

## Right to Information Decision

### Right to Information No.: RTI202122-039

#### Information Requested

The information requested:

1. The treatment timeframes for each triage category used by Oral Health Services Tasmania
2. The percentage of patients seen within the treatment timeframes
3. The average waiting time for people removed from the 'General Care' and 'Denture' waiting lists
4. The longest time waited by people removed from the 'General Care' and 'Denture' waiting lists
5. The risk categories applied to the oral health status of children
6. The target visit frequency for children in each risk category and the percentage of targets which are met
7. The average waiting time for people referred to the Oral and Maxillofacial Unit
8. The current expected waiting time for adults who require general anaesthetic in order to received dental treatment
9. The current expected waiting time for children who require general anaesthetic in order to received dental treatment
10. What, if any, prioritisation method is applied to the patient cohort requiring general anaesthetic (both adults and children) and what is the average wait time for each priority level?
11. Information against 1 – 10 above broken down by region.

Time period: financial years 2019-20 and 2020-21

Pursuant to s13(7) of the *Right to Information Act 2009*, the applicant agreed to refine the request as submitted for point 2, 3, 8 and 9.

2. The percentage of adult patients seen within the treatment timeframes
3. The-median waiting time for people removed from the 'General Care' and 'Denture' waiting lists
6. The target visit frequency for children in each risk category and the percentage of targets which are met
8. The median waiting time for adults who require general anaesthetic in order to received dental treatment
9. The median waiting time for children who require general anaesthetic in order to received dental treatment.

## Decision and Statement of Reasons

### I. The treatment timeframes for each triage category used by Oral Health Services Tasmania.

Table I. Treatment timeframes for each triage category. The public authority only triage adults.

Adult Triage Category	Target Treatment Timeframe
Emergency	Same day
P1	2 days
P2	4 weeks

### 2. The percentage of adult patients seen within the treatment timeframes

Table 2. Data collected quarterly. The results presented quarterly, for the state and then for each region. Note, quarters affected by the Covid-19 shutdown and recovery periods show atypical results.

#### STATE-WIDE

JUL19-SEP19	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	383	95%
<b>P1</b>	2766	77%
<b>P2</b>	3753	85%
<b>Total</b>	6902	

OCT19-DEC19	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	316	96%
<b>P1</b>	2724	74%
<b>P2</b>	3247	71%
<b>Total</b>	6287	

JAN20-MAR20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	319	93%
<b>P1</b>	2809	75%
<b>P2</b>	3230	84%
<b>Total</b>	6358	

APR20-JUN20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	461	60%
<b>P1</b>	3441	58%
<b>P2</b>	2079	24%
<b>Total</b>	5981	

JUL20-SEP20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	402	82%
<b>P1</b>	3675	50%
<b>P2</b>	4022	53%
<b>Total</b>	8099	

OCT20 - DEC20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	389	94%
<b>P1</b>	2854	76%
<b>P2</b>	3486	37%
<b>Total</b>	6730	

JAN21-MAR21	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	355	91%
<b>P1</b>	2763	72%
<b>P2</b>	3708	53%
<b>Total</b>	6826	

APR21-JUN21	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	351	95%
<b>P1</b>	2955	78%
<b>P2</b>	3553	61%
<b>Total</b>	6859	

#### NORTH

JUL19-SEP19	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	95	96%
<b>P1</b>	561	84%
<b>P2</b>	1173	93%
<b>Total</b>	1829	

OCT19-DEC19	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*

	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	84	98%
<b>P1</b>	592	78%
<b>P2</b>	1041	68%
<b>Total</b>	1717	

JAN20-MAR20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	101	94%
<b>P1</b>	644	76%
<b>P2</b>	1046	78%
<b>Total</b>	1791	

APR20-JUN20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	131	56%
<b>P1</b>	872	69%
<b>P2</b>	581	29%
<b>Total</b>	1584	

JUL20-SEP20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	114	83%
<b>P1</b>	748	58%
<b>P2</b>	1349	39%
<b>Total</b>	2211	

OCT20 - DEC20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	135	93%
<b>P1</b>	692	72%
<b>P2</b>	986	26%
<b>Total</b>	1813	

JAN21-MAR21	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	136	96%
<b>P1</b>	713	79%
<b>P2</b>	1030	39%
<b>Total</b>	1879	

