



Who Treats Patients?

The Head of the Specialist Unit decides who will carry out your treatment.

Westmead Hospital is a teaching hospital so patients may be treated by the following staff:

- Specialist
- Postgraduate student or Registrar (Specialist in Training)
- Dental Officer under supervision of a Specialist.

Fees for Specialist Treatment

If you are accepted for specialist treatment it is likely that there will be a nominated fee. There can be charges for consultations as well as treatment. You will be advised of estimated costs prior to treatment starting.

Patients without a social security card (health care, or other benefit card) are private or billable patients. These patients will be billed for all consultations and treatments. The fees must be paid at the time of treatment.

Patients who have a social security card, health care or other benefit card must hold these benefits at the time of consultation and treatment. If the benefit is taken away then fees will be charged.

Medicare does not cover most services. They are provided as part of the teaching role of Westmead Hospital.

To receive free denture treatment, patients must have their entitlement for at least 12 months before consultation.

Waiting Lists

Because of heavy demand for specialist services, in some departments, there are waiting lists for consultations and for treatment.

If you would like further information on specialist services at Westmead, please ring **9845 6766**

A free, confidential Health Care Interpreter Service is available 24 hours, 7 days a week. Ask staff to arrange an interpreter for you.

AUSLAN interpreters are also available.

**Westmead Centre For
Oral Health**

**Specialist
Oral Health Services**

**Information For
Patients**

The Westmead Centre for Oral Health is a specialist referral centre for New South Wales.

Presently, the following specialist services are available:

- **Special care** (treatment of adults with disabilities & special needs)
- **Endodontics** (root canal therapy)
- **Dental Implants**
- **Intra-Venous Sedation**
- **Maxillofacial Prosthodontics** (artificial noses, ears etc)
- **Oral Medicine** (diagnosis & treatment of diseases of the mouth)
- **Oral Pathology**
- **Oral and Dento-Maxillofacial Radiology**
- **Orthodontics** (straightening of teeth)
- **Paediatric Dentistry** (treatment of children with special needs)
- **Periodontics** (treatment of gum disease)
- **Prosthodontics** (replacement of missing teeth)
- **TMJ Dysfunction** (joint pain)
- **Oral Maxillofacial Surgery**

How to Seek Specialist Treatment?

All specialist treatment requires a referral. Referrals can be made in the following ways:

- A private doctor or dentist. The doctor or dentist writes a letter to Westmead asking for specialist treatment. You may be charged for this service.
- Apply for general dental care in the patient's own Area Health Service. If the clinician treating the patient feels specialist treatment is needed, they will refer the patient to the specialist department.
- Children with special needs and adults with disabilities can be referred by a health care worker. The health care worker writes a letter to Westmead asking for specialist treatment.

Referral letters must specify the type of treatment needed and the urgency of treatment.

How to be Accepted for Specialist Treatment?

The Head of the Specialist Unit assesses if treatment will be given. The decision if treatment is provided is based on:

- Clinical needs of the patient as written in the referral letter.
- The resources available at the Unit.

Only patients who require **specialist treatment** will be considered.

A social security entitlement does not guarantee specialist treatment will be offered.

Generally only patients who are highly motivated and show good oral hygiene will be considered for specialist services which require long term care eg, endodontics, implants, prosthodontics, orthodontics and periodontics.

Orthodontics

Due to the demand for orthodontic treatment, only a small percentage of patients seeking treatment can be accepted. Only patients with very severe malocclusions are considered. Please refer to the separate information sheet on Orthodontic treatment at Westmead Hospital.