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Referral to The Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne Procedure

Objective

This procedure is intended to provide a structured approach for identification and referral of patients to The Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne (RDHM) dental services. This can be a referral from your public or private oral health/health practitioner or from another department within RDHM.

This will formalise the handover of responsibility for the patient care and ensure the planning and delivery of care is appropriate, well communicated and coordinated.

Procedure

Care for eligible public patients, can be transferred to RDHM from members of the community under the following circumstances:

- Emergency transfer:
    - a metropolitan public dental agency
    - from a public or private health practitioner
- Referral to a RDHM general or specialist clinic:
    - for specialist dental care
    - for general dental care within the Dental Teaching clinic

Self-referral is not admissible for most specialist clinics, although referral by the primary carer may be appropriate if care is required through Integrated Special Needs or Domiciliary Services.

Emergency Transfer into RDHM

All patients accessing emergency care will be assessed in accordance with the Emergency Care Demand Management System, or triage tool.   The triage assessment will determine the urgency by categories 1 – 5 with an expected maximum timeframe for care provision.

1. Transfer from a public dental agency

If public dental agencies are unable to provide care according to the required triage timeframe, they may provide the patient with the option to:

- transfer care to the RDHM Primary Care clinic (This is only feasible for public dental agencies within the metropolitan Melbourne region), or
- access care through a private dental provider using a Victorian Emergency Dental Scheme voucher.

Referral of patient requesting emergency care by phone.
- The agency is to call RDHM on 9341 1000 to arrange an appointment on behalf of the patient.
- Details regarding the patient care urgency are to be provided verbally to RDHM staff

Referral of patient requesting emergency care in person.
- The agency is to call RDHM on 9341 1000 to arrange an appointment on behalf of the patient.
- The patient will be provided with a Service Co-ordination Tool (SCTT) form to present at RDHM. This form will include details regarding the patient identification, the referring agency, and the triage outcome depicting the urgency for care.

A record of the referral source will be made in the patient episode created in the RDHM electronic patient management system, Titanium. On presentation, the patient's full details will be updated in Titanium.

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2. Transfer from a public / private health practitioner

Patients eligible for public dental services can be referred for emergency care, to their closest public dental agency, including RDHM, by any health practitioner. All patients are eligible for time critical urgent care at RDHM regardless of their eligibility for public dental services. Fees may apply for patients not eligible for public dental services.

The locations of these clinics can be found at: www.dhsv.org.au

Referral to a RDHM general or specialist clinic

1. Overview

Referrals may be made to the following DHSV services at (RDHM):

Dental Teaching Clinics, including:
- General care
- Endodontics
- Paediatric Dentistry
- Periodontics
- Prosthodontics - Fixed
- Prosthodontics – Removable
- Oral Hygiene

Other dental services, including:
- Domiciliary Services
- Endodontics
- Implant Clinic
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
- Oral Medicine – Mucosal
- Oral Medicine – Orofacial Pain and Temporo Mandibular Disorder
- Orthodontics
- Paediatric Dentistry
- Periodontics
- Prosthodontics - Fixed
- Prosthodontics - Removable
- Special Needs Dentistry
- Primary Care – internal referral only
- Day Surgery Unit – internal referral only *

*Referral to the Day Surgery Unit for a general anesthetic can only be made with prior contact to the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Specialist Paediatric Dentistry, Specialist Special Needs Dentistry or Primary Care clinics.

2. Making a Referral

Referral form

A referral is to be made on the RDHM Dental Services Referral Form for the relevant clinic which can be found:
- on the DHSV website for private referrers www.dhsv.org.au ,or
- by using the *Create patient letter* icon in the Titanium Patient Management System for public dental agencies as per the Quick Reference Guide: RDHM Referral

If a patient requires comprehensive care (more than one specialty), the referring practitioner may request consultation in multiple specialist areas, but should nominate ONE specialist area as the primary contact. This specialty will then refer to other clinics, where necessary.

Referral Criteria

Acceptance of care is dependent on the applicable referral criteria as specified within the RDHM Dental Service Referral Form for each clinic.

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Information Required

All sections of the referral form are to be completed. Failure to provide adequate detail or the information required by the relevant clinic will delay the referral process, as the referral will be returned with a request to provide the missing information. All referrals should be forwarded as per instructions on the referral form.

For further advice or assistance please call Patient Services on (03) 9341 1000

Referrals to Specialist Services

Referrals to Specialist Services fall into three categories, as outlined below. Referring practitioners are required to indicate the category the referral falls under on the referral form.

Specialist Consultation and Examination only

The specialist provides advice or diagnosis and treatment planning for a particular patient but returns the patient to the general practitioner for treatment.

