

6. Dental services

Dental services are provided by public dental services at no charge and private dentists in Queensland. There are strict criteria you have to meet in order to use free services. You must have a Health Care Card, a Pension Concession Card and/or a Seniors Card. You also need to be a Queensland resident.

Public dental services

- Queensland Health has 520 public dental clinics. To find your nearest public dental clinic look under Queensland Health, Dental (Oral) Health Services in the white pages telephone directory. Alternatively, you can call the 13HEALTH line on **13 43 25 84**
- many clinics have long waiting times for general dental treatment. In some regions the waiting time is more than three years.

Services for adults – free public dental clinics

- adults and their dependents that have one of the following cards issued by Centrelink can use these clinics at no charge:
 - Pension Concession Card
 - Health Care Card
 - Pensioner Concession Card – issued by the Department of Veteran's Affairs
 - Queensland Seniors Card
 - Commonwealth Senior Health Card
- if you do not have one of these cards, you should go to a private dentist.

School dental service

- all Queensland resident children four years of age or older who have not completed year ten at school are eligible for free public dentist services. This service is available for everyone, regardless of their income
- non-emergency dental treatment is provided at schools through fixed or mobile clinics (dental caravans). Schools are treated on a rotational basis. An offer of dental treatment is done by sending home a treatment consent form
- consent forms are given to all students enrolled at the school at the commencement of service within each school
- when a school clinic is closed or unavailable, take your child to the nearest dental clinic for emergency dental treatment.

Private dentists

- when you see a private dentist, you have to pay for the service. Dentists who work privately can be found in many locations throughout Queensland such as suburban areas and shopping centres
- to find a private dentist you can look in the yellow pages telephone directory under 'dentist'
- if you have private health insurance you should check your coverage for dental services. Even if you do have dental coverage, this may not cover all of the fees
- before undergoing major dental work, it is best to ask the dentist for a written estimate of the cost.

Emergency dental treatment

- dental emergency is a situation involving an immediate threat to the person's health including traumatic injury to the teeth or face, prolonged uncontrolled bleeding and swelling of the face
- each Health Service District has its own dental emergency procedures, and people are generally assessed according to need.



Interpreter

Interpreters

- you have a right to a professional interpreter if you need one, when you use a Queensland Health public service
- interpreters can be provided either in person or by phone at no charge
- it is Queensland Health policy to use friends and relatives only in emergency situations. If the friend or relative is less than 18 years old they should not be used as an interpreter under any circumstance
- private dentists may not provide an interpreter unless you pay.

This factsheet is part of a series of 10. The complete set comprises:

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