



TAYSIDE LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

CHAIR – Dr Andrew Buist
MEDICAL SECRETARY – Dr Andrew Cowie
VICE CHAIR – Dr Bob Rosbottom
VICE CHAIR – Dr Mary O’Brien
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To all GP Practices in Tayside

Dear Colleague

Dental Problems

As you will be aware individuals who are not currently registered with a Dentist are having increasing difficulty in accessing NHS dental care in Tayside.

Should a patient present to the GP Surgery we have been advised by the Area Dental Advisory Committee that they should be asked to access dental care using the following system.

First they should be advised to telephone their local Community Dental Service Access Centre as early in the day as possible. Appointment the same day for relief of pain will be given. Should all appointment slots be filled patients are advised to call the next day or call the Dental Hospital. The numbers are

Angus Springfield Medical Centre in Arbroath	01241 432481
Dundee Wallacetown Health Centre	07740937679
P & K Drumhar Health Centre	01738 564261

Dundee Dental Hospital and School

Although not its primary function, Dundee Dental Hospital will see unregistered patients for emergency dental treatment. The Dental A & E Department is a walk-in clinic with no appointment system. Patients are generally seen in the order in which they attend, but a patient with swelling, bleeding or trauma may be seen before those who have less serious complaints. The clinic also attends to the emergency care of patients who are undergoing treatment at the Dental Hospital, where the patient is not also registered with a general dental practitioner.

Dundee Dental Hospital A & E normally accepts patients for treatment during the hours of 8.45 am to 3 pm, but if the department is particularly busy, or there are staffing difficulties, then the departments will stop accepting patients earlier. Patients may have to wait a significant period of time before they are seen.

The primary function of this Dental A & E clinic is to recruit suitable patients for treatment by the undergraduate students and provision of emergency treatment for those patients currently undergoing care in the Dental Hospital. If a patient is accepted for a course of treatment, they will be discharged once this has been completed.

Out of Hours Provision

In the evening and weekends, the arrangements for care currently vary across the region, though it is hoped to start a Tayside-wide service, in the very near future. This new service will provide consistent and appropriate out-of-hours dental emergency advice to all patients, irrespective of their registration status. Where true emergency access to care is required at night and weekends, patients will be referred to an acute hospital A & E unit for management by the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Department.

Urgent weekend access to dental care will be by appointment at dedicated sessions in suitable locations across Tayside. Weekday urgent access will be provided by General Dental Practitioners for their own patients and by

the Community Dental Service for unregistered patients. This model of care has been piloted successfully in Perth & Kinross over the last two years.

As soon as this new service starts to operate across Tayside, the contact telephone number will be made widely available across NHS Tayside and General Medical Practices will be told how their patients can access this service, if required.

Andrew Cowie
Medical Secretary