Specific Treatment

The specialist provides treatment in a particular area. The guidelines for each specialist area can be found in the RDHM Dental Services Referral Form in:
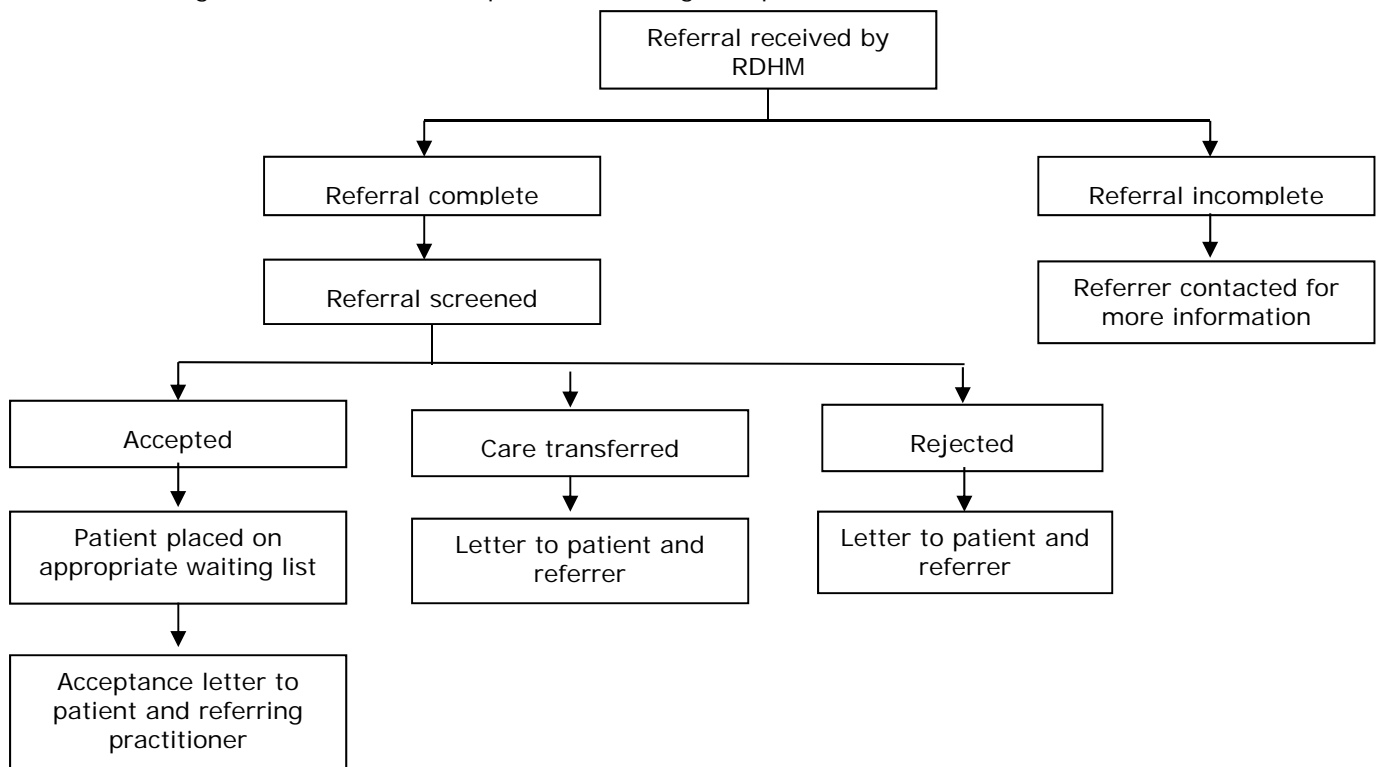
- The Titanium Patient Management System
- DHSV website

Comprehensive care

Where treatment needs are beyond the attending practitioner's resources or capabilities (may involve referral to multiple areas).

Process of Referrals

The following flowchart outlines the process following receipt of referrals.

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │ Referral received by│
                    │       RDHM          │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                ┌────────────┴──────────────────────────┐
       ┌────────────────┐                      ┌────────────────────┐
       │ Referral       │                      │ Referral incomplete│
       │ complete       │                      └────────────────────┘
       └────────────────┘                               │
                │                               ┌────────────────────┐
       ┌────────────────┐                       │ Referrer contacted │
       │ Referral       │                       │ for more           │
       │ screened       │                       │ information        │
       └────────────────┘                       └────────────────────┘
      ┌──────┬──────────┴──────────┐
┌──────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────┐
│ Accepted │  │ Care         │  │ Rejected │
└──────────┘  │ transferred  │  └──────────┘
     │        └──────────────┘       │
┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
│ Patient      │  │ Letter to    │  │ Letter to    │
│ placed on    │  │ patient and  │  │ patient and  │
│ appropriate  │  │ referrer     │  │ referrer     │
│ waiting list │  └──────────────┘  └──────────────┘
└──────────────┘
     │
┌──────────────┐
│ Acceptance   │
│ letter to    │
│ patient and  │
│ referring    │
│ practitioner │
└──────────────┘
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3. Referral Priority

Referrals are screened by a senior oral health practitioner within the relevant clinic. Referrals for priority specialist care can be expedited. However, the referring practitioner should review and coordinate the patient's general dental needs as soon as possible to ensure an overall treatment plan has been developed and implemented.

