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| Subject: Dental Services | Effective Date:  Revised Date:  Revised Date:  Revised Date: |
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POLICY:

Given the short stay of the program, it is anticipated that the patient will be obtaining routine dental care after discharge, but the patient will be assisted in obtaining emergency dental care.

“**Routine dental services**” means an annual inspection of the oral cavity for signs of disease, diagnosis of dental disease, dental radiographs as needed, dental cleaning, fillings (new and repairs), minor dental plate adjustments, smoothing of broken teeth, and limited prosthodontic procedures (e.g., taking impressions for dentures and fitting dentures).

“**Emergency dental services**” includes services needed to treat an episode of acute pain in teeth, gums, or palate; broken or otherwise damaged teeth, or any other problem of the oral cavity that requires immediate attention.

“**Prompt referral**” means, within reason as soon as the dentures are lost or damaged. Referral does not mean that the patient must see the dentist at that time but does mean that an appointment (referral) is made, or that the facility is aggressively working at replacing the dentures.

PROCEDURE:

# Patient, patient's family member, significant and/or concerned others, attending physician, or nursing may identify dental care needs.

# If the need is not urgent but should be addressed, this will be discussed with patient and/or family. Assistance to schedule an appointment with a dentist of their choice for post-discharge will be offered, as necessary.

# Patients with lost or damaged dentures that may cause interference with eating will be promptly referred to a dentist for evaluation and treatment.

## Follow the hospital’s policy identifying those circumstances when the loss or damage of dentures is the facility's responsibility and may not charge a patient.

## Must promptly, [within x days], refer residents with lost or damaged dentures for dental services if it should not wait for post discharge.

## If a referral does not occur within 3 days, the facility must provide documentation of what they did to ensure the patient could still eat and drink adequately while awaiting dental services.

# For more urgent situations as described above, the program staff will call the dentist of the patient’s choice or use a dentist identified by the hospital as willing to meet the patients’ needs in such situations.

# The staff will assist in arranging transportation as necessary if family is not available.