

Oral Health Services

**Emergency Dental
Services for Low Income
Adults**

Tier 2 Service Specification

September 2024

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1. Status

Approved to be used for mandatory nationwide description of services to be provided.

MANDATORY ☒ RECOMMENDED ☐

It is compulsory to use this Specification when purchasing services. No Districts should use a local service specification instead of this mandatory specification.

2. Review History

Review History	Date
First published on Nationwide Service Framework Library	January 2011
Amendments: Inserted standard Māori health clause, updated Exclusions Injury Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Compensation Act 2001, Purchase Unit table, User Part Charges/Co-payment updated in line with October 2010 GST changes.	October 2010
Amendment: Removed reference to Waiting Times Fund in additional reporting requirements. Aligned section 2.2 with other dental service specifications.	May 2013
Amendment: Aligned with Community Oral Health Services for Children and some Adolescents service specification. Requirement to collect Level 2 ethnicity information.	June 2015
Amendment: Amended discrepancy in section 9.2 quarterly reporting requirements	August 2015
Amendments: Administration review, minor editing and formatting changes, updated links, references and language etc.	May 2021
Content moved to updated Health New Zealand format	September 2024
Consideration for next service specification review	Within the next 5 Years

Note: In September 2024 a small programme of work moved all Service Specifications to Health New Zealand branded templates. No amendments were made to the body text or content of the Service Specification, so references to DHB, Ministry of Health or other pre-2022 reforms vocabulary will still exist. A larger programme of work to review and revise all Service Specifications is planned for late 2024 to early 2025.

Note: Contact the Service Specification Programme Manager, National Health Board Business Unit, to discuss the process and guidance available in developing new or updating and revising existing service specifications. Web site address Nationwide Service Framework Library: [Nationwide Service Framework Library – Health New Zealand](#)

3. Introduction

This tier two service specification for Emergency Dental Services for Low Income Adults (the Service) must be used in conjunction with the overarching tier one Oral Health Services service specification.

4. Service Definition

The Service provides emergency dental treatment services that are immediately necessary for the relief of pain and treatment of infection for low income adults. The Service can be provided from a public hospital or a private dentist's facilities.

The Service only provides treatment for the current problem that the Service User presents with, not any preventive or maintenance dental work that may become apparent on examination. Service Users may receive more than one episode of treatment per year.

5. Service objectives

Refer to tier one Oral Health Services service specification for generic Service Objectives.

In addition, the Service will:

- provide rapid diagnostic and treatment services
- ensure reasonable access is readily available for people in need of emergency dental care
- contribute to improvement in the Service User's health status and/or quality of life by restoring function, reducing pain and distress, and minimising disability by providing rapid diagnostic and treatment services for people in need of emergency dental care.

6. Service Users

Service Users are low income adults aged 18 years and over who hold a valid Community Services Card and meet any other specified entry criteria.

7. Access

7.1 Entry and Exit Criteria

Service Users in need of emergency dental treatment may be referred, or self-refer, to the Service. Entry criteria for the Service is agreed between Funder and Provider.

The Service User is discharged from the Service once the treatment of the current problem that the Service User presents with has been completed.

7.2 Timeliness

The Service will be provided as soon as possible within a 24-hour maximum response time. This response will include telephone triage and a face-to-face consultation, if required.

7.3 Service Delivery Times

The Service will operate during normal business hours. Outside of normal business hours, the Service will provide a telephone information service providing contact information on the usual after-hours dental service where Service Users will receive telephone triage and immediate treatment, if necessary.

7.4 Service User Part Charges and Co-Payments

Refer to tier one Oral Health Services service specification and the current Service Coverage Schedule¹ for the requirements for Service User Charges and Co-payments.

8. Service Components

8.1 General

Refer to Service Objectives in the tier one Oral Health Services service specification.

8.2 Processes

The Service includes:

Assessment, diagnosis and advice

- emergency oral examination
- radiography: intra-oral periapical, bitewing or orthopantomogram radiograph - single film, or two films of the same site, ie, periapical and bitewing.

Treatment

Extraction:

- removal of permanent tooth or parts thereof
- surgical extraction of un-erupted or partly erupted tooth not requiring removal of bone or tooth division
- surgical extraction of un-erupted or partly erupted tooth requiring removal of bone or tooth division, but not more than one procedure in this category.

