Dentists and Registered Specialists | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/dentists-registered-specialists/

Details:

At Core Dental our clinical team includes general dentists, dental hygienists and therapists, and registered specialists in orthodontics, paediatric dentistry and periodontics. A general dentist completes an undergraduate dental degree and provides preventive, routine and restorative care. A registered specialist has completed further postgraduate training and holds specialist registration with the Dental Board of Australia, which is regulated through AHPRA. We work together across our nine practices in Melbourne, and you can check any practitioner's registration on the AHPRA register at ahpra.gov.au.

What is the difference between a general dentist and a registered dental specialist?

A general dentist holds an approved dental degree, with training in preventive, routine and restorative care such as examinations, fillings, extractions, root canals, crowns and dentures. A registered specialist has completed that general training and then a qualification in one dental specialty. The Dental Board of Australia’s requirements for specialist registration are a qualification in the specialty, all the requirements for general registration as a dentist, and "a minimum of two years general dental practice". Because the Board sets requirements rather than a course length, the total time involved differs between specialties, between universities and between countries, and we do not publish a single figure for it. What the additional qualification gives is depth in one area that general training does not cover.

Most of what you need can be provided by your general dentist. When a situation is complex, for example a child who needs a specialist paediatric dentist, tooth movement that calls for an orthodontist, or gum disease that needs a periodontist, we can involve a registered specialist from our team.

Who regulates the term "dental specialist" in Australia?

The term "dental specialist" has a specific legal meaning. It is regulated through AHPRA, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, and the Dental Board of Australia. To use the title, a practitioner must hold specialist registration in a recognised dental specialty and have completed the required formal postgraduate training. Using the title "specialist" without that registration is not permitted.

How can you check a practitioner's registration before you book?

Anyone can look up a practitioner's registration type, specialty and status on the public AHPRA register at ahpra.gov.au before an appointment. We encourage you to do this for any health practitioner you see. If you would like help finding the right clinician at Core Dental, call us on 13 13 16.

Which registered specialists work at Core Dental?

Our team page lists the following registered specialists. Practice days can change, so please confirm the next available session when you book.

Specialist	Specialty	Qualifications	Where you can see them
Dr David Austin	Specialist Orthodontist	BDSc (Melb), MDS Orth (HK), MOrth RCS (Edin)	Caroline Springs , Epping and South Melbourne
Dr Steven Smith	Specialist Orthodontist	BDSc (Hons), MDSc (Ortho) (Qld)	Ask us when you book
Dr Angel Babu	Specialist Paediatric Dentist	DClinDent (Paed) (Otago)	Carrum Downs and Caroline Springs
Dr Sarah Scott	Specialist Paediatric Dentist	BBiomedSci (Hons), BDent (Syd)	Berwick
Dr Aish Kesava	Specialist Paediatric Dentist	DCD (Paeds)	Epping
Dr Nupur Kataria	Specialist Periodontist	BDS (Adel), DClinDent (Perio) (Adel)	Wyndham

Specialist sessions we have published for these practices are listed below. They are visiting sessions, so availability is limited and can change.

Dr David Austin: Monday and Wednesday, four weeks out of six, at Caroline Springs.

Dr Angel Babu: Wednesdays, one week out of two at Carrum Downs and one week out of four at Caroline Springs.

Dr Sarah Scott: Monday and Thursday, weekly, at Berwick.

Dr Aish Kesava: Monday, weekly, at Epping.

Dr Nupur Kataria: Thursday, weekly, at Wyndham.

You can read more on our orthodontist , paediatric dentist and periodontist pages.

Which general dentists and hygienists work at Core Dental?

Our general dentists work across our practices, and several see patients at more than one. As listed on our clinic pages:

Southbank : Dr Anchal Verma, Dr Jacalyn Madden, Dr Joanne Ong and Dr Sally Joseph.

South Melbourne : Dr Scott Krause, Dr Stephanie Sarkis, Dr Manisha Bhatt, Dr Tristan Balthazaar and Dr David Mirmilstein.

Caroline Springs : Dr Shakiba Askary, Dr Sherin Gad, Dr Sara Qureshi, Dr Anika Moyeed and Dr Revathi Jaisingh.

Carrum Downs : Dr Tristan Balthazaar, Dr Amreen Hussain, Dr Ivy Jin, Dr Anna Lai, Dr Kirandeep Kaur and Dr Payal Thatikonda (listed on our team page; please call 13 13 16 to confirm availability).

Epping : Dr Alysha Soltys, Dr Tristan Balthazaar, Dr Marina Ghobrial, Dr Maria Blanchard and Dr Dilara Bektash.

