

## Guidelines for referrals of Refugees and Asylum Seekers to Queensland Health Dental Services

Office of the Chief Dental Officer

Queensland Health Dental Services are provided through public dental clinics across Queensland. These include hospital, community, fixed school and mobile dental clinics.

Queensland Health Dental Services aim to reduce the burden of dental disease in the Refugee and Asylum Seeker population through the provision of public dental services.

These guidelines aim to assist agency staff in the process of:

- referring Refugees and Asylum Seekers to Queensland Health Dental Services; and
- accessing treatment for these groups at a dental clinic.

### 1. Eligibility

#### People who are Refugees:

Refugees are eligible for Medicare and a Health Care Card and are therefore eligible for publicly funded Queensland Government dental clinics.

#### People who are Asylum Seekers:

Asylum Seekers do not meet the normal eligibility criteria for public oral health services. However, under the *2006 FMPM Circular 01/2006 – 'Public Hospital Services for Medicare Ineligible Asylum Seekers in Queensland'*, health fees are automatically written off on the basis of financial hardship. Under this guideline Asylum Seekers are entitled to public dental services within the first 12 months of arriving in Queensland and then based on meeting current eligibility criteria.

### 2. Service Provision

Queensland Health dental clinics accept referrals from agencies that provide support to Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers, including both adults and children, are entitled to one priority general course of care (including specialist services) in Queensland public adult or school based dental clinics within the first 12 months of arrival in Queensland.

The treatment provided consists of a full mouth examination and any treatment identified by the treating health practitioner. Treatment may include cleaning, restorations, extractions, prosthetics and any specialist dental treatment that is considered normal practice.

If client eligibility expires before the completion of their course of care, the course of care will be completed.

### 3. How to make a referral to Queensland Health Dental Services

1. Telephone the closest Queensland Health dental clinic to your location to establish contact details of the local public dental clinic that provides this service. The telephone and fax numbers for Queensland Health public dental clinics can be found at [http://www.health.qld.gov.au/oralhealth/services/dental\\_clinics.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/oralhealth/services/dental_clinics.asp) or under **Queensland Health, Dental (Oral) Health Services** in the white pages.

2. Complete the relevant referral form and email or fax the form to the public dental clinic providing the service;

- to refer a refugee please complete the 'Refugee Referral form'
- to refer an Asylum Seeker please complete the 'Asylum Seeker Referral form',

When completing the form, please ensure:

- only one person's details are entered on each referral form,
- the correct form is used for each referral,
- all information required is completed, and
- the relevant form is faxed or emailed to the public dental clinic providing the service.

The public dental clinic will provide an appointment as soon as possible and will confirm the client's appointment time and date via fax or e-mail. The dental clinic will also post an appointment confirmation letter to the client.

*\* Local communication processes may need to be adopted to suit local needs.*

3. Please provide a copy of the referral form to the client for presentation at the public dental clinic on their arrival for their allocated appointment.

#### 4. What clients need to know about their appointment with Queensland Health Dental Services?

- the public dental clinic will inform the referring agency of the appointment date and time;
- refugees must present their Health Care Card on arrival at the public dental clinic,
- if continuing treatment is required, further appointments will be made with the client at the dental clinic following their initial appointment; and
- on completion of the course of care, the client may be placed on a wait list for future examination subject to eligibility requirements. (See section 1 – Eligibility)

#### 5. Emergency Treatment

If the client is in need of an immediate dental emergency\* appointment, please contact the local dental clinic to access their emergency service.

\*A dental emergency is defined by Queensland Health Dental Services as:

- trauma including loss of function;
- swelling;
- uncontrolled bleeding; or
- infection.

For more information

- Contact your dental professional
- Visit [www.health.qld.gov.au/oralhealth](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/oralhealth)
- Call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) for confidential health advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Email [oral\\_health@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:oral_health@health.qld.gov.au).

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