DHS and record these details on the DS70C form.

DHS will **not** reimburse CPDSS clinics for non-periodic general treatment or prosthodontic treatment provided **before** the date of issue of a DS70C.

2.6 Exemptions to the Limits and Rules of the CPDSS

In extenuating circumstances, exemptions to the limits and rules of the CPDSS may be approved by the DHS Subsidy Department:

- Exceeding the limits on the total value of treatment and episodes of emergency care.
- Exceeding the limits on the total value of treatment of general care.
- Obtaining extensions to the expiry date for General Treatment Authority forms.
- Repeating prosthodontic care earlier than the allowed periods (if approved, the amount of subsidy paid by DHS will be on a pro rata/proportional basis).

Requests for exemptions are considered on a case-by-case basis and must be submitted to DHS **before** any relevant expiry date. DHS may require copies of the CPDSS clinic's clinical notes for the patient to approve an exemption.

It is imperative that these types of requests are made before commencing any treatment as DHS will **not** reimburse CPDSS clinics for treatment provided without the necessary approval.

3 Dental Practitioner Participation in the CPDSS

3.1 Locations where CPDSS is Available

The scheme is available to private dental practitioners whose clinics are located more than 25 kilometres from the nearest DHS clinic.

3.2 Registration for the CPDSS

Private dental practitioners wanting to participate in the CPDSS should complete the DHS Application to Participate in Subsidised Dental Program Form.

3.3 Online Resources

There is an online portal for the CPDSS: <https://www.dental.wa.gov.au/ppp>

Private dental practitioners can access this document, relevant forms, the Assessing Reference and fee schedules here.

CPDSS clinics can use the portal to assist with patient administration:

- Checking if patients are already registered and active.
- Determining remaining limits for patients.
- Reviewing reimbursements paid by the CPDSS.

Private dental practitioners unable to access to the online portal can contact DHS for more information.

3.4 Contacting the DHS Subsidy Department

Private dental practitioners may contact the DHS Subsidy Department via:

Email: dhs.subsidy@health.wa.gov.au
 Phone: (08) 9313 0660 or 1800 130 555
 Postal Address: Subsidy Department
 Dental Health Services
 Locked Bag 15
 BENTLEY DELIVERY CENTRE
 WA 6983

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