APR21-JUN21	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	112	95%
<b>P1</b>	679	84%
<b>P2</b>	1009	33%
<b>Total</b>	1800	

#### NORTH-WEST

JUL19-SEP19	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	116	96%
<b>P1</b>	790	75%
<b>P2</b>	1059	91%
<b>Total</b>	1965	

OCT19-DEC19	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	112	98%
<b>P1</b>	802	72%
<b>P2</b>	838	84%
<b>Total</b>	1752	

JAN20-MAR20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*

	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	78	96%
<b>P1</b>	812	78%
<b>P2</b>	872	96%
<b>Total</b>	1762	

APR20-JUN20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	92	95%
<b>P1</b>	833	80%
<b>P2</b>	527	24%
<b>Total</b>	1452	

JUL20-SEP20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	90	97%
<b>P1</b>	1047	68%
<b>P2</b>	963	72%
<b>Total</b>	2100	

OCT20 - DEC20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	88	100%
<b>P1</b>	746	76%
<b>P2</b>	946	78%
<b>Total</b>	1780	

JAN21-MAR21	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	82	95%
<b>P1</b>	759	75%
<b>P2</b>	1055	90%
<b>Total</b>	1896	

APR21-JUN21	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	85	98%
<b>P1</b>	755	70%
<b>P2</b>	1007	96%
<b>Total</b>	1847	

### SOUTH

JUL19-SEP19	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	172	94%
<b>P1</b>	1415	76%
<b>P2</b>	1521	75%
<b>Total</b>	3108	

OCT19-DEC19	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	120	93%
<b>P1</b>	1330	73%
<b>P2</b>	1368	64%
<b>Total</b>	2818	

JAN20-MAR20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	140	91%
<b>P1</b>	1353	72%
<b>P2</b>	1312	80%
<b>Total</b>	2805	

APR20-JUN20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	238	49%
<b>P1</b>	1736	41%
<b>P2</b>	971	20%
<b>Total</b>	2945	

JUL20-SEP20		
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	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	198	75%
<b>P1</b>	1880	36%
<b>P2</b>	1710	54%
<b>Total</b>	3788	

OCT20 - DEC20	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	166	90%
<b>P1</b>	1416	78%
<b>P2</b>	1554	20%
<b>Total</b>	3136	

JAN21-MAR21	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	137	84%
<b>P1</b>	1291	67%
<b>P2</b>	1623	39%
<b>Total</b>	3051	

APR21-JUN21	Total Triage records	% reached target for total triage records*
<b>Emergency</b>	154	94%
<b>P1</b>	1521	79%
<b>P2</b>	1537	57%
<b>Total</b>	3212	



### 3. The median waiting time for people removed from the 'General Care' and 'Denture' waiting lists

Table 3. The 2019-20 and 2020-21 data recording the median time for people removed from the General Care and Denture waiting lists. Note that both financial years involved months that were affected by the Covid 19 shutdown, or recovery period.

#### General Care

2019-2020	Total removed from W/L	Median (days)	Median (months)
<b>State-wide</b>	2392	662	21.8
<b>North</b>	620	668	22.0
<b>North-West</b>	138	346.5	11.4
<b>South</b>	1634	663	21.8

2020-2021	Total removed from W/L	Median (days)	Median (months)
<b>State-wide</b>	392	854	28.1
<b>North</b>	192	1127	37.1
<b>North-West</b>	136	331.5	10.9
<b>South</b>	64	395.5	13.0

#### Prosthetic (Denture) Care

2019-2020	Total removed from W/L	Median (days)	Median (months)
<b>State-wide</b>	574	90	3.0
<b>North</b>	82	160	5.3
<b>North-West</b>	280	69	2.3
<b>South</b>	212	92.5	3.0

2020-2021	Total removed from W/L	Median (days)	Median (months)
<b>State-wide</b>	938	187	6.1
<b>North</b>	185	126	4.1
<b>North-West</b>	394	194	6.4
<b>South</b>	359	205	6.7

### 4. The longest time waited by people on the 'General Care' and 'Denture Care' services waiting list.

The public authority is not able to report on this request in a meaningful/accurate way. The reason being that clients who do not respond to offers of dental care from the waiting lists (eg they did not reply to letters, phone calls or SMSs) but later present for care at a clinic are then restored to the waiting list at their original listing date. Such circumstances, in a reporting sense, results in longer times between date of listing and date of coming off the list. The database queries can partially exclude clients who have been restored to the waiting list after a period of being removed due to not responding to offers of care in some cases but not all. This means it is not possible to determine the longest waiting time of clients who have not had some instance of being uncontactable or removed from the list.

