

Media Release

The Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services



Monday, 30 March 2020

SUSPENDING NON-URGENT PUBLIC DENTAL FOR CORONAVIRUS

All non-urgent public dental procedures across Victoria will be placed on hold for the next three months to limit the spread of coronavirus and to protect patients and staff.

Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos said the suspension of public dental will take effect immediately for three months and will then be reassessed to determine if a further extension is required.

This is consistent with advice of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee and includes treatments and checkups as part of the Government's Smile Squad school dental program, which provides free dental care to Victorian public primary and secondary school students.

Victorians can continue to access emergency and urgent dental care at the Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne, and many community-based dental services across the state. Health screening procedures will be in place at these clinics to protect staff and patients.

Postponing all non-urgent dental services will help limit the spread of coronavirus in line with other current measures, such as scaling back elective surgery in public and private hospitals. It will also free up personal protective equipment for front line health workers, and ensure supplies are available for critical dental services.

Suspended services include general dental care, routine denture services, specialist care, oral health promotion, teaching clinics and day surgery procedures. All patients with existing dental appointments in the next three months will be contacted to discuss their treatment plans and make new appointments when services re-commence.

The Victorian Government has so far invested an additional \$537 million in our health system as part of our coronavirus response, including more beds, ICU equipment and personal protective equipment to keep our dedicated health care workers safe.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos

"We need to postpone non-urgent public dental care to help slow the spread of the coronavirus and allow our health services to prepare for this unprecedented challenge."

"We're putting the safety of patients and health care workers first by ensuring health care professionals have the equipment they need when they need it."

"I urge all Victorians to maintain their oral health by eating well, drinking tap water, and brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste."