

EARLY RELEASE OF SUPERANNUATION FOR MAJOR DENTAL

Everyone has the right to optimal health and wellbeing. Being healthy and living well is important to all of us.

Finances and health are nearly impossible to separate, and we all know that quality health care costs money, and there are lots of other things that you could be spending that money on, but it is important to prioritise your health. Medical costs can be tough for a family to handle but keeping yourself healthy will prevent a lot of extra costs and problems later.

Can you use Super for dental? As an option, you may be eligible for compassionate release of super to pay for necessary medical treatment for you or your dependant. (The eligibility of a family member is determined within the definitions provided by the Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993).

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT COMPASSIONATE RELEASE OF SUPERANNUATION FUNDS:

Early release of dental funds through the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) allows individuals to access their superannuation early to pay for necessary dental treatment. This option is available for treatments that are essential to alleviate acute or chronic pain or treat a life-threatening illness, and only when the person cannot afford the treatment any other way.

The ATO manages the application process and requires documentation, such as medical and dental certificates, proving the need for the treatment. The release of funds is carefully audited by the ATO to ensure funds are used solely for the intended medical purpose. The dental practice itself has no role in the application or release of funds—patients independently apply through the ATO.

EARLY RELEASE OF SUPER FOR DENTAL TREATMENT

You may be able to make an application through the Australian Tax Office (ATO) using myGov to access your existing funds held in your superannuation fund for your retirement. There are very limited circumstances when you can access your

superannuation early. You may be allowed to withdraw some of your super on compassionate grounds, for unpaid expenses. This means that you have no other means of paying for these expenses. The amount of super you can withdraw is limited to what you reasonably need to meet the unpaid expense.

Definitions of Compassionate Grounds by the ATO include, needing money to pay for:

Medical treatment, medical expenses, dental expenses and medical transport for you or your dependant (including major dental)

The super you withdraw is paid and taxed as a normal super lump sum. The tax rate depends on various factors, including your age and the components of the super lump sum. Your super fund will automatically deduct the tax from your super account.

EARLY RELEASE OF SUPER FOR DENTAL ELIGIBILITY

The eligibility for compassionate release of super for dental is below. The ATO can only approve a release of your super on compassionate grounds if you meet all of the conditions listed below:

Condition 1 – you meet the eligibility requirements of the compassionate ground you're applying for. The specific eligibility criteria, related to dental is Medical (treatment or transport).

Medical treatment – There are two sub-conditions to meet to be eligible:

Sub Condition 1 – you or your dependant must require medical treatment to treat a life-threatening illness or injury, to alleviate acute or chronic pain OR to alleviate acute or chