Procedures Performed in a Dental Hospital | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/procedures-performed-dental-hospital/

Details:

A dental hospital is a specialised healthcare facility that may operate as part of a general hospital or as a separate institution, particularly in larger cities. It employs qualified dentists, specialists, specialists in training and dental students to provide advanced dental care. Procedures can include general dentistry, oral surgery, orthodontics, endodontics, paediatric care under general anaesthetic and prosthodontics. Core Dental is a group of dental practices rather than a hospital, and our team can help you work out which kind of care suits you.

What is a dental hospital?

A dental hospital is a specialised healthcare facility. It may be part of a general hospital or a completely separate institution, and these facilities are more common in larger cities. A dental hospital employs fully qualified dentists and specialists, as well as specialists in training and dental students, who provide care under supervision. This mix of staff is designed to provide advanced dental care and to train the next generation of dental professionals.

Can you choose your dental practitioner at a dental hospital?

Usually not. Unlike a dental clinic, patients at a dental hospital do not typically choose their specific dental practitioner. You are generally allocated to a clinician or a team based on your needs and availability. At a dental practice such as ours, you can usually ask to see a particular dentist, and we will try to arrange this when you book. Availability can vary between our clinics.

How does the emergency department at a dental hospital work?

The emergency department at a dental hospital works in a similar way to the emergency department of a medical hospital. A triage system is used, so people with acute dental pain or tooth infections that need immediate attention are assessed according to the severity of their condition, and then wait their turn to be seen by a dental professional. This means that someone with a less urgent problem may wait longer than someone whose condition is serious.

If you have a dental emergency, call us to see whether we can offer an appointment. We reserve emergency appointments each day where possible. Call 000 immediately for uncontrollable bleeding, difficulty breathing or swallowing, serious facial injury or other life-threatening symptoms. You can read more about emergency dentistry and what to do in a dental emergency .

What general dentistry procedures are performed at a dental hospital?

General dentists at a dental hospital provide foundational dental care, including fillings, cleanings and tooth extractions. These services address common dental conditions and routine maintenance for

patients who need hospital-level care, for example because of a complex medical history. Many people receive the same kinds of care at a local dental practice. At Core Dental our general dentistry services include check-ups and cleans , fillings and restorations and tooth extractions .

What oral surgery procedures are performed at a dental hospital?

Oral surgeons at dental hospitals perform tooth extractions, including complex cases such as impacted wisdom teeth. They also carry out biopsies of oral tissues, removal of oral malignancies and orthognathic (jaw) surgery to correct severe jaw alignment issues. Whether a procedure is suitable for a practice or needs a hospital setting depends on your health, the complexity of the case and the facilities required. Your dentist will advise you and, if needed, discuss a referral. See our information on oral and maxillofacial surgery .

What orthodontic treatment is performed at a dental hospital?

An orthodontist is a dentist who specialises in correcting the alignment of teeth. The most common way to align teeth is with braces, but sometimes additional surgery to align the jaws, or to expose impacted teeth, may be required. At Core Dental you can learn about our orthodontic braces and Invisalign treatment .

What is endodontic treatment?

Endodontic treatment, also known as root canal treatment, is necessary when deep dental decay causes inflammation or infection of the nerve within the tooth. It may also be necessary after a traumatic injury to a tooth or several teeth. Our page on root canal therapy explains the process in more detail.

What paediatric treatment is performed at a dental hospital?

Sometimes children need to be put to sleep before long or multiple dental procedures. This can be done at a dental hospital, which has the facilities and staff to administer a general anaesthetic. Not every child needs this, and many children can be treated in a practice with gentle explanation and care. Read more about children's dentistry and paediatric dentistry .

What is prosthodontics?

Prosthodontics includes dentures, crowns, bridges and implants. These treatments replace or restore teeth that are missing or damaged. See our pages on dentures , dental crowns and dental implants .

How do you decide between a dental hospital and a dental practice?

For many routine and some specialist needs, a local practice is suitable. A dental hospital may be recommended when you need hospital facilities, such as a general anaesthetic, or when your medical history is complex. A useful first step is to describe your concerns, symptoms, timing and treatment goals when you book, and to bring relevant medical information and a current list of your medicines. Our team can then assess your teeth, gums and bite, explain suitable options and the alternatives, and discuss referral if it is appropriate. Treatment time and fees vary with the diagnosis and the complexity of care, so a written treatment plan can help you compare stages and payment arrangements.

How Victoria's public dental system is actually organised

Dental hospitals occupy an odd place in public understanding. The published description of the Victorian system is clearer than most summaries, and it answers the two questions people have: who can use it, and where.

Where it operates. The Victorian Department of Health: "Public dental services are provided through the Royal Dental Hospital Melbourne (RDHM) and more than 40 integrated and registered community health services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations across Victoria."

So the hospital is one part of a network of more than forty services, not the whole system.

Who is eligible. The Department's list, verbatim: "all children aged 0-12 years"; "young people aged 13-17 years who hold a healthcare or pensioner concession card, or who are dependants of concession card holders"; "people aged 18 years and over, who are health care or pensioner concession card holders or dependants of concession card holders"; "all children and young people in out-of-home care provided by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), up to 18 years of age (including kinship and foster care)"; "all people in youth justice custodial care"; "all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people"; "all refugees and asylum seekers."

Who is seen without joining the queue. "Victorians who have priority access to dental care are offered the next available appointment for general care. They are not placed on the general waiting list." Those groups: "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people"; "children and young people"; "people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness"; "pregnant people"; "refugees and asylum seekers"; "people registered with mental health or disability services, who have a letter of recommendation from their case manager or a special developmental school."

Denture care has its own pathway. "If the person has denture care needs, then they will be offered the next available appointment for denture care or placed on the priority denture waiting list."

Everyone else. "All other people seeking routine dental or denture care need to place their name on a waiting list." We are not going to quote a waiting time, because the published material gives none.

And there are voucher schemes through which private clinics can be involved. The Department names three: the "Victorian Emergency Dental Scheme (VEDS)", the "Victorian General Dental Scheme (VGDS)" and the "Victorian Denture Scheme (VDS)". On access: "RDHM and community dental clinics have detailed information about how private dental clinicians may access these schemes."

Note that the Department points you to RDHM and community clinics for the detail — and nothing read here establishes which clinics participate in any scheme, so that is a question to ask directly.

Sources: Victorian Department of Health, Access to Victoria's public dental care services, health.vic.gov.au . Accessed 6 November 2026.

Why some procedures happen in a hospital rather than a chair

Several treatments appear in the published advice with a hospital or specialist setting attached. The reasons are specific, and they explain which procedures move and which do not.

Treatment under general anaesthetic. The Department: "Treatment under a general anaesthetic is carried out in a hospital setting by the dentist and an anaesthetist. General anaesthesia involves patients being 'fully asleep'. Some possible side effects include nausea and a longer recovery time than other forms of sedation."

It also requires planning either side: "You will need a pre-operative (before treatment) visit to the dentist, and may also need a post-operative (after treatment) visit. The anaesthetist will also need to assess you before the general anaesthetic."

And the anaesthetist is a doctor rather than a dentist: "A qualified anaesthetist, who is a medical doctor with specialist training in anaesthetics, administers the general anaesthetic."

Intravenous sedation, which may or may not be in a hospital. "Intravenous (IV) sedation is provided by a dental sedationist (a dentist with advanced training in sedation) or an anaesthetist. It can be undertaken at a dental practice that has additional equipment, or in a hospital."

Oral and maxillofacial surgery. This is the specialty with the unusual requirement. The Dental Board of Australia: "Oral and maxillo-facial surgery is a specialty recognised by both the Dental Board of Australia and the Medical Board of Australia. You must hold qualifications in both medicine and dentistry." It is one of the "13 dental specialties in Australia which are approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council".

Wisdom teeth are the common referral route: "Wisdom teeth can be removed by a dentist, but may also need to be referred to an oral maxillofacial surgeon who has done additional training and study in surgery or the teeth, bones, jaws and face."

Surgery as part of orthodontic treatment. "In complex cases, surgery may be required to remove buried teeth or make it easier for them to erupt into the mouth. Surgery can also be used to correct some jaw problems." And from the gapped-teeth page: surgery "can also be useful when there is a problem with the jaws, or to improve the outcome of orthodontic treatment".

How specialist status is verified. "Ahpra publishes an online register of all dental practitioners that provides the profession and the public with up-to-date information about a dental practitioner's registration status. This register also includes details of the specialty or specialties for dentists who hold specialist registration."

And the general point about complex care. "If it is a simple procedure, it may be done on the day. If it is a complex procedure, you may need time to think about your options, or see specialists over multiple visits."

If something goes wrong with care received anywhere in the system , the Department names the avenue: "If people have concerns about the dental care they are receiving, they should contact the clinic which provided the care or the Health Complaints Commissioner."

Sources: Victorian Department of Health, Access to Victoria's public dental care services, health.vic.gov.au ; Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Dental anxiety and phobia, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 22 October 2025); General anaesthetics, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (the page states its review date as 30 September 2012); Wisdom teeth, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (the page states its review date as 3 June 2022); Orthodontic treatment, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 15 December 2025); Teeth - gapped teeth, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 1 July 2025); Cosmetic dentistry and teeth whitening, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 12 December 2025); Dental Board of Australia, Specialist Registration, dentalboard.gov.au (the page states it was reviewed 18/03/2025). All accessed 6 November 2026.

Frequently asked questions

Is a dental hospital the same as a dental clinic?

No. A dental hospital is a specialised facility that may be part of a general hospital or an independent institution, with dentists, specialists, specialists in training and students. A dental clinic or practice is usually smaller, and you can often choose your dentist.

Do I need a referral to a dental hospital?

Requirements differ between hospitals and services, so please check with the hospital directly. If your dentist believes hospital care is needed, we can discuss the next steps with you and explain why we recommend it.

Are Core Dental practices dental hospitals?

No. Core Dental is a group of nine dental practices across Melbourne offering general dentistry, cosmetic dentistry, orthodontics and specialist care, delivered by our team of dentists, specialists and hygienists. We are not a hospital emergency service.

Can children have dental treatment under general anaesthetic?

Sometimes children need to be put to sleep before long or multiple procedures, and this can be done at a dental hospital that has the facilities and staff for a general anaesthetic. Your dentist can advise whether this is needed for your child.

Who treats dental emergencies at a dental hospital?

Emergencies are assessed through a triage system, where patients with acute pain or infection are seen according to the severity of their condition. For life-threatening symptoms, call 000 immediately.

How is public dental care organised in Victoria?

The Victorian Department of Health: "Public dental services are provided through the Royal Dental Hospital Melbourne (RDHM) and more than 40 integrated and registered community health services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations across Victoria."

Who is eligible?

"All children aged 0-12 years"; young people aged 13-17 with a healthcare or pensioner concession card or as dependants of card holders; "people aged 18 years and over, who are health care or pensioner concession card holders or dependants of concession card holders"; children and young people in out-of-home care up to 18; "all people in youth justice custodial care"; "all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people"; and "all refugees and asylum seekers".

Who is seen without joining the waiting list?

Priority access groups, who "are offered the next available appointment for general care. They are not placed on the general waiting list": Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, children and young people, "people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness", "pregnant people", refugees and asylum seekers, and "people registered with mental health or disability services, who have a letter of recommendation from their case manager or a special developmental school".

How long is the waiting list?

The published material gives no waiting time, so we are not going to quote one. It says that "all other people seeking routine dental or denture care need to place their name on a waiting list".

Is there a separate pathway for dentures?

Yes. "If the person has denture care needs, then they will be offered the next available appointment for denture care or placed on the priority denture waiting list."

Can a private clinic be involved in public care?

