

Public Dental Services

Information for patients

All patients are prioritised for dental care through a triage system depending on the urgency of their dental needs. This is because public dental services are in high demand and means those with urgent conditions can be seen sooner.

There are waiting lists for patients to be seen under the public dental service. A list of maximum waiting times for dental care can be found in the Oral Health Access Policy Directive.

Am I eligible for public dental services?

To access NSW public dental services, you must be a NSW resident who is eligible for Medicare. You must also be:

- a child under 18 years of age, or
- an adult with one of the following Australian Government concession cards:
 - Health Care Card
 - Pensioner Concession Card
 - Commonwealth Seniors Health Card

If you are not eligible for public dental services, you will need to see a local private dentist. You can find a dentist at: <https://www.adansw.com.au/Community/FindaDentist>

If I am eligible, how do I make an appointment?

Contact your local public dental service to discuss your dental needs. Before you call, please have your **home postcode**, **Medicare** and **Concession Card** details ready.

If you need an interpreter, call the **Translating and Interpreting Services** on **131 450** and ask to be connected to 1800 679 336.

If you have difficulties with hearing or speech, call the **National Relay Service** on **1300 555 727**.

What do I do if I think I need urgent dental care or start to feel worse while waiting for my appointment?

If you are having trouble breathing or think you are experiencing a medical emergency, call **Triple Zero (000)**, or go to your local **Emergency Department**. For all other urgent dental enquiries or if you start to feel worse while waiting for your appointment, please contact your local public dental service as soon as possible.

The public dental service is closed. Who do I call?

If your local public dental service is closed, contact your GP or call healthdirect on 1800 022 222. healthdirect is free and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A nurse will answer your call, ask some questions and connect you with the right care.

If the enquiry can wait, please contact your local public dental service when they reopen

What should I do if I need to cancel or reschedule my appointment?

If you need to cancel or change your appointment, please call the public dental service as soon as possible. Please try to give at least 24 hours' notice.

If you miss your appointment, please call the public dental service as soon as possible. If you continually miss your appointments, you may need to have your dental needs re-assessed.

What if my details change while waiting for my appointment?

Contact your local public dental service as soon as possible to tell them your new details.

Dental services at Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations

Some Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) provide dental care for their patients. Each ACCHO may have different eligibility criteria and appointment processes for their dental programs. Contact your local ACCHO for more information.