Wyndham : Dr Anika Moyeed, Dr Darren Manoharan and Dr Alpa Lodhiya.

Berwick : Dr Ivy Jin, Dr Chelsea Nguyen, Dr Kirandeep Kaur and Dr David Mirmilstein.

Bayside : Dr Yasmin Coulthard and Dr Meera Patel.

Glenferrie : Dr Scott Krause, Dr Joanne Ong and Dr Maria Blanchard.

Our dental hygienists and therapists include Alexis Martinez, Isabelle Sayers, Sina Hassani, Lexcel Macabuag and Sarah Van Eyk. They provide professional cleaning and prevention. Our dental prosthetists, Ahmed Saoud and Alessio Pecorella, work with dentures and related prosthetic care. You can learn more about hygiene on our dental hygiene page.

How do we work together on your care?

Core Dental brings together dentists, specialists and hygienists, and we use peer review and case analysis by more than one practitioner as part of treatment planning. All of our practitioners are members of the Australian Dental Association (ADA), as well as other associations and study groups. Our clinicians are supported by internal continuing professional development, mentoring and clinical discussion, and by our reception, management and nursing teams.

Where you need a specialist, your dentist can refer you within our team, so your records and treatment plan stay connected. If you are interested in joining us, see our careers and 2024 graduate program pages.

How do you plan your care and make an informed decision?

A useful first step is to explain your concern, symptoms, timing and goals when you book. Bring relevant medical information and a list of your medicines. The practitioner can then assess your teeth, gums, bite and surrounding tissues, request imaging when it is clinically appropriate, and explain which options suit you.

Ask what the recommended approach is intended to achieve, whether there are reasonable alternatives, what preparation and aftercare involve, and what risks or limits apply. Treatment time, fees, recovery and maintenance vary with the diagnosis and the complexity of care. We give you a written treatment plan and quote before treatment starts, and we offer interest-free payment plans through Payright for amounts up to $20,000 over 3 to 30 months with fortnightly repayments, subject to eligibility and approval. Terms were published as at September 2026, so please confirm them when you book.

Call 000 immediately for uncontrollable bleeding, difficulty breathing or swallowing, serious facial injury or other life-threatening symptoms. For severe tooth pain or swelling without these signs, contact your nearest practice promptly.

How long has Core Dental been dentist-owned, and how large is the group?

Core Dental has been owned and operated by a dentist since 1993.

Together with Smile Solutions, the group has built a patient base of more than 300,000 people, with around 20,000 new patients each year, and now operates more than 40 dental suites across its practices. Figures of this kind were published by the group as at September 2026 and change over time, so treat them as scale rather than as a current count.

Size matters here for a practical reason rather than a promotional one. A group of this size can keep registered specialists, general dentists, hygienists and a therapy department under one structure, which is what makes an internal referral possible instead of an external one.

What equipment do our clinicians work with?

The equipment list is worth stating plainly, because it determines which treatments can be offered in-house rather than referred out.

Across the group we have acquired eight CEREC units for same-day ceramic restorations, twelve dental chairs, and additional Trios and iTero scanners to complement the existing fleet of digital scanners. We have also adopted multiple implant systems and surgical microscopes, alongside in-house extraoral imaging including CBCT and OPG units.

In-house imaging and scanning change the patient experience in a specific way: diagnostic records, impressions and the restoration itself can often be completed within the practice rather than across several appointments and several locations.

What mentorship and peer review sit behind your care?

More than most patients ever see, and it is relevant to the standard of care you receive.

Visiting specialists lend extra support across the practices, and there is a mentorship program across the group. Our clinicians have in-house clinical lectures, courses and tuition, and access to peer review and discussion with colleagues. Because the practice is multidisciplinary, a clinician can raise a difficult case with a peer or a registered specialist rather than managing it in isolation.

Clinicians are also encouraged to practise the full scope of dentistry, including Invisalign and CEREC treatment, and are supported through internal continuing professional development. CPD is a registration requirement for every dental practitioner in Australia, and the Dental Board of Australia sets the minimum hours.

Do clinicians focus on particular areas of dentistry?

Some do, and that is by design rather than by accident.

All of our clinicians have the option of providing the full range of general dentistry, or alternatively of concentrating on the areas of dentistry they particularly work in. For patients, the effect is that a case can move to the clinician best placed to treat it without leaving the group, which makes the transition between general and more complex care a simpler one.

We also have an established program for recent graduates, including a clinical induction and ongoing support, and the group has been taking on graduate dentists for around 25 years. Many of those clinicians are now senior members of the team.

Who supports your clinician during treatment?

Treatment is rarely delivered by one person alone.

