How to Access Free or Low-Cost Dental Services in Australia – Gold Standard (Updated)

1. What this service actually offers

Dental services support your teeth, gums, and oral health. This includes check-ups, pain relief, fillings, extractions, and emergency treatment.

2. Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS) – important

The Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS) is a government program that provides up to a set amount of funding over 2 years for basic dental services for eligible children.

- Covers check-ups, cleaning, x-rays, fillings, and extractions
- For children aged 0–17 who meet eligibility criteria
- Services are often bulk billed if the clinic accepts CDBS

Ask the clinic: "Do you accept CDBS?"

3. Cheapest pathway: step-by-step

1. Check if you or your child are eligible (Medicare / concession / CDBS)
2. Search for public dental or CDBS providers
3. Call and confirm costs before booking
4. Explain urgency if in pain

4. What if you are in severe pain right now (urgent pathway)

If you are in strong pain, swelling, or infection, you may be eligible for urgent dental care.

- Call a public dental clinic and say it is urgent
- Explain symptoms clearly: pain, swelling, infection
- Ask for emergency appointment

If pain is severe and you cannot access dental care:

- Go to a hospital emergency department

- Call Healthdirect: 1800 022 222

5. What to say

- "I am in pain and need urgent dental care"
- "Do you have emergency appointments?"
- "Do you offer CDBS or low-cost options?"

6. Sources

- Healthdirect Australia
- Services Australia

Disclaimer: These resources might not be up to date and newer information might be available. We try our best to update our resources as often as possible.