

Dentists - Frequently Asked Questions

Do you need a dentist?

Our Service can provide you with information on dental services in Wales, including how to access dental services, to identify whether you are a registered or unregistered, how to find dental treatments in an emergency and information on dental charges. Simply call us on 0845 46 47 and speak to a Health Information Adviser or use our dental search facility online.

How do I register?

It is always best to telephone the dental practice first to see if they are able or willing to make an appointment for you and register you as an NHS Dentist. When you are registered with an NHS Dentist you are entitled to:

- A written estimate and treatment plan that details NHS treatment and any private treatment you have agreed
- A practice information leaflet
- All treatment necessary to secure and maintain oral health
- Free repair or replacement of certain treatments that fail within a year
- Advice and, where necessary, treatment in an emergency
- A national set of charges
- A maximum charge per course of treatment
- Free or reduced cost treatment for some groups of patients
- For some patients, an examination and sometimes care provided at home
- Access to a formal complaints procedure
- Private treatment that is alternative to, or in addition to, NHS treatment.

Can I register for NHS or Private Care?

At the outset your dentist will agree with you whether your treatment will be under the NHS, or private, or a mixture of both. If you are not sure at any time, do not hesitate to ask your dentists or receptionist.



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Can my dentist change from being an NHS to Private Dentist?

What is the Community Dental Service (CDS)?

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Will I have to pay for treatment?

You may be entitled to partial exemption of payment for treatment on the NHS if you are in one of the following categories, however examinations are free:

- You are under 25 years of age
- Age 60 years of age or over
- NHS Examinations and treatment are free if:
 - You are under 18, or are a full-time student under 19
 - You or your partner are getting the following benefits:
 - Income Support
 - Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance
 - Full Working Families Tax Credit, and you are named on an NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate
 - Disabled persons tax credit
- You are expecting a baby when treatment starts, or you have had a baby in the last 12 months
- You are named on an NHS certificate for full help with health costs

For those not entitled to free treatment:

Before treatment begins, your dentist will discuss the procedures that are required and the probable cost. Your dentist must give you a written treatment plan and estimate of the cost of the treatment if:

- You ask for one at any time
- You are seeing that dentist for the first time
- You are considering having all or part of your treatment carried out privately
- You are having a relatively long or complicated course of treatment

Sometimes, particularly for extensive or complicated treatment, it is not possible for this initial estimate to be completely accurate because some alternative or additional procedures may become necessary during the course of treatment. Your dentist will discuss changes to the estimate with you before undertaking the treatment.

When you pay for your treatment you will be given a receipt. Your dentist will discuss methods of payment with you. The dentist is entitled to ask you to pay before you receive your treatment. Your dentist may make a charge for a broken appointment if you do not give reasonable notice.

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What do I do if I need emergency treatment and I am not registered?

You should try arranging an appointment with a dentist. To find a dentist in your area you can either look in Yellow Pages or telephone NHS Direct Wales on 0845 46 47 for information and advice.

What do I do if I need treatment in an emergency when the surgery is closed?

If you are a registered patient, your dentist must have arrangements in place for you to receive telephone advice, and treatment if necessary. If an emergency arises outside normal surgery hours you can contact NHS Direct Wales for advice.

What is a Dental emergency?

The following are classed as emergencies:

- Dental bleeding that will not stop
- Acute Spreading infection (Swelling of the lip, tongue, cheek or gum)
- Damage to teeth or jaws as a result of accident

Toothache, no matter how bad, is not classed as a dental emergency.

If you would like advice on pain relief telephone NHS Direct Wales on 0845 46 47 or contact your dentist.

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How do I make a complaint about my Dentist?

If you wish to make a complaint about the care or service provided by your dentist or dental practice, contact the person responsible for the practice complaints procedure. You may make the complaint verbally or in writing. Your dentist will try to resolve your complaint at this stage. If the complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction then contact your local Community Health Council for advice.

If your complaint is still unresolved the next step in the procedure is to contact the Complaints Manager at your Local Health Board. For further information on complaints procedures or contact details for your Local Health Boards please contact NHS Direct Wales 0845 46 47.

Can my dentist change from being an NHS to Private Dentist?

Yes, dentists are independent practitioners so they can change from being an NHS to a Private dentist. As an NHS patient you are entitled to 3 months notice prior to the change over. It is up to you whether you decide to stay with your dentist and pay privately or re-register with an alternative NHS Dentist.

What is the Community Dental Service (CDS)?

CDS provides treatment for people who may not otherwise seek or receive dental care, such as people with learning disabilities, elderly housebound people, people with mental or physical health problems or other disabling conditions which prevent them from visiting a family dentist/General Dental Practitioner.



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