Background:

Papua New Guinea nationals and traditional inhabitants from Australia who reside in the Torres Strait Protected Zone or in the 13 treaty coastal villages in and adjacent to the Torres Strait enjoy free movement in order to pursue traditional activities. This movement has been allowed through *The Torres Strait Treaty* which states that parties should act ‘in the spirit of mutual friendship and good neighbourliness’.

Papua New Guinea nationals are able to access services from the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area Health Service District in the Torres Strait Protected Zone whilst in the course of conducting traditional activities. Provision for this is sanctioned under the Queensland Health Policy – Management of Papua New Guinea Nationals presenting to Queensland Health facilities in the Torres Strait. (Currently under review)

Rationale:

Due to the inability for timely and appropriate care to be arranged in Papua New Guinea health facilities and in the event of health needs of a serious nature and immediacy, Papua New Guinea nationals can receive emergency oral health treatment and care through the Torres Strait Northern Peninsular District Oral Health Service.

Service Provision:

Papua New Guinea nationals presenting at Queensland Health Oral Health Service facilities located on the outer islands of the Torres Strait Protected Zone are eligible only to receive immediate emergency oral health care.

Papua New Guinea children will receive emergency care through the Child and Adolescent Oral Health Service (CAOHS) and access treatment in the same way as an adult. All patients are to receive emergency care only and are not to be placed on any waiting lists for further treatment.

Process for Provision of Service:

Outpatients: Clients will seek emergency treatment from the District Oral Health Service staff on the island they are currently visiting.

- No appointment is required to receive treatment.
- Clients are treated by the oral health professional for any immediate emergency work that is required.
- No follow up appointments are given.
- If further emergency work is needed, the client should present to the District Oral Health Service on another occasion.

Inpatients: Papua New Guinea nationals who are inpatients of the Thursday Island Hospital (or other Queensland public hospitals if the
treatment required is out of the scope of the Thursday Island Hospital) are eligible to receive emergency oral health treatment prior to their discharge if it is deemed necessary to their overall health care. The treatment will be coordinated with the District Oral Health Service through the medical staff of the hospital providing treatment to the Papua New Guinea national.

Data Collection:

Funding of Papua New Guinea nationals receiving treatment is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. Consequently, correct reporting of this group in Information System for Oral Health (ISOH) is important for full cost recovery.

The oral health team must record within ISOH the correct ID type for the purpose of accurate historical data and to facilitate full cost recovery from the Commonwealth government.

For registration of the client in ISOH, the appropriate ID and eligibility must be entered into the ID section of the client's record.

- **ID Type** = Other
- **ID Number** = PNG

For more information

- Contact your dental professional
- 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).