4. Offer of Appointment for Screening Consultation

Acceptance to the Orthodontic, Fixed Prosthodontic and Dental Teaching Clinics may be subject to a screening consultation. This patient consultation will determine if the treatment need is suitable for care at RDHM and therefore if the referral is accepted. This appointment should not be considered automatic acceptance for treatment. Alternate treatment options will be discussed if the referral is not accepted.

5. Referral Acceptance

Once a referral is accepted, the patient is placed on the appropriate waiting list. When the patient comes to the top of the waiting list they will be contacted to make an appointment.

The RDHM oral health practitioner will determine suitable treatment options available to the patient and the urgency of such treatment. Prior to referral, referring practitioners are asked to discuss the various treatment possibilities with the patient to ensure their treatment expectations remain realistic. This is particularly important where complex care such as implant retained prostheses and orthodontics may be involved.

Demonstrated Oral Hygiene and Health

Commencement of elective specialist treatment, particularly Fixed Prosthodontics, Endodontics and Orthodontics, is dependent on sound management of the patient's general dental care. This includes all pain relief and temporary restorations and the patient's demonstrated ability to maintain good oral hygiene and periodontal health.

Patients are required to:

- Travel to RDHM for treatment
- Keep appointments and be on time
- Be easily contactable by phone
- Agree to pay fees, where required.

If patients consistently fail to attend appointments they will be notified that they will need to reapply for a new referral. As a referring practitioner, you will be notified if this affects one of your patients.

6. Completion of Treatment

Once specialist treatment is completed the patient and referring practitioner will receive a discharge letter detailing the treatment provided, any medical issues noted during treatment, and details of any additional care that may be required on the behalf of the referring practitioner.

7. Service for Patients from Rural / Remote Areas

Victorian Patient Transport Assistance Scheme

Patients needing access to specialist services who live more than 100km from the hospital are eligible to claim a subsidy from the Department of Health for travel and accommodation. Claim forms must be signed by the referring practitioner and the treating specialist before the patient can lodge a claim.

Claims can only be lodged after the patient has attended the appointment. For further details regarding eligibility please contact:

Victorian VPTAS Office
PO Box 712
Ballarat VIC 3350
Toll free telephone: 1300 737 073

8. Ambulance transport assistance
Non-emergency patient transport (NEPT) may be arranged through Ambulance Victoria where the patient has an illness or injury that does not need active medical treatment but which does require supervised patient transport to access dental care. Examples include;
- Inability to travel in a normal seated position
- Requirement for oxygen during transport
- Impaired cognitive function
- Inability to travel more than a few steps unaided.

It is also acceptable for NEPT to transport a patient who is not acutely ill, but who requires stretcher transport because of a chronic medical condition (such as quadriplegia) and who is unable to access a suitable alternative form of transport.

Please refer to the Non-emergency Patient Ambulance Transport procedure.

Definitions

Eligibility:
The criteria patients are required to meet to be able to receive dental treatment at The Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne.

Priority Access:
Identified groups of the community are given priority to receive dental treatment. This includes being offered the next available appointment and skipping the waiting list.

Student in the Dental Teaching Clinics:
A person undertaking studies to become one of the following
- a dentist
- an advanced dental technician/prosthetist
- a dental hygienist
- a dental therapist
- an oral health therapist

Health practitioner:
A health practitioner as recognised in Australia, from either the dental or medical field who has referred a patient to RDHM.

Public dental agency:
Community health agencies delivering dental care to eligible public patients.

Titanium:
The Electronic patient management system used in all public dental agencies including RDHM.

Emergency demand triage tool:
A decision tree questionnaire used to ascertain the treatment urgency according to patient responses to each question.

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November 2017	Manager Operations

Approved by	**Date approved**
Executive Director RDHM	November 2014

Related documents

Department of Health Eligibility and priority access for public dental services policy
http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Eligibility-and-priority-access-for-public-dental-services-policy-June-2014

Department of Health Public dental urgent denture care wait list policy
http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Public-dental-urgent-denture-care-wait-list-policy-June-2014

Department of Health Public dental non-urgent care wait list policy
http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Public-dental-non-urgent-care-wait-list-policy-June-2014

Department of Health Public Dental Fees Policy, September 2014

http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Public-Dental-Fees-Policy-September-2014

RDHM Patient Eligibility Policy

RDHM Patient Fees Policy

Informed Consent Policy and Procedure
http://intranet.dhsv.org.au/download/d3c97dc2/informed-consent-procedure-pr-a018-03.pdf

RDHM Patient Payment Plan & Fee Exemption Policy and Procedure

RDHM Triage of Emergency Patients Policy & Procedure

RDHM Clinical Handover Policy

RDHM Failure to Attend Dental Appointments Policy and Procedure

Quick Reference Guide: RDHM Referral

Non-emergency Patient Ambulance Transport Procedure