

Public Dental Services

Information for referrers

Routine referrals to the public dental service

Before referring a patient, first check that they meet the eligibility criteria. Eligible patients can self-refer by contacting their local public dental service or you can refer a patient to the public dental service by contacting the service on behalf of the patient. All patients are triaged and prioritised for care depending on how urgent their dental needs are.

Some patient groups have specific referral pathways, please contact the patient's local public dental service to check if this applies and whether there is a specific referral form to fill out.

Patients who are not eligible should be advised to contact their preferred private dental provider.

Urgent referrals to the public dental service

If the patient requires urgent medical attention, call **Triple Zero (000)**, or advise the patient to go to their local **Emergency Department**.

If the patient is eligible for public dental services, please contact the local public dental service as soon as possible.

Urgent referrals for a dental check prior to receiving life-saving care

Patients who require urgent dental review prior to receiving specific life-saving care, for example, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, an organ transplant, or open-heart surgery, should be urgently referred to the public dental service by their medical specialist. Please contact a local public dental service directly.

What information do I need to include in the referral?

If the Local Health District or Specialty Network has a specific referral form, please ensure all relevant patient details and clinical information are included in the referral. This will include patient demographics, relevant medical and dental history, the reason for referral and details of the referring service.

What should I do if I need to update a referral or provide additional information?

If there are any changes to the patient's condition or there is additional information that needs to be provided, contact the public dental service as soon as possible.