

# **SPECIAL CARE DENTAL UNIT INFORMATION FOR REFERRALS**

## **What is the Special Care Dental Unit?**

The unit provides the dental assessment and management of patients whose acute medical treatment, medical condition or chronic condition:

- Impacts on their oral health; and/or
- Is affected by their oral health; and/or
- Poses significant risks for the delivery of routine dental care.

It is not a specialist clinic, and is different from a general dental service because it focuses on treating medically compromised patients. Due to the complexity of the patients' medical conditions it is more appropriate to provide the dental treatment in a supported (acute) setting. The Unit's scope is limited to general dentistry and does not provide specialist oral and maxillo facial services.

The Unit is:

- Accessible to both inpatients and outpatients via referral only (people presenting at the Department of Emergency Medicine for oral health treatment will not be accepted for referral and will be required to contact community dental clinics for treatment).
- A clinical service that aims to (at a minimum) stabilise and maintain the oral health of a patient for an appropriate period until such time that the patient is transferred back to their regular Oral Health Services Tasmania (OHST) clinic or private dentist.

The Units are located in the North West Regional Hospital, Royal Hobart Hospital's Wellington Clinic precinct and Launceston General Hospital.

## **How to refer patients?**

Referrals can be made using the Special Care Dental Services Referral Form - Outpatients.

Hospital inpatient referrals can be made on the Hospital's Consultation Request Form.

Referrals should provide enough detail for the Regional Senior Clinician to assess clinical need and prioritise patients accordingly. The Senior Clinician may determine that the patient does not need to be seen at the Special Care Dental Unit and arrange for the patient to be seen at a community clinic.

Each referral is valid for 3 months from acceptance by OHST. The referral period can be extended at the discretion of OHST Senior Clinicians or Clinical Director. At the end of the referral period, the patient must return to their regular OHST clinic or private dentist.

Email or fax all completed referrals to the relevant regional Oral Health Services Tasmania office; details provided over the page.

For copies of the Special Care Dental Services Referral Forms, please contact Oral Health Services Tasmania on 1300 011 013

**Medical treatments or conditions that may lead to referral include (but are not limited to):**

- Radiation oncology / Head and neck radiotherapy
- Medical oncology (including medications to slow bone metabolism)
- Organ transplant
- Heart valve replacement
- Patients at risk of medication related osteonecrosis of the jaws (MRONJ)
- Poorly controlled diabetes
- Haemophilia or significant coagulopathy
- Hepatitis C
- Confirmed anaphylactic reactions to dental drugs and materials
- Endocrinology
- HIV
- Inpatients of the hospital with dental emergencies, dental infections, or dental condition/s impacting on their recovery.

**Patient Fees**

There is no cost for treatment (excluding dentures) if the patient is:

- under 18 years of age.
- an inpatient of the hospital.

**Subsidised fees apply for all other patients.**

**Patient contact information**

Patients can phone 1300 011 013 for any enquiries or to make changes to booked appointments.

**Contact information:**

Burnie Dental Centre

1 Strahan Street

Burnie 7320

Email: dental.parkside@ths.tas.gov.au

Fax: (03) 6464 1945

Southern Dental Centre

2 Archer Street

New Town 7008

Email: dental.south@ths.tas.gov.au

Fax: (03) 6173 0464

Northern Dental Centre

Kelham Street

Launceston 7250

Email: kelhamstdts@ths.tas.gov.au

Fax: (03) 6777 5130