



# Your Rights and Responsibilities

For SA Dental Clients



Government  
of South Australia

SA Dental aims to provide you with the best oral health care services possible. As an eligible client, you can help to ensure you have positive experiences and good results by working with us and knowing your rights and responsibilities.

# Your Rights

## **As a client of SA Dental, you have the right to:**

- > be treated with dignity and consideration
- > have your beliefs, cultural and religious practices respected
- > be listened to when you have a question or want more information
- > receive an appropriate response to any reasonable request you make for service or information
- > receive public dental services in keeping with SA Dental policies, clinical guidelines and practices
- > have the risks of any dental care explained to you
- > be informed of any fees and charges prior to your treatment or service - if you are in severe financial hardship, speak to staff about your payment options
- > receive the most appropriate oral health care available, within the range of treatments offered from our current resources

*(Note: within the public system a range of services are provided by students under supervision. This may be your only offer of dental care. If you refuse dental care with students you may place your name back on the bottom of the waiting list. However, when your name next comes to the top of the waiting list, dental care provided by students may again be offered).*

- > have information about your oral health, proposed treatment and chance of success clearly explained to you so that you can make an informed decision about your treatment. This should include an explanation of:
  - your oral health condition
  - the purpose of any tests or examinations and how the tests are done
  - the result of any tests or examinations
  - the treatment options available (including those which may only be available with a private provider at your own expense)
  - what treatment is recommended and why (including the likely results of having no treatment)
  - the chance of success and any risks involved
  - the use and possible effects of drugs you are being given

- the best way to look after your oral health
  - the possible results of not taking the advice of your dental practitioner
- > be involved in decision-making about your oral health care - this means being given information on all aspects of your care and treatment in a way that you can understand. You are welcome to request the presence of another person who may be a friend, family member, carer or advocate. If an interpreter is needed at your appointment, speak with clinic staff before your visit, so that arrangements can be made for this to occur.  
*(Note: only accredited interpreters, not friends or family members, can be used to interpret)*
- > consent to dental care
- > seek a second opinion about your diagnosis and treatment options from another dental practitioner within the SA Dental. Alternatively, you can see a private provider at your own cost
- > refuse the presence of people not directly involved in your care, such as health workers, students, researchers, family members (including husband, wife or partner)
- > refuse to have examinations, tests or dental work at any time - if you refuse, you should be given details of the likely results of your decision
- > stop treatment at any time. *(Note: if you choose to do this, you may need to sign a form which releases SA Dental from any further responsibility for your oral health care. You can refuse care from a particular dental practitioner at any time, however your request to see another dental practitioner may not be possible at the same clinic)*
- > have your personal health information treated confidentially - information about your oral health care should only be seen and discussed by authorised staff
- > have your records and personal information dealt with appropriately in keeping with the Information Privacy Principles (South Australia) 2016
- > request copies of your personal records under the Freedom of Information Act. To discuss an application and required fees and charges, contact your local clinic or our Client Relations Unit on 7117 0052.

## Your Responsibilities

While you have rights, you also have responsibilities that can help to improve your oral health and your experience of our dental service.

### **As a client of SA Dental, you have a responsibility to:**

- > show consideration to staff by telling them of your needs in a polite way
- > think about your behaviour and how it affects other people and staff. Acts of violence, swearing, threats or verbal abuse towards other clients or staff members are not acceptable
- > keep appointments, arrive on time and notify the clinic if you are unable to attend
- > give necessary information - tell your dental practitioner all relevant medical and dental history, including any problems or complications you have had, and any allergies you have or medicines you are taking. You should inform your dental practitioner if you are in a high risk category for infection transmission or if you have financial difficulties or religious and cultural beliefs that may affect the recommended treatment
- > follow your treatment plan - let your dental practitioner know if you do not want to do this
- > tell us if you are seeing another dental practitioner
- > tell us if you are unhappy with your care or treatment - you are welcome to have a family member or friend help you
- > ask for information - if you do not understand what your dental practitioner has told you, ask them to explain it more clearly. Tell them how you are feeling about your oral health care
- > help in your own care by contacting the clinic as soon as possible if you have an oral health problem and by following the advice you are given. It is important that you let clinic staff know of any changes in your oral health condition
- > pay for any costs associated with your treatment.

## Compliments and Complaints

Your suggestions about how we can provide a better service are welcome. If you are unhappy with any part of your oral health care, you should discuss this with clinic staff and/or the manager so that you can have the concern dealt with properly and promptly.

If you feel this does not resolve the problem satisfactorily, you can write to the Executive Director, SA Dental (GPO Box 864, Adelaide, SA, 5001) and ask for the situation to be reviewed.

## Phone Contacts

### **SA Dental**

1300 008 222

### **SA Dental Client Relations Unit**

7117 0052

The **Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner (HCSCC)** helps people resolve complaints about health and community services when a direct approach to the service provider has not succeeded. HCSCC can be contacted by telephone Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm on 8226 8666 or 1800 232 007 or by email at [info@hcsc.sa.gov.au](mailto:info@hcsc.sa.gov.au).

The **Australian Dental Association, SA (ADASA)** may be able to help if you have a complaint about a dentist who is an association member. Phone 8272 8111 or email [admin@adasa.asn.au](mailto:admin@adasa.asn.au).

The **Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra)** may be able to help if your complaint is about the unprofessional conduct of any dental practitioner by telephone Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm on 1300 419 495.

### **Freedom of Information (FOI)**

For information and/or an application form, ask clinic staff or contact the SA Dental Client Relations Unit on 7117 0052.



## For more information

SA Dental contact details are listed in the White Pages' Business and Government Listing under SA Health. Contact your local clinic for appointments and treatment information.

### For general enquiries contact:

SA Dental

GPO Box 864

Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: 1300 008 222

[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/sadental](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/sadental)



**Interpreters:** If you need an interpreter, call the clinic before your appointment, so arrangements can be made.

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact the National Relay Service. For more information visit: [www.relayservice.gov.au](http://www.relayservice.gov.au) or call 1800 555 660.



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