

NHS Lothian Oral Health Service

Department of Restorative Dentistry

Referral and Treatment Acceptance Guidelines

Edinburgh Dental Institute (EDI) provides a NHS funded specialist Restorative Dental service for patients living in Lothian. Through its links with the University of Edinburgh, EDI also provides opportunities for Postgraduate (PG) specialty training in Prosthodontics and Restorative Dentistry, Core Dental training for recent graduates and in addition we train Undergraduate (UG) Dental Hygiene and Therapy (DHT) students in the School of Dental Hygiene and Therapy (SoDHT).

The primary aim of the consultant and specialist delivered NHS Restorative Dental service is to provide advice and non-routine dental care for patients who fall into priority (core) groups.

Priority (core) patient groups:

- Patients requiring oral rehabilitation following ablative surgery for head and neck cancer
- Patients with developmental conditions resulting in deformed or missing teeth
- Patients who have suffered severe dento-facial trauma requiring specialist input in terms of effective rehabilitation
- Patients requiring endodontic treatment rather than extraction because of an increased risk of osteonecrosis of the jaws due to intravenous bisphosphonate therapy or radiotherapy
- Patients with aggressive periodontitis

We can only commit to assess patients who fall into these priority groups. Other patients may be offered an assessment appointment at our discretion on a case by case basis and this decision may be influenced by the needs of our PG trainees at the time of referral.

Although your patient may be accepted for an assessment appointment, this does not mean that they will be accepted for treatment, even if you request this and if your patient falls into one of the priority groups. Patients whose care is within the scope of a primary care practitioner will be referred back with an appropriate plan of care. Aspects of a treatment plan that are specialist in nature may be delivered through EDI with the remainder of the plan delivered by the referring primary care practitioner.

We can only provide consultant and specialist delivered dental treatment for any patients who fall into one of the priority groups. Occasionally, and for the purposes of PG training, we are able to accept patients for treatment who fall outwith these priority groups. Unfortunately we cannot keep waiting lists for these patients and we can only take patients based on the needs of the trainees at that time.

Please note that all patients requiring dental implants as part of their care must meet the Royal College of Surgeons guidelines for NHS funded treatment see <https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/dental-faculties/fds/publications-guidelines/clinical-guidelines/>. There are specific guidelines for provision of implants in EDI which will be published soon.

We will not see the following groups of patients for assessment:

- Those patients requiring anxiety management (please consider referral to PDS)
- Management of primary disease. Please consider referring directly to the School of Hygiene-Therapy.
- Assessment of implants not placed within the NHS
- Patients with complex medical problems and/or special needs. (Please consider referral to the PDS)
- Second opinions on quality of care
- Treatment in secondary care for financial reasons

We expect that all patients referred are caries free and otherwise dentally fit. Patients referred with periodontal disease the Restorative Department must have a plaque score of <15%.

Please note that we expect you to provide emergency care for your patients even while they are undergoing active treatment in the Restorative Department. All patients who receive treatment at EDI will be discharged following treatment for maintenance in primary care.

In order for the consultant staff to effectively assess the needs of your patient it is important that your referral letter is comprehensive and complete. Please see advice.

Specific referral advice

Periodontal problems

We will accept patients requiring treatment of aggressive periodontitis.

The vast majority of periodontal referrals are for patients with chronic periodontal disease. In the past these patients were assessed by the consultant team and many patients would be sent to the School of Dental Hygiene Therapy (SoDHT) for management and direct discharge. Only a selection of patients would require reassessment by the consultant team.

We cannot continue to offer initial assessment for patients with chronic periodontal disease within the Restorative Department. However, we recommend that such patients be directly referred to the SoDHT where they will be assessed on a screening clinic by the staff supporting the training of the UG DHT students. Please note this is **not** a consultant lead service and it is not subject to NHS waiting time targets. Referrals to this service can be made through SCI gateway and for the time being should be sent to the restorative department but labelled: **Referral to the SoDHT**. This process will be streamlined within SCI by the addition of an option to refer to the SoDHT.

Patients may be referred from the SoDHT to the Restorative department and such referrals will be subject to the same triage process and waiting times as all new referrals.

Endodontic problems

We will accept patients requiring endodontic treatment that fall within the priority groups.

In addition to this we are able to accept a small number of cases to satisfy the training requirements of our postgraduate trainees. Example case types considered:

- Patients in whom apical surgery may be indicated. Should root canal re-treatment be required prior to this, we will refer the patient back to your care for its completion prior to re-assessment
- Teeth affected by dental resorption
- Teeth with anatomical anomalies (e.g. open apices, severe curvatures, unusual anatomy)

Please note that, as a matter of routine, we are unable to accept cases requiring endodontic re-treatment

Advice on content of referral letter

A referral letter must:

- Contain full and complete dental, medical and social history including any treatment related to the referral
- Include full periodontal charts for periodontal referrals inc. plaque score
- Include recent radiographs related to the referral
- Referrals that do not meet the criteria for assessment will be returned with information explaining the reasons why