Through voucher schemes. The Department names the "Victorian Emergency Dental Scheme (VEDS)", the "Victorian General Dental Scheme (VGDS)" and the "Victorian Denture Scheme (VDS)", and notes that "RDHM and community dental clinics have detailed information about how private dental clinicians may access these schemes". Which clinics participate is a question to ask directly.

Why are some procedures done in a hospital?

Because of the anaesthetic. "Treatment under a general anaesthetic is carried out in a hospital setting by the dentist and an anaesthetist", and "the anaesthetist will also need to assess you before the general anaesthetic".

Who gives a general anaesthetic?

"A qualified anaesthetist, who is a medical doctor with specialist training in anaesthetics, administers the general anaesthetic."

Does sedation always require a hospital?

No. "Intravenous (IV) sedation is provided by a dental sedationist (a dentist with advanced training in sedation) or an anaesthetist. It can be undertaken at a dental practice that has additional equipment, or in a hospital."

What is special about oral and maxillofacial surgery?

Its dual qualification requirement. The Dental Board of Australia: "Oral and maxillo-facial surgery is a specialty recognised by both the Dental Board of Australia and the Medical Board of Australia. You must hold qualifications in both medicine and dentistry."

How can I check someone's specialist registration?

On the public register. "Ahpra publishes an online register of all dental practitioners ... This register also includes details of the specialty or specialties for dentists who hold specialist registration."

What if I have a concern about care I received?

"If people have concerns about the dental care they are receiving, they should contact the clinic which provided the care or the Health Complaints Commissioner."

Related services and further reading

General dentistry

Emergency dentistry

Specialist care

Oral and maxillofacial surgery

Children's dentistry

Dental crowns

Our dentists and registered specialists

5 tips for a healthier smile

6 questions often asked of dentists

5 tips to help with dental anxiety in children

How can we help?

If you are unsure whether you need a dental practice or a hospital, our team can listen to your concerns and point you in the right direction. Call 13 13 16 or book online at any of our nine Core Dental practices, or read about our specialist care .

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, bulk billing for eligible children under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule.

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online via coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday 8.00am to 1.30pm, Sunday closed

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.

How would you describe a dental hospital?

A dental hospital is a specialised healthcare facility that may be part of a general hospital or a separate institution. It employs qualified dentists and specialists, plus specialists in training and dental students. Core Dental is a group of practices, not a hospital.

Do patients pick their own dentist at a dental hospital?

Typically not. Patients at a dental hospital are generally allocated to a clinician or team. At Core Dental you can ask for a particular dentist when you book, subject to availability at your chosen practice.

How are urgent cases handled in a dental hospital emergency department?

A triage system is used. Patients with acute dental pain or tooth infections are assessed by severity of condition and wait their turn to be seen. Call 000 for life-threatening symptoms.

Which routine treatments does a dental hospital provide?

General dentists at a dental hospital provide fillings, cleanings and tooth extractions for patients who need hospital-level care. Core Dental offers these services across our nine Melbourne practices for patients who are suited to a practice setting.

What kind of oral surgery is carried out in dental hospitals?

Oral surgeons perform tooth extractions, including complex impacted wisdom teeth, biopsies of oral tissues, removal of oral malignancies and orthognathic jaw surgery. Your Core Dental dentist can advise whether referral is appropriate.

Why might a child need a general anaesthetic for dental work?

Sometimes children need to be put to sleep before long or multiple dental procedures. This can be done at a dental hospital with the facilities and staff to give a general anaesthetic. Core Dental dentists can discuss options for your child.

Which treatments does prosthodontics cover?

Prosthodontics includes dentures, crowns, bridges and implants. Core Dental offers these treatments, and our dentists explain the options, risks and costs in a written treatment plan before you decide to proceed.

How can I get dental advice from Core Dental about where to be treated?

Call 13 13 16 or book online through coredental.com.au. Our team will assess your teeth and gums, explain suitable options and, if appropriate, discuss referral to a hospital or specialist.