

<b>GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</b> Standard Operating Procedures		
<b>Functional Area:</b> Program Services/Health Services - Physical Health	<b>Reference Number:</b> VH66-0001	<b>Revises            Previous            Effective Date:</b>  01/01/10
<b>Subject:</b> Guidelines for Dental Treatment		
<b>Authority:</b> Owens/Smith	<b>Effective Date:</b> 7/01/10	Page 1 of  <b>10</b>

**I. POLICY:**

Dental services will be provided to inmate/probationers in accordance with established guidelines for dental evaluation and treatment.

**II. APPLICABILITY:**

This procedure is applicable to all State, Private and County Prisons, Boot Camp, Detention, and Transitional Centers.

**III. RELATED DIRECTIVES:**

- A. GDC R & R: 125-4-4-.07
- B. GDC SOPs:
  - 1. VH07-0001 [Charges to Inmate/probationer Accounts for Health Care Provided]
  - 2. VH30-0003 [Nursing Sick Call]
  - 3. VH65-0001 [Classification of Dental Unit]
  - 4. VH66-0002 [Specialized Dental Services at ASMP]
  - 5. VH66-0004 [Dental Radiological Services]
  - 6. VH67-0001 [Dental Screening, Evaluation and Profiling]
  - 7. VH67-0002 [Dental Treatment Priorities]
  - 8. VH69-0001 [Dental Unit Report]
  - 9. VH69-0003 [Auditing the Dental Unit]

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- C. NCCHC 2003 Adult Standard: PE-06.
- D. NCCHC 1999 Juvenile Standard: Y-37.
- E. ACA 1990 Standards as amended 1998: 3-4347, 3-4343, 3-4345, 3-4355,3-4350, and 3-4353.

**IV. DEFINITIONS:**

- A. Maintenance Inmates: Those inmates who are permanent residents assigned to perform maintenance or support services at transitional centers.
- B. Diagnostic Inmates: Inmates at diagnostic facilities who are awaiting their permanent facility assignment.
- C. Dental Screening: An evaluation by a trained health care professional to rule out acute dental problems requiring immediate treatment.
- D. Dental Examination: An examination by a dentist to include a review of dental history, teeth charting, and a hard and soft tissue evaluation.

**V. ATTACHMENTS:**

NONE

**VI. PROCEDURE:**

- A. The Dental Provider's Role
  - 1. Every inmate will have access to the full range of dental services offered at the resident facility or referral facility. The dentist providing dental services in accordance with established guidelines for dental evaluation & treatment will determine the treatment necessary.
  - 2. All dental records are to be maintained as is outlined in the appropriate dental sections of the Health Services Standard Operating Procedures Manual.
- B. Access to Dental Treatment

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1. Resident inmate/probationers at Level I Institutions will have access to the following services:
  - a. Inmate/probationers at Transitional and Diversion Centers can receive dental services on a fee-for-service basis paid for by the inmate/probationer.
  
2. Resident inmate/probationers at Level II Institutions will have access to the following services:
  - a. Intake: At Probation Detention Centers, Probation Boot Camps and Pre-Release Centers, newly assigned inmate/probationers will be scheduled for a dental screening within seven (7) days. Boot Camp inmates will have already had this screening during their intake process. Appointment scheduling will follow the guidelines established in Dental SOP, VH67-0002 (Treatment Priorities) and Section C of this document. The Screening will be by appropriately trained health care staff.
  - b. Sick Call: the dental or medical staff will screen Inmate/probationers with unexpected dental problems during normal sick call hours for that facility. Inmate/probationers with dental conditions requiring emergent/urgent treatment will be scheduled accordingly. Appointment should be made with the assigned State Prison dental department. Requests for services made by the inmate/probationer will be subject to a fee for service in accordance with SOP VH07-0001 (Charges to Inmate Accounts for Health Care Provided).
  - c. Routine treatment: A probationer who is housed at a Probation Detention Center or an inmate housed in a Pre-Release Center for more than six months becomes eligible for routine dental services at an assigned State Prison dental department. A written request using the Health Services Request Form (PI 2064) will be utilized and each visit will be subject to a

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fee for service. The probationer or pre-release inmate will remain housed at their facility and be transported to the State Prison for treatment.

3. Inmates at Level III, IV, and V Institutions will have access to dental services via:
  - a. Dental Screening and Examination: Newly incarcerated inmates will have been scheduled for a dental screening and an examination at the intake facility as described in SOP VH67-0001. Inmates that have had a dental examination within the last two years and are transferring from one institution to another do not require re-examination at the new institution.
  - b. Sick Call: the dental or medical staff will screen inmates with unexpected dental problems during normal sick call hours for that facility. Inmates with dental conditions requiring immediate treatment will be scheduled accordingly as outlined in VH67-0002. Requests for services made by the inmate will be subject to a fee for service in accordance with SOP VH07-0001 (Charges to Inmate Accounts for Health Care Provided).
  - c. Routine Dental Services: Inmates who wish to receive routine dental treatment may do so by written request using the Health Services Request Form PI-2064). They will be scheduled for an appointment or placed on a list of appointments to be scheduled. The treatment will be subject to fee for service in accordance with SOP VH07-0001. Diagnostic inmates at intake facilities are not eligible for routine services, unless they have been at the intake facility for six months.
  - d. Recall: A list used for recall may be maintained for various treatments (cleaning, exam, etc.) but the service provided will be subject to fee for service. Recall for follow

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up to a procedure will not be subject to a fee for service.

- e. Emergency: The dental authority at each facility will develop a plan for dental emergencies and the process to obtain that treatment both during scheduled hours and after hours. This plan will be in writing, dated and signed by the dental authority at each facility. It will be placed in the facility dental practices and procedures manual. Emergencies are not subject to fee for service unless sports related. A process to make treatment available to patients with urgent needs as defined in VH67-0002 will also be established.

C. Dental Services to be Rendered

- 1. Guidelines for Dental Care at Transitional Centers (Level I)

Services are available on a fee for service basis. This arrangement is between the independent dental provider and the inmate and in no way obligates the GDC for these services. Payment is to be directly from the inmate to the provider.

- 2. Services to be rendered to inmate/probationers assigned to Level II Institutions.

- a. Inmate/probationers will receive a dental screening within seven (7) days of arrival to check for any severe dental problems that require immediate attention.

- b. Inmate/probationers are eligible for emergent/urgent care where there is significant pain or infection.

- 3. Services to be rendered to inmates permanently assigned at Level III, IV and V Institutions. Access to the following routine services will be provided. Generally this will be in the order in which the

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treatment request is received. In some instances, an inmate's period of incarceration will expire prior to the completion of services. All Routine services will be provided on a time available basis.

- a. Comprehensive Diagnostic Services: The full range of diagnostic services necessary to provide adequate information to allow the dental practitioner to arrive at a diagnosis or treatment plan will be available at each facility or at a referral center. The dentist rendering treatment will determine the necessary diagnostic services.
- b. Treatment Plan: A treatment plan is required before routine care can be provided. This can be done using the existing Pathology/ Treatment Plan sections at the bottom of form PI-1152. Treatment options will be explained to the inmate. The inmate will be informed that treatment will be initiated only at their request and that it is subject to co-pay.
- c. Operative Procedures: Routine restorative procedures will be offered to inmates to include amalgams, composites and temporary type restorations. Treatment desired by the inmate/probationer for esthetic purposes only will not normally be provided. Those procedures that require castings or involve laboratory fees are not available.
- d. Periodontal Services: The following may be provided with the type and frequency of maintenance services to be determined by the dentist.
  - 1) Routine prophylaxis: Prophylaxis may be made available on a schedule deemed appropriate by the dentist but normally no more often than every six months. It will be subject to fee for service.
  - 2) Scaling and root planing.

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3) Closed flap curettage.

- e. Extractions: Routine dental extractions will be provided; however, these will be subject to co-pay. Referral to ASMP for dental procedures such as impacted wisdom teeth will be subject to co-pay. The inmate/probationer should be informed of the fee for service prior to transfer to ASMP.
- f. Fixed Prosthodontics (crown and bridge): This service is not available.
- g. Removable Prosthodontics: (complete dentures and partial dentures)

1) Edentulous patients: Those patients who are completely edentulous in one or both arches and who do not have serviceable dental appliances will have the opportunity to acquire complete dentures within the capability of Dental Services. If the inmate is edentulous in only one arch, the dentist performing the services will decide what treatment is appropriate for the arch that is not edentulous, not to include a cast partial denture. Patients waiting for prosthetics who have difficulty masticating their food may be offered a Mechanical Soft Diet. All prosthetic cases will require prior approval by the Georgia Department of Corrections State Dental Director before any treatment can be started.

2) Patients waiting for prosthetics who have difficulty masticating their food may be offered a Mechanical Soft Diet.

3) Repair/replacement of prostheses: Those prosthetic appliances that are damaged or lost due to circumstances beyond a reasonably diligent inmate's control will be repaired or replaced in accordance with the GDC guidelines for prosthetic services

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in effect at that time, as outlined in the previous paragraph.

- 4) Repairable, functional (necessary for mastication), broken dentures or partials should be repaired as received. The repair of esthetic tooth replacements, without significant masticatory function, is restricted to those that can be repaired, on site, during the initial evaluation of the repair request.
  - 5) An inmate who purposefully damages or discards a prosthetic appliance or who has multiple episodes of lost or damaged appliances may be assumed to not value them nor to desire the use of such appliances. With a review of well-documented records, the inmate will be placed in an inactive dental status in regards to replacement of that appliance. A review of the status will be made at the request of the inmate and the findings will be entered in the dental progress record.
- h. Endodontics: Endodontic therapy is normally not available.
  - i. Orthodontics: Orthodontics is not offered by the GDC. A dentist at the resident facility will evaluate those inmates who enter the Department in appliances. The dentist conducting the exam will make a reasonable effort to contact the dentist previously providing care. Based on the information obtained and recorded in the record, a decision will be made to retain or remove the braces. If questions remain the Statewide Dental Supervisor should be contacted.
  - j. Implants: Implants will not be offered by the GDC. Those patients having implants when entering the Department will be monitored for complications (e.g., infections, mobility,



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etc.) and if problems arise, the Statewide Dental Supervisor is to be consulted.

k. Exceptions: The Statewide Dental Supervisor must authorize exceptions to these stated guidelines.

4. Services to be Rendered to State Inmates in County Institutions:

County Institutions will use the instructions listed below in determining whether dental care will be made available through the county facility or by transporting the inmate/probationer to a designated State Prison.

a. County Institutions are expected to provide urgent/emergent and routine dental services to state inmates in their custody: Such as fillings, cleanings and extractions.

b. Exceptional services (prosthetics, impacted surgery cases) needing evaluation and resolution may be addressed by contacting the State Dental Supervisor through a completed consultation form, PI 2007. If treatment is approved, arrangements should be made to transport the inmate to the nearest State Prison that can provide the requested service. If the needed service is deemed routine, the inmate will be scheduled for the service in the order in which the request was received. At the appointed time, he will be transported back and forth, between the County Institution and the State Prison until the treatment is complete. Urgent/emergent care will be offered at the initial assessment.

5. Services to be Rendered to Diagnostic Inmates:

Diagnostic inmates are eligible for the following dental care:

a. Inmates will receive a dental screening (within 7 days) and an examination (within 30 days)

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after arrival. Both will usually be done at the same visit.

- b. Inmates will be eligible for emergency/urgent dental care for severe pain, swelling, or other condition where in a dentist's opinion delaying treatment would damage their health.
- c. When inmates are transferred to their resident facility, they will be eligible for dental care as outlined in this document.
- d. Inmates, who spend six (6) months in a diagnostic facility without permanent assignment, become eligible for routine care at the diagnostic facility.

#### 6. Dental Treatment for Maintenance Inmates

Inmates who are permanent residents at Transitional Centers will have access to urgent/emergent and routine dental care. Arrangements will be made by the Transitional Center with a State Prison that has a dental unit.

#### 7. Dental Treatment for Inmates Temporarily Assigned to a Facility

Inmates temporarily assigned to a facility will have access to emergency dental care only.

#### D. Paying for Dental Services

Each dental appointment will incur a fee for service with the exception of certain services as specified in this policy. Inmate/probationers in Transitional and Diversion centers are responsible for their own dental care.

#### E. Right to Defer Treatment

The dentist performing treatment on an inmate/probationer will have the right to defer specific treatment when that treatment cannot be adequately rendered because of non-cooperation of the patient (e.g., poor oral hygiene, failure to follow instructions, etc.). The reason for deferring treatment and the behavior modifications needed

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prior to re-instituting treatment will be entered in the Dental Progress Record.