

**Scottish Dental  
Reference Service**  
Monitoring the standard  
of NHSScotland dental  
treatment.





## Monitoring dental standard and quality

The Scottish Dental Reference Service (SDRS) is made up of a small team of NHS dentists who help to monitor the standard and quality of NHS dental treatment.

We must make sure that your NHS dental treatment is carried out to a satisfactory standard. We do this by checking that the treatment your dentist wants to do is appropriate and that any treatment you have received was satisfactory.

We inspect your mouth either before treatment is carried out or after you have received treatment. Please read the section called 'What will the examination involve' under the 'Attending the appointment' section for more on this.

Your examination will be carried out by a Dental Reference Officer, an experienced NHS dentist, who will provide an assessment of the health of your teeth and gums.

You can request a copy of the report by contacting the SDRS team:



[nss.sdrs@nhs.scot](mailto:nss.sdrs@nhs.scot)



**0345 712 5449** (charged at the local rate).

## Why me?

You have been chosen because you have recently had, or are about to have, NHS dental treatment. Every year we select and examine a number of patients from every NHS dentist in Scotland.



## Attending the appointment

### When is the appointment?

You will receive a letter inviting you to attend on a specific day. However, the letter does not specify a time. **You will need to call the number provided in the letter to arrange a time for your appointment.**

Do NOT attend on the day without arranging a time as there will not be any Dental Reference Officers available to see you.

Your appointment needs to be arranged ahead of time so that we can ensure one of our dentists is available to see you.

**Please phone us at least seven days in advance of your specified date to arrange a suitable time.** Otherwise we cannot guarantee that an appointment will be available.

It may be helpful to take your appointment letter with you when you attend your appointment.

## How long will it take?

We aim for your examination to take around 15 minutes.

## Where will the appointment be?

We use clinics all over the country. We will arrange your appointment at a clinic convenient to you. Please tell us whether you would prefer a town closer to where you work, rather than where you live, by calling us on **03457 125449**.

## What will the examination involve?

A qualified NHS Dental Reference Officer will examine your mouth and provide an assessment of the health of your teeth and gums. No treatment will be given at this appointment.

If your dentist wants to provide a fairly extensive course of treatment, at the examination we will assess whether that treatment is the most appropriate. This means that you will not be able to have your treatment until after the examination.

If your examination is after your treatment, we will check if the treatment was satisfactory and of good quality.



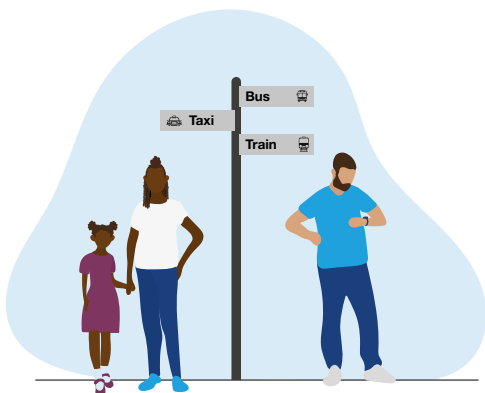
Please be reassured that if you are in pain, your dentist may provide pain relief. Your new course of treatment can commence immediately after the examination unless prior approval\* is required.

\*Prior approval is needed for courses of treatment exceeding £600. Your treatment cannot begin without our approval. If prior approval is needed and you do not attend your examination, we will not be able to approve your treatment.

## Can I claim travel expenses?

You can claim reasonable expenses for travel to and from our clinic. We do not provide transport.

When you attend your appointment, you can request a claim form for your travel costs. In certain circumstances, you may claim travel expenses for someone who has accompanied you.



## What if I cannot attend?

If you cannot attend, please call the number provided in the letter to cancel or reschedule your appointment.

Do not attend the appointment if you have any of the following symptoms:

- high temperature or fever
- new, continuous cough
- a loss or alteration to taste or smell
- any other symptoms of a respiratory virus
- any positive tests for respiratory infection within the last seven days.



## Does my dentist know?

We will tell your dentist about your examination before the appointment, and they may also wish to attend. However, we will always ask you if you are happy for your dentist to attend.

## **Can I continue with dental treatment in the meantime?**

Your dentist will not carry out any routine treatment until after your examination. It is important that when we examine your teeth, they are in the same state as they were at your last dental appointment. This will allow us to evaluate the quality of the treatment you have received and if the treatment proposed by your dentist is appropriate.

If you need emergency dental treatment before your examination, your dentist will provide treatment only to relieve pain. They will give us the details and then continue with any other treatment you need soon after the examination.

We aim to minimise waiting times, however, these can vary depending on circumstances.

## **Your Commitment**

By attending your appointment, you are helping to maintain the standard of your dental treatment provided in NHSScotland.

## **Agreeing to this examination**

When you visit your dentist, you are asked to sign a form for the treatment you receive. When you do this, you are agreeing to have an examination by a Dental Reference Officer, if necessary.

We have shown this part of the dental form here:

**Part 7 PATIENT'S DECLARATION ON COMPLETION** (to be completed and signed by, or on behalf of the patient) I confirm that I have had all the treatment that I am willing to have and, if invited by the Scottish Dental Reference Service, will attend for an examination by another dentist.

If prior approval is needed and you do not attend your examination, we will not be able to approve your treatment.

Call us on **0345 712 5449** to confirm your appointment or to arrange a different one. Our friendly staff will offer you any help and advice you need.

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This publication is also available to download at: [nss.nhs.scot/dental-services/monitoring-dental-quality/find-out-how-dental-quality-is-monitored/](https://nss.nhs.scot/dental-services/monitoring-dental-quality/find-out-how-dental-quality-is-monitored/)

This publication can be made available in large print, Braille (English only), audio tape and different languages. Please contact [nss.equalitydiversity@nhs.scot](mailto:nss.equalitydiversity@nhs.scot) for further information.

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