

PATIENT PRESENTATION				
Presenting Problem	Specific presenting problem	Refer to hospital	Refer to specialist practice	Referral probably not indicated
Increased Overjet	Overjet 6mm or under at any age			✓
	Overjet over 6mm >10 years		✓	
	Overjet over 9mm >10 years with significant skeletal discrepancies	✓		
Crossbite	Anterior crossbite with no/mild skeletal discrepancies		✓	
	Posterior crossbite		✓	
Overbite	Overbite traumatic tissues or open bite >3mm		✓	
Crowding	Crowding in mixed dentition			✓
Crowding in permanent dentition	Moderate or severe crowding		✓	
	Mild crowding, significant aesthetic detriment		✓	
	Mild crowding, little significant aesthetic detriment			✓
Canines	Not palpable buccally >10 years		✓	
	Palatally placed on radiographs		✓	
	Cs retained, not mobile >11 years		✓	
Hypodontia (Ignore 8's)	One tooth missing per quadrant		✓	
	Two or more teeth missing per quadrant	✓		
	Cleft lip and palate syndromes	✓		
	Medical history or management issues complicating treatment	✓		
	Problems likely to need complex surgical or restorative care	✓		
	Severe skeletal discrepancy/facial disharmony	✓		



### REFERRAL TO HOSPITAL

Please refer patient to "Specialist Orthodontic Service - Grampian Orthodontic Care" via Sci Gateway.

**Please confirm the following in referral:**

- Reason that treatment is necessary
- Stability of oral health: patient has been caries free for 12 months (exception for opinion e.g. compromised 6s)
- No active periodontal disease
- Excellent oral hygiene
- Patient is motivated
- Understanding of the complexity and length of care/treatment
- Patient advised the initial appointment will be for orthodontic assessment only and does not guarantee an offer of treatment
- Patient aware they may need their General Dental Practitioner to refer on to another provider depending on the complexity of their problem

**Ensure the following information is included in the referral:**

- Relevant clinical findings (salient features of malocclusion)
- Previous orthodontic treatment
- Study models/photographs if requesting an opinion
- Relevant radiographs if available

Please also read the secondary care orthodontic referral guidelines.

### REFERRAL TO SPECIALIST PRACTICE

Please refer patient using the "Specialist Practice" referral protocols.

**Note:** Specialist practices may still need to refer to Aberdeen Dental Hospital if treatment proves to be more complicated.

**NO REFERRAL**

No referral indicated at this time.

Version – 2	Title – Orthodontics	Department – Dental Services	FINAL
Creator – Karen Shaw	Lead – Karen Shaw	Last Review – 27 January 2026	Next Review – 27 January 2028



# NHS GRAMPIAN SECONDARY CARE ORTHODONTIC REFERRAL GUIDANCE

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## Scope and Audience:

These guidelines are to aid:

- General Dental Practitioners (GDPs),
- Public Dental Service (PDS) dentists, and
- Primary Care Orthodontic Specialists

to refer appropriately to the Secondary Care Orthodontic department for Consultant Orthodontist advice and treatment in Grampian.

This should ensure that we are able to provide appropriate specialist care to those patients with complex orthodontic needs.

## Referral pathway:

NHS funding is available to provide routine orthodontic treatment for children and adults through Specialist Orthodontists and GDPs who work within the primary care General Dental Services.

Within Grampian there are a number of orthodontic specialists working as specialists in primary care. Where possible GDPs and PDS dentists should initially refer their patients to their local Orthodontic Specialist as this represents the most efficient use of orthodontic services.

These Orthodontic Specialists work closely with the NHS Grampian Secondary Care Orthodontic service and will refer onwards any cases that require either treatment planning advice or treatment from the Consultant-led Secondary Care Orthodontic team. However, GDPs and PDS dentists can also refer patients who meet the referral criteria outlined in this document directly to the NHS Grampian Secondary Care Orthodontic Service. Referral to our service is through SCI Gateway.

NHS Grampian's Secondary Care Service operates from Aberdeen Dental Hospital & Institute of Dentistry and Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin. Patients will be offered an appointment at either location irrespective of postcode.

## The Secondary Care Consultant Orthodontic Service:

Provides tertiary care treatment for patients requiring complex interventions such as those:

- who have cleft lip and palate,
- require orthognathic (jaw) surgery,
- have other severe multidisciplinary dental problems.

In addition, treatment planning and dental development advice is provided to Orthodontic practitioners and other Secondary Care Departments for less complex cases and second opinions are provided for practitioners at the request of Practitioner Service Department (PSD).

### Referral Criteria:

Under normal circumstances patients will only be accepted for treatment in the Consultant Orthodontic Service if they meet one of the following criteria:

1. Patients with severe skeletal problems requiring treatment by means of combined orthodontic and orthognathic surgical treatment.

Patients may need to remain under review in order to allow facial growth to be monitored before making a definitive treatment plan. In some cases, when growth is complete, patients who do not need or decline jaw surgery will be referred back to the referring Specialist Orthodontic practitioner for provision of their orthodontic treatment.

2. Patients with complex multidisciplinary dental problems requiring a combined orthodontic and restorative approach where close liaison is required with hospital restorative dentistry specialists.

Less complex cases in this category will be referred back to Specialist Orthodontists & GDPs or PDS dentists with appropriate orthodontic and restorative treatment plans.

3. Patients requiring co-ordinated care for cleft lip and palate and other congenital dentofacial anomalies.

4. Severe problems of un-erupted, displaced or malformed teeth, or the effects of trauma and pathology in the dento-alveolar structures of the child and young adult.

Less complex cases in this category (for example isolated palatally ectopic canines) will be referred back to Specialist Orthodontists with appropriate treatment plans.

5. Children with growth related problems or syndromes who also have a malocclusion.

Patients referred from Specialist Orthodontists with less complex problems will be referred back to the specialist with appropriate guidance where it is considered by the Consultant Orthodontist that the treatment required is within the scope of practice of a Specialist Orthodontist.

7. Most children and adults with medical problems or special needs can receive orthodontic care in Specialist Orthodontic Practice and patients with less complex orthodontic problems will be referred back to the specialist with appropriate guidance or to the GDP or PDS dentist with advice to refer to a Specialist Orthodontist.

## GDP/ PDS Dentist Responsibilities:

During any orthodontic treatment delivered in Secondary Care Departments in Grampian it is expected that the patient's own GDP or PDS dentist continues to see them for routine examinations and treatment, and will provide all other aspects of the patient's dental care.

If the patient requires any routine extractions, restorations and/or prostheses, it is expected that the GDP or PDS dentist will provide these treatments.

All patients accepted for treatment into the Orthodontic Service should remain registered with their GDP or PDS dentist, and will be discharged back to their GDP or PDS dentist following completion of treatment for long term care and maintenance, including the maintenance of any removable or bonded orthodontic retainer appliances.