

Position Summary

Government, hospitals and health fund policies should ensure that patients have equitable access to dentistry under general anaesthesia.

1. Background

- 1.1. Safe and effective modern general anaesthetic techniques have enabled millions of people such as young children, individuals with special needs and many other dental patients who are unable to be treated in the usual clinic setting to receive dental treatment with adequate anxiety and pain management.
- 1.2. Dental General Anaesthesia Procedure Facilities exist which provide a safe and well-equipped environment for the provision of oral health care.

Definitions

- 1.3. GENERAL ANAESTHESIA produces a drug-induced state where the patient will not respond to any stimuli, including pain. It may be associated with changes in breathing and circulation.
- 1.4. DENTAL GENERAL ANAESTHESIA PROCEDURE FACILITY (DGAPF) is a licensed hospital or day procedure centre with an operating theatre, staff and equipment able to cater for the dental needs of patients
- 1.5. ACTIVITY BASED FUNDING is a way of funding hospitals whereby they are paid for the number and mix of patients they treat.

2. Position

- 2.1. Dental treatment under general anaesthesia should only be undertaken when indicated for appropriate management of the patient.
- 2.2. A dentist must not carry out any procedure forming part of the practice of dentistry on a patient under general anaesthesia unless it is administered by an appropriately qualified and registered medical practitioner.
- 2.3. General anaesthesia in dental clinics must be administered in accordance with the guidelines of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists and any State, Territory or Federal Regulations.
- 2.4. General anaesthesia facilities should be readily available to dentists to treat all patients in a timely manner.
- 2.5. Government funding for dental treatment should include treatment under general anaesthesia.
- 2.6. Activity based funding should reflect the cost and complexity of providing dental treatment under general anaesthesia.
- 2.7. Private Health Insurance Funds should negotiate fair and reasonable rebate rates for DGAPFs for the provision of comprehensive dental treatment under general anaesthesia.

Policy Statement 6.32

Adopted by ADA Federal Council November 9/10, 2017.
Amended by ADA Federal Council, August 21, 2020