## 5. The risk categories applied to the oral health status of children.

Table 4: There is no formal definition for what constitutes a high, medium or low risk child, as these risk categories are set by the Clinician using a clinical judgement, after taking into account various factors, including but not limited to dmft score (decayed, missing, filled teeth), recent decay activity, oral hygiene habits, dietary habits, previous attendance history, family history, various social determinants, and so on.

Child Risk Category	Target Timeframe
High Risk	Patient to have a dental check-up every 6 months
Medium Risk	Patient to have a dental check-up every 12 months
Low Risk	Patient to have a dental check-up every 18 months

## 6. The target visit frequency for children in each risk category and the percentage of targets which are met

As noted under request 5, the risk status is determined by the Clinician at the exam appointment. There is no uniformity applied for the risk category as it is reliant on the professional judgement of the Clinician. The information is not listed as the data is inaccurate due to the broad interpretation adopted for the risk categories and clients who do not respond to offers of dental care.

## 7. The average waiting time for people referred to the Oral Maxillofacial Unit.

Table 5. Average (median) days waited on wait list for Oral Maxillo Facial Surgery (Median across the year in days)

Fin Year	Patient's Post Code Region	Urgency Category 1 (procedure is advisable within 30 days)	Urgency Category 2 (procedure is advisable within 90 days)	Urgency Category 3 (procedure is advisable within 365 days)	All Categories
2019-20	North	17	232	204	<b>208</b>
2019-20	North West	7	230	353	<b>262</b>
2019-20	South	14	267	335	<b>281</b>
2019-20	Unknown	-	118	-	<b>118</b>
2019-20	<b>Statewide</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>269</b>
2020-21	North	23	244	512	<b>334</b>
2020-21	North West	20	400	282	<b>339</b>
2020-21	South	11	393	427	<b>376</b>
2020-21	<b>Statewide</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>363</b>

## 8. The median waiting time for adults who require general anaesthetic in order to receive dental treatment

Table 6. The results are the median number of days waited by clients currently on the waitlist (as at end September 2021). Note, this is clients currently waiting, not clients removed from the waiting list.

ADULT	Median (days)
State-wide	522.5
North	409
North-West	185
South	578

## 9. The median waiting time for children who require general anaesthetic in order to receive dental treatment.

Table 7. The results are the median number of days waited by clients currently on the waitlist (as at end September 2021). Note, this is clients currently waiting, not clients removed from the waiting list.

CHILD	Median (days)
State-wide	135.5
North	195
North-West	38
South	144

## 10. What, if any, prioritisation method is applied to the patient cohort requiring general anaesthetic (both adults and children) and what is the median waiting time for each priority level.

Table 8. Priorities for general anaesthetic waitlists are a clinical decision made by the clinician assessing the client. Categorisation of the priorities differs across the regions, as in the North and NW Oral Health Services manages the waitlist whereas in the South the Royal Hobart Hospital manages the dental GA waitlist and therefore use their own naming convention. For the purposes of this report, the categories have been grouped and renamed “Urgent” and “Non-Urgent” for the sake of consistency across the regions.

The below results are the median number of days waited by clients currently on the waitlist (as at end September 2021) – not the days waited by clients removed from the waiting list.

### ADULTS

STATE-WIDE	Median (days)
Urgent	68.5
Non-urgent	585

NORTH	Median (days)
Urgent	no clients currently waiting
Non-urgent	195

NORTH-WEST	Median (days)
Urgent	71
Non-urgent	188

SOUTH	Median (days)
Urgent	67
Non-urgent	721

## CHILDREN

STATE-WIDE	Median (days)
<b>Urgent</b>	29
<b>Non-urgent</b>	187.5

NORTH	Median (days)
<b>Urgent</b>	no clients currently waiting
<b>Non-urgent</b>	195

NORTH-WEST	Median (days)
<b>Urgent</b>	no clients currently waiting
<b>Non-urgent</b>	38

SOUTH	Median (days)
<b>Urgent</b>	29
<b>Non-urgent</b>	202

### **11. Information against 1 – 10 above broken down by region.**

Refer to the information listed under each request.