Root treatment for anterior tooth, endodontic dressing for posterior tooth:

- pulpectomy
- root canal preparation and filling
- pulp removal and dressing - posterior tooth.

Tooth restoration, single or multi surface restoration of the problem tooth (not cast metal or porcelain):

- one surface, anterior tooth
- two surface, anterior tooth
- three or more surfaces, anterior tooth

¹ The Service Coverage Schedule describes the agreed level of service coverage for publicly funded services. www.nsfl.health.govt.nz/accountability/service-coverage-schedule

- one surface, posterior tooth
- two surface, posterior tooth
- three or more surfaces, posterior tooth
- complex coronal restoration
- temporary restoration, where not an intrinsic part of another service.

Treatment of acute infection:

- temporary restoration or sedative dressing for emergency treatment where not an intrinsic part of another service
 - treatment of acute periodontal infection, scaling, draining and irrigation
 - incision and drainage of abscess or cyst
- pharmaceutical prescription to treat pain/infection (does not include sedation or general anaesthetic).

8.3 Key Inputs

The key inputs required for the Service are:

- appropriately trained clinical staff such as general dentists registered with the Dental Council and auxiliary staff including dental assistants
- administrative support personnel
- laboratory diagnostic services
- pharmaceutical supplies such as antibiotics.

9. Service Linkages

Refer to tier one Oral Health Services service specification for generic Service Linkage requirements.

10. Exclusions

Refer to the tier one Oral Health Services service specification for generic exclusions. The following services are excluded from this Service:

- dental services other than those listed in clause 6.1 below, for example, orthodontics, crowns, dentures and root fillings in posterior teeth
- any work of a non-urgent nature that is not immediately necessary for the relief of pain and treatment of infection (elective maintenance and preventive treatment excluded)
- people eligible to receive a Special Needs Grant (Dental) for the total cost of the treatment from Work and Income.

11. Quality Requirements

11.1 General

Refer to tier one Oral Health Services service specification for generic Quality Requirements.

In addition, the Service will keep appropriate clinical documentation of the Service User's relevant dental and medical history in relation to the emergency treatment being provided.

The Service will:

- manage access to the Service in a timely, equitable and efficient manner, to meet assessed need within available resources and according to entry criteria agreed between Funder and Provider
- document the criteria and subsequent decisions made based on these criteria.

12. Purchase Units

Purchase Units (PU) codes are defined in Health New Zealand's Nationwide Service Framework Purchase Unit Data Dictionary. The following PU code applies to this Service.

PU Code	PU Description	PU Definition	PU Unit of Measure
D01005	Emergency Dental Care for Low Income Adults	Dental services that are immediately necessary for the treatment of pain and infection for adults with a Community Services Card. Includes examination and diagnosis and treatment and reparative services as necessary. Elective maintenance and preventative care are excluded.	Treatment

Explanation of above Unit of Measure.

Unit of Measure	Unit of Measure Definition
Treatment	Number of attendances for treatment.

13. Reporting Requirements

13.1 General

The Provider must comply with the reporting requirements of national data collections, where appropriate. Funders must ensure that they and their contracted providers submit data to the relevant national collections for all mandatory reporting PU codes.

Reporting is to be provided to the Funder as requested.

Reporting Requirements	
Frequency	Reporting Unit
Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total Number of completed treatments• Number of completed treatments by ethnicity (Māori, Pacific, Other)
Annually (financial year)	<p><i>Quality Reporting Requirements</i></p> <p>If requested by the Funder, the service provider will provide a report on the quality-related activities that are currently in place and/or proposed for implementation in the following year.</p>

Other locality specific reporting requirements for the Service may be specified by the Funder in the agreement Provider Specific Terms and Conditions.

Recording ethnicity data

Services will record data at the unit (individual) level, using the NHI. Ethnicity data for NHI is to be collected and provided to the District according to the HISO 10001:2017 Ethnicity Data Protocols for the health and disability sector at Level 2. The Protocol provides guidelines for collecting ethnicity for children. Some people may identify themselves as belonging to more than one ethnic group, so use section 4.3.2 of the protocols to report their prioritised ethnicity.

14. Glossary

Not required

15. Appendices

Not required