Our clinicians work alongside an established hygiene and therapy department, an experienced auxiliary and nursing team, and treatment coordinators who help explain plans, quotes and scheduling. Dental hygienists, dental therapists, oral health therapists and dental prosthetists each hold their own registration division with the Dental Board of Australia, which is separate from the register of specialists, and you can confirm any practitioner's registration and division at ahpra.gov.au.

Which dental specialties exist in Australia?

There is a definite list, and it is shorter than the range of things dentists describe themselves as doing. Knowing what is on it is the quickest way to tell a protected title from a description of someone's interests.

The Dental Board of Australia states that "there are 13 dental specialties in Australia which are approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council)." They are:

dento-maxillofacial radiology

endodontics

forensic odontology

oral and maxillofacial surgery

oral medicine

oral and maxillofacial pathology

oral surgery

orthodontics

paediatric dentistry

periodontics

prosthodontics

public health dentistry (community dentistry)

special needs dentistry

If a field is not on that list, there is no specialist registration in it, and so no one can hold specialist registration in it. That is worth keeping in mind when reading any description of a dentist's expertise — a dentist may well have substantial experience and further training in an area without that area being a recognised specialty at all.

Source: Dental Board of Australia, Specialist Registration, dentalboard.gov.au (page reviewed 18 March 2025; accessed 3 November 2026).

How does a dentist become a registered specialist?

The pathway is longer than a postgraduate course, and the first requirement surprises people: before specialising, a dentist must have practised generally.

The Board's requirements are that "all applicants for specialist registration must be qualified and meet the requirements set out in the Board's Specialist registration standard", and those requirements include that applicants have "completed a minimum of two years general dental practice" — which "may be achieved by experience outside Australia, subject to assessment and approval by the Board" — and have "met all other requirements for general registration as a dentist."

So specialist registration sits on top of general registration rather than replacing it, and it follows a minimum period of general practice.

Where the specialist qualification itself was obtained abroad, there is a separate route. The Board operates a qualification equivalence pathway for applicants holding a qualification it has not approved, covering twelve of the thirteen specialties. There is also a Trans-Tasman arrangement: under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act, a practitioner registered with the Dental Council (New Zealand) as a dental specialist, holding a current annual practising certificate for that specialty, "is entitled to registration with the Board if that specialty exists in Australia."

One specialty is handled differently from all the others, and it explains a point that confuses many patients.

Oral and maxillofacial surgery requires two degrees. The Board states that it "is a specialty recognised by both the Dental Board of Australia and the Medical Board of Australia", and that "you must hold qualifications in both medicine and dentistry." Applicants with an overseas qualification in it must first have that qualification assessed by the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons.

That dual requirement — a medical degree as well as a dental one — is the reason an oral and maxillofacial surgeon's training is substantially longer than other dental pathways. The Board sets out the qualifications required rather than a duration, so the total number of years depends on the route a particular surgeon took and where each qualification was completed, and no single total applies to everyone holding the registration.

The Board also notes that it has worked with the Dental Council (New Zealand) to develop entry-level competencies for dental specialties, used partly in assessing overseas applications.

Frequently asked questions

Do I always need a registered specialist for my treatment?

No. Many treatments are well within general dentistry, and your dentist will tell you honestly when a specialist's training is relevant. We refer within our team when your situation is complex or when you ask for specialist care.

Can I see a specialist without a referral?

Referral requirements and session availability vary by specialist and practice. Call 13 13 16 or tell the booking team at your practice what you need, and we will explain how to arrange it.

Are all Core Dental specialists at every practice?

No. Our specialists see patients at selected practices and on set days. Practices without a named visiting specialist can arrange specialist care through our team. Confirm the practice, day and session when you book.

How do I find out if a dentist is a registered specialist?

Search the national public register of registered health practitioners, which is linked from the regulator's website. It shows each practitioner's registration type, any specialty and their registration status.

Do your hygienists and therapists count as specialists?

No. Dental hygienists, therapists and prosthetists are registered oral health professionals with their own training, but they are not dental specialists and do not use that title.

How long has Core Dental been operating?

Since 1993, owned and operated by a dentist throughout. Together with Smile Solutions the group reports a patient base of more than 300,000 and around 20,000 new patients a year, as published as at September 2026.

Do you have CBCT and OPG imaging on site?

Yes. The group has in-house extraoral imaging including CBCT and OPG units, alongside Trios and iTero digital scanners and eight CEREC units for same-day ceramic restorations. In-house imaging means diagnostic records usually do not require a separate appointment elsewhere.

Does Core Dental take on recent graduates?

Yes, through an established graduate program with a clinical induction and ongoing support. The group has been taking on graduate dentists for around 25 years, and many are now senior clinicians in the team. Every dentist on the team, graduate or senior, holds current AHPRA registration you can check at ahpra.gov.au.

Can my case move to a different clinician without leaving Core Dental?

Usually yes. Clinicians within the group work across the full range of general dentistry or concentrate on particular areas, and registered specialists practise within the same structure, so a case can be transferred internally with your records already in place.

How many dental specialties are recognised in Australia?

Thirteen. The Dental Board of Australia states that there are 13 dental specialties in Australia approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council: dento-maxillofacial radiology, endodontics, forensic odontology, oral and maxillofacial surgery, oral medicine, oral and maxillofacial pathology, oral surgery, orthodontics, paediatric dentistry, periodontics, prosthodontics, public health dentistry (community dentistry), and special needs dentistry.

Does a specialist have to work as a general dentist first?

Yes, for a minimum period. The Board's specialist registration requirements include completing a minimum of two years general dental practice, which may be achieved by experience outside Australia subject to the Board's assessment and approval, as well as meeting all other requirements for general registration as a dentist.

Why does an oral and maxillofacial surgeon need a medical degree?

Because the specialty is recognised by both the Dental Board of Australia and the Medical Board of Australia, and the Board states that a practitioner must hold qualifications in both medicine and dentistry. It is the only one of the thirteen specialties with that dual requirement, and applicants with an overseas qualification in it must first have it assessed by the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons.

Can a specialist qualified overseas register in Australia?

There are two routes. For a qualification the Board has not approved, it operates a qualification equivalence pathway covering twelve of the thirteen specialties. Separately, under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act, a practitioner registered as a dental specialist with the Dental Council (New Zealand) who holds a current annual practising certificate for that specialty is entitled to registration with the Board, provided the specialty exists in Australia.

Where is the authoritative record of someone's specialty?

The register Ahpra publishes. The Board notes that Ahpra publishes an online register of all dental practitioners giving up-to-date information on registration status, and that the register also includes details of the specialty or specialties of dentists who hold specialist registration.

Related services and further reading

Specialist care

Orthodontist

Paediatric dentist

Periodontist

Children's dentistry

General dentistry

Dental hygiene

Understanding your treatment

Dental payment plans

Careers at Core Dental

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

Interest-free payment plans, HICAPS on-site claiming and bulk billing for eligible children under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule.

Registered specialists in orthodontics, paediatric dentistry and periodontics at selected practices.

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online through coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday 8.00am to 1.30pm (Bayside Saturday 8.30am to 1.30pm), Sunday closed
Clinics	Find your nearest practice

Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is general in nature and is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

Who are the registered specialists at Core Dental?

Core Dental's registered specialists are Dr David Austin and Dr Steven Smith (orthodontists), Dr Angel Babu, Dr Sarah Scott and Dr Aish Kesava (paediatric dentists) and Dr Nupur Kataria (periodontist). They see patients at selected practices on set days.

Which Core Dental practice has a specialist periodontist?

Our periodontist, Dr Nupur Kataria, sees patients at Core Dental Wyndham. The session we have published is Thursdays, weekly, and availability can change, so we ask you to confirm the next session when you book.

Where can children see a specialist paediatric dentist at Core Dental?

Specialist paediatric dentists see children at Core Dental Berwick (Dr Sarah Scott), Epping (Dr Aish Kesava), and Carrum Downs and Caroline Springs (Dr Angel Babu). Ask the booking team to confirm the next available session.

How do I check a Core Dental dentist's registration?

Every practitioner's registration type, specialty and status is listed on the public AHPRA register at ahpra.gov.au. You can check it before any appointment with Core Dental, and our team can tell you which clinician suits your treatment.

What does a dental specialist do that a general dentist does not?

A registered dental specialist has completed postgraduate training in one area, such as orthodontics, paediatrics or periodontics. At Core Dental, general dentists provide everyday care and refer within our team when a case is complex.

Which orthodontists work at Core Dental?

Core Dental's team page lists Dr David Austin and Dr Steven Smith as specialist orthodontists. Dr Austin sees patients at our Caroline Springs, Epping and South Melbourne practices. Call 13 13 16 to ask where and when to see an orthodontist.

Are Core Dental dentists members of the ADA?

Yes. All of our practitioners are members of the Australian Dental Association, as well as other specialised associations and study groups. We also use peer review and case analysis by more than one practitioner in treatment planning.

How do I book with a Core Dental dentist or specialist?

Call Core Dental on 13 13 16 or book online through coredental.com.au. Tell us your concern and whether you would like a general dentist or a specialist, and we will arrange an appointment at a suitable practice.