



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 vision

Improve the health of Western Australians through access to quality oral health services.

Our mission

Deliver high quality, efficient oral health services to eligible populations across WA by:

- Promoting oral health
- Providing people who meet eligibility requirements emergency dental care for the relief of pain
- Providing general dental care for all enrolled school children
- Providing access to general and specialist dental care for financially or geographically eligible people in the community and other special groups of people
- Supporting the training and education of oral health professionals
- Contributing to oral health research

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 who attend 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 centers (DTC) co-located with some schools

General Dental Service

General dental clinics operate throughout the metropolitan area and in country Western Australia. They provide subsidised general and emergency dental care for financially and geographically eligible Western Australians:

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

Special Dental Services

The following dental services are also provided:

- Consenting residents of metropolitan aged care residential facilities who undergo a dental assessment by a visiting dental practitioner
- Prisoners in metropolitan and major rural Department of Corrective Services facilities (generally prison- based clinics)
- Eligible Disability Services Commission clients
- Visiting services to eligible patients at Royal Perth Hospital and Graylands Hospital

Dental Subsidy Schemes

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

- Country Patients Dental Subsidy Scheme (CPDSS): compliments care provided through country public dental clinics and usually operates in locations with no reasonable access to a government dental clinic, in which case DHS approved private dentist are used
- Metropolitan Patients Dental Subsidy Scheme (MPDSS): when funding permits provides opportunity for eligible metropolitan patients on a public dental waiting list to be issued on authority to undergo a course of non-urgent subsidised general dental care at participating private dental practitioners
- Private Orthodontic Subsidy Scheme (POSS) – the POSS 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

Patients receiving emergency or general dental care at a public dental clinic or private dental practitioner who participates in the Dental Subsidy Scheme are charged a fee and will be issued with an account (or the parent/guardian in the case of minors).

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

Treatment obtained 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. The actual level of dental subsidy a person is entitled to is based upon their Centrelink income which is assessed by DHS.

Residents in remote locations

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

For more information

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