

Queuing up early for chips became history: DH optimises online registration system for dental general public session to ensure effective use of public healthcare resources

The Department of Health (DH) said today (January 3) that the online registration system for the dental general public session ([ORDGP](#)) has been operating smoothly since its launch on December 30, 2024, and is pleased that the public, especially the elderly, no longer need to brave the wind and rain to go to the dental clinics to queue up in the early morning to compete for a disc quota. The DH also noted that there were cases in the past three service days where individuals who were successfully allocated quotas for the service did not attend the appointment. To optimise the use of public resources, starting from Monday (January 6), the DH will temporarily implement an over-subscription ballot to suitably increase the number of successful applicants to a level exceeding the actual service quotas and introduce a waiting list mechanism to fill possible vacancies.

"Since the launch of the ORDGP, some members of the public who had been successfully allocated a quota did not turn up for the appointment. Upon initial enquiry, they said that they were unable to attend due to other commitments or had forgotten their appointment, while others said that they were unaware that the scope of the service was limited to emergency dental services," the DH spokesman said.

From next Monday (January 6), elderly people aged 65 or above who have completed the online registration but are not selected by the computer ballot will be placed on a waiting list by computer ballot with priority. The waitlisted persons, upon notification by telephone, will be arranged to attend the clinic of their first choice.

The DH will take the initiative to contact successful applicants on the day when the ballot results are announced to confirm that they have received the SMS and to remind them of the location of the clinic and the consultation time for the following day. If it is known that individual successful applicants will not be able to receive the service the next day, the DH will contact the waitlisted persons by telephone, and they should arrive at the designated clinic at 8.30am on the following day to register for the service.

In addition, members of the public who have been successfully allocated a quota must arrive at the designated dental clinic at 8.30am on the appointment day for registration. After verifying the number of attendances and absentees, staff of the dental clinics will call those waitlisted persons from 9.30am to fill any vacancies and they should arrive at the designated clinics before 11.30am to register for the service.

"Depending on the absence rate at each clinic, the DH will suitably increase the quota of successful applicants and set up a waiting list to fill vacancies without compromising the overall quality of service, which remains the top priority. The DH will continue to monitor the operation of the new system and keep in view the utilisation and attendance rates. If the situation warrants, a mechanism to deter absenteeism and abuse may be introduced as necessary," the spokesman said.

The spokesman emphasised that public dental services are dedicated to those in need of emergency dental treatments only, namely prescriptions for pain relief, extraction of teeth, or treatment of other emergencies (e.g. oral abscesses). Given the limited quotas, members of the public should not abuse the service and waste valuable resources.

To further facilitate the use of the ORDGP, the public will be able to access it through the Hospital Authority's mobile application "HA Go" starting from January 10, in addition to the [eHealth mobile application](#) or the DH's Dental Public Session [website](#).

The DH will continue to deploy additional manpower to assist members of the public in need to register and utilise the ORDGP. Anyone who needs assistance with registration can go to any dental clinic between 8.30am and 11.30am and be assisted by staff in the registration process without the need to use their own cell phones or computers.

In addition, the DH has extensively linked up with the following district networks to assist those in need:

- [District Health Centres](#);
- [District Health Centre Expresses](#);
- Neighbourhood Elderly Centres and the District Elderly Community Centres under the Social Welfare Department;
- District Councillors' offices;
- Community Care Teams; and
- dental clinics run by 15 social welfare institutions or non-governmental organisations.

Members of the public may also visit the DH's [website](#) to view briefings and demonstration videos on the system.

For the addresses and service hours of the 11 dental clinics under the DH, please refer to the relevant [websites](#).