

**FEE GUIDE POLICIES**  
**2008 - 2009**

**GENERAL FEE POLICIES**

1. Fees are charged for **ALL** services provided in this Clinic.
2. Fees charged for student-rendered services are generally about fifty percent of the (professional) fees for the same services listed in the “Nova Scotia Dental Association Suggested Fee Guide for Dental Services Provided by General Practitioners”. Normally laboratory fees are not charged in addition to those fees for undergraduate student services except for denture and partial denture repairs and additions.
3. A Treatment Plan signed by the patient/guardian and a faculty dentist indicates that the Dalhousie Dental Clinic will provide dental treatment and the patient will settle his/her account when payment is due. For some services, payment is due when a procedure is complete. For other services, payment is due before treatment is started. When laboratory work is involved, a portion of the fee is due before work will be accepted by the Dental Laboratory. The patient's entire account balance must be zero before Patient Services will issue a 100% paid stamp, which is required for the release of work from the Dental Lab.

Students MUST discuss payment arrangements with their patients and verify that accounts are settled prior to beginning irreversible procedures (e.g. tooth preparation for crowns, bridges) and final impressions for dentures, appliances etc.

4. The Schedule of Fees for Dental Services is reviewed and revised annually, usually in the early summer. The revised Schedule nullifies (including fees and conditions) all previous schedules however, all previously quoted fees recorded on a current official treatment plan and signed by the patient and clinical instructor will apply until the treatment contracted on that treatment plan is complete or for two years, whichever comes first.
5. Fees for Dental Treatment Services for Students, Staff Members of Dalhousie University

Dalhousie University students, staff members, and faculty must pay for dental treatment whether provided by students or faculty members. A 5% discount will be given to any students, staff or faculty only if the current Dalhousie ID card is shown to Patient Services staff at the time the treatment is completed and paid. This 5% is not retroactive and will not be applied after the Treatment is paid.

Students will not be cleared for graduation unless all their account charges for personal dental treatment are paid in full at Patient Services.

6. Endodontic Fees

Once endodontic treatment has begun, the appropriate code is to be put "in progress". 50% of the fee is expected at the initial appointment and the remaining 50% is due at the time of completion of endodontic treatment. Except for emergency endodontic management a signed treatment plan must be developed that includes endodontic therapy and the definitive restoration for the tooth before proceeding with endodontic appointments.

Before endodontics is begun, be sure that:

- (a) The tooth can be restored after endodontic completion
- (b) The patient knows and is in agreement with the restorative plan and associated fees for the tooth

Restorative treatment may involve:

- periodontal surgery/crown lengthening
- post/core system of appropriate design
- crown of appropriate design

- (c) The patient knows that the fee for endodontics does not include fees for restoration of the tooth.

7. Laboratory Fees

Generally when Dental Lab work is involved, the patient's outstanding account balance must be paid in full and 50% payment of the fee for the prosthesis/appliance is to be paid before the Dental Lab will accept the work. The balance of fee payment must be paid and a 100% paid stamp must be obtained before the completed prosthesis/appliance is allowed to leave the Dental Lab or the Clinic. Make sure that the patient understands the entire fee obligation for treatment (by means of a signed treatment plan and discussion for options) before starting any treatment that involves laboratory fees.

8. Denture Fees

Patients must pay 50% of the denture fee before the Dental Lab can accept work for processing. The other 50% must be paid prior to the Dental Lab releasing the denture to the student for insertion. The patient's entire account balance must be zero before Patient Services will issue a 100% paid stamp, which is required for the release of work from the Dental Lab.

The fees for immediate CUD and CLD include the fees for necessary soft tissue conditioning and for one laboratory processed denture reline. The **processed (hard) reline must be completed within one year** from the date of denture placement. The denture fees do not include fees for extractions.

9. Orthodontic Fees

The orthodontic treatment services and fees identified by the following "80000" codes do not include the two orthodontic examinations, namely: 01901 and 01902

The 01901 and 01902 fees are not refundable if the patient is not accepted for treatment or if the patient declines treatment.

100% payment is due after the Orthodontic Treatment Plan is developed and approved by the patient and Clinic and **before** treatment is started. Orthodontic treatment and hence fees, includes provision for retention following active tooth movement. When band and brackets have been cemented students are to complete the codes pertaining to this treatment. At all of the patient's next appointments students are to enter the code 80602 as Observe/adjust appliances to follow treatment progress and appointments on computer.

The orthodontic treatment services and fees identified by the 81113 through 81292 codes include the fabrication, placement, observation and adjustment of any and all appliances required to achieve the desired results.

Where appropriate, treatment fees include the fabrication, placement and adjustment (for up to one year from the date of placement) of appropriate retention appliance (often a removable retainer). Replacements for lost appliances and/or repairs to damaged appliances will be done at the patient's expense.

10. TMD Fees

100% of the fee for a biteplane is due before the patient can leave with the appliance. The patient's entire account balance must be zero before Patient Services will issue a 100% paid stamp to the Dental Lab.

11. Restorative Fees

Patients must be informed, normally before the treatment procedure is started, if there will be or may be a deviation from the written treatment plan. Examples:

- (a) The restoration will/may involve more surfaces than indicated on the treatment plan. Therefore the fee charged will/may be greater than originally agreed upon.
- (b) There will/may be a pulpal exposure as the result of caries or existing restoration excavation. Therefore either root canal therapy (plus restoration) or extraction will/may be the result. Additional fees will apply.

12. Miscellaneous Fees

Miscellaneous fees (e.g. fees for consultation, referrals for radiographs) are due upon the completion of the service. Where a "product" is generated (e.g. duplicate chart, duplicate films, etc.) the fee must be paid prior to release or mailing of the product. Patient Services will advise amounts of fees for miscellaneous services.

13. Fee Waivers and Refunds/Credits

Fee waiver / credit requests must be entered in the chart progress notes by the supervising faculty member and student and then authorized by the Clinic Director. The Clinic Director and the Supervisor of Patient Services are the only ones who can authorize treatment at no charge or any other fee variance.

## FORMS OF PAYMENT

1. Patients are expected to pay for services on the day the service is completed (or partly in advance when Dental Lab work is involved.)
2. Payment may be made by cash, debit card, American Express, Mastercard or Visa. Cheques are **not accepted.**
3. Advance payment on account is acceptable (i.e. "Lay Away" Plan). Any positive balance remaining at the completion of active treatment will be refunded or applied as a credit against future treatment.
4. The Dalhousie Dental Clinic **does not** arrange Payment Plans. Patients do not have the privilege of devising their own payment schedule outside Clinic payment regulations.
5. Students are not permitted to pay for services to patients.

## DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS AND N.S.F. CHEQUES

1. A patient's account balance, which has \$50.00 or more in arrears after 120 days, will be sent to a Collection Agency and the patient will be suspended from the Clinic.
  - a. Interest is not charged on overdue accounts.
  - b. When an account goes to a collection agency the entire balance owing is due.
  - c. When an account goes to a collection agency the patient's chart is flagged inactive/collection agency unless d., below applies.
  - d. Active treatment of an irreversible nature which was begun prior to the account being sent for collection and the resulting suspension, will be completed to the point where the patient is made stable and can seek treatment elsewhere. The patient's chart then becomes inactive.
  - e. No further treatment will be done until the account is **completely paid** and the collection agency has formally advised the Patient Services office of payment received. All accounts that have been sent to the Collection Agency are **only payable to the collection agency**, not the Dalhousie Dental Clinic.
  - f. The Clinic reserves the right to refuse readmission to active treatment for any patient whose account has been sent to the collection agency including after the account is fully paid.
  - g. A patient who is allowed to return as an active patient after paying the collection agency will be required to pay an additional administrative fee of \$20.00 before further appointments are arranged.
2. Account balances of **less than** \$50.00 in arrears at 120 days will have no monthly statements printed. Patient's chart is flagged inactive/suspended until full payment is received.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS**

1. Students are expected to inform and have their patient pay their accounts before further work is done.
2. The Clinic reserves the right to suspend a patient's appointments until any outstanding balance over \$50.00 is paid.

## **PATIENTS ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

1. Patients, whose treatment fees are covered by the Social Services Department of the Halifax Regional Municipality or the Province of Nova Scotia, require **prior** approval from the agency before any treatment may be rendered. Treatments that have been authorized by Social Services are for one year from date of approval only. Claim forms, letters of authorization and estimates **must** be submitted to Patient Services for processing. Therefore, in these situations, students must ensure that the Supervisor of Patient Services/ Assignment Coordinator has given written approval in chart progress notes before treatment is commenced. Payment is received from Social Services only after the approved dental treatment has been completed. Only pre-approved treatment services may be done.

If the Social Services patient must personally pay part of his/her account, then the "co-pay" payment must be paid in full prior to the beginning of any treatment.

Normally, the Faculty does not accept payment by "Quikcard". "Quikcard" is accepted at the Nelson Whynder School Clinic.

## **M.S.I. CLAIMS (MARITIME MEDICAL SERVICES INSURANCE) FOR PEDIATRIC PATIENTS**

1. A "Consent to Treatment" form must be signed by the parent before treatment begins. Students must enter into the computer **the day of** (either at the satellite clinic or the main Clinic) all treatment rendered during the day in order that accounts are kept up to date. All parents are to be informed that MSI does not cover all treatment for children and therefore they may be required to pay for part of their child's dental treatment.

## **THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS**

1. Patients whose treatment fees are covered by a third party payment plan, such as private dental insurance, must pay their fees in full to Clinic Patient Services before insurance claim forms will be completed. The Dalhousie Dental Clinic does not accept fee assignment. Once the patient's treatment is completed and paid for, Patient Services staff will print a standard insurance form based on information entered into the computer (and charts, if need be). These are then forwarded to the patient. Therefore, it is very important that students record accurate and complete information in the chart and in the computer. It is the patient's responsibility to submit the claim form to the insurance company for reimbursement.
2. Most insurance companies require a preliminary estimate of treatment cost (sometimes called "predetermination") for crowns, bridges and prosthetics. Such estimates are completed by the Clinic Patient Services staff based on the Treatment Plan and often after consultation with the dental student and the supervising faculty instructor. These predeterminations are sent to the patient for forwarding to their insurance company.

## **INCORRECT/INSUFFICIENT ADDRESS**

1. Patient's whose outstanding account statements are returned by the post office as no address, wrong address or otherwise undeliverable will be suspended by Patient Services from future appointments until sufficient suitable address information is provided and the account is paid in full. It is the patient's responsibility to inform the Clinic's Patient Services office of change of address. Patient failure to receive bills because of their address change does not alter the aging and handling of accounts by the Clinic, Patient Services unit.
2. Active treatment of an irreversible nature, which was begun prior to the account suspension, will be completed to the point where the patient is made stable and can seek treatment elsewhere.

## **CANCELLATION POLICY / "NO SHOW" POLICY**

Patients who cancel with less than 24 hours notice or who do not show up for appointments will be penalized as follows:

- a) The first, short-notice cancellation / no show is recorded in Progress Notes by the student and signed by the faculty instructor.
- b) The second and subsequent short-notice cancellations / no shows are recorded in Progress Notes as above and the patient is charged a fee of \$12.00 which is added to his/her account by the student. The fee code for all cancellations and no-shows is 94303.
- c) If a total of three (3) short-notice cancellations / no shows are recorded in Progress Notes, the patient will be suspended by Patient Services and informed in writing. Active treatment of an irreversible nature which was begun prior to the account suspension will be completed to the point where the patient is made stable and can seek treatment elsewhere.
- d) Re-admission to the clinic is at the discretion of the Director of Clinics/Supervisor of Patient Services and the administrative fee for this will be \$20.00.

## **RESPONSIBILITY / REPLACEMENT / REPAIR INFORMATION**

### **Range of Services Available:**

The Dalhousie University, Faculty of Dentistry Clinic is primarily an undergraduate dental student teaching clinic. The faculty and students will provide only those treatment procedures that the supervising faculty instructors and students together feel confident in completing successfully. All treatment services, which the dental profession can offer, are not necessarily available at the Dalhousie Dental Clinic.

### **Unsatisfactory Care**

Unfortunately even when the best judgment of care-providers is used, unforeseen circumstances cause treatments to be unsuccessful or less successful than anticipated. By agreeing to treatment at the Dalhousie Dental Clinic, the patient accepts that he/she is treated primarily by undergraduate dental and dental hygiene students and accepts that the risks and rewards are influenced by the lack of experience and judgment of the student operators.

**The Faculty of Dentistry will provide treatment in a caring and technically competent manner within the limitations of the knowledge, experience, judgment and skills of the students and instructors working together. There is no guarantee, explicit or implicit, provided by the Dalhousie Dental Clinic.**

### **Referrals to Dentist Practicing External to the Clinic**

From time to time Clinic patients may be referred to dentists who practice external to this Clinic. Often the reason is that the required treatment cannot be successfully completed within this Clinic. Normally the Clinic accepts no financial responsibility for treatment performed by the dentist to whom the patient is referred. The referral must be accompanied by the official referral form (available only in the Clinic Director's office). This form must be signed by the dental student, clinical instructor, Clinic Director (or designate) and the patient.

### **Damaged/Broken/Lost Appliances**

As numerous treatment services involve placement of prostheses \* or devices \*, the Dalhousie Dental Clinic's policy is as follows with respect to replacement / repair costs. (\* These include: fillings, crowns, bridges, removable dentures whether partial or complete, orthodontic appliances and retainers, biteguards)

1. The Clinic assumes no responsibility, financial or otherwise for the replacement of prostheses/devices lost, purposely altered or broken by the patient and/or his/her acquaintances.
2. The Clinic assumes no responsibility financial or otherwise for intra-oral deterioration of the patient due to misuse of any prosthesis/device which was properly placed initially or for any prosthesis/device lost/unused and not reported in a timely fashion to the Faculty.

3. The Clinic assumes no responsibility financially or otherwise for manufacturing errors and/or defects, which are beyond the control of the Faculty.
4. The repair / replacement policy is that any prosthesis / device (which includes fillings, crowns, bridges, dentures, orthodontic appliances, biteguards and possibly other items) which in the judgment of the patient concerned and supervising dental faculty has failed within one year from the date of placement, due to breakage or has been lost for reasons related to placement or otherwise does not perform as planned, will be repaired or replaced with the cost of the repair or replacement borne entirely by the Clinic after authorization from the Clinic Director or the Supervisor of Patient Service.

**Failure or loss of prostheses /devices after one year from the date of placement is not Clinic responsibility. The costs of repair or replacement of prostheses / devices after one year from the date of placement are entirely the patient's responsibility.**

#### **RELATIVE VALUE UNITS (RVU's)**

The "Clinical Comprehensive Patient Care" course uses relative value units as a measure of student clinical production.

RVU figures are determined by the amount of time, skill required and responsibility associated. The accumulation of RVU's over the period is a measure of the value and volume of experience gained by the student. The accumulation of RVU's during the course will be used toward determining part of the student's course grade in Clinical Comprehensive Care III and IV. See the course outlines for more details.

The RVU values for selected treatment procedures, identified by CDA service codes are programmed into the Clinic computer and are displayed in the printed Clinic fee guide along with CDA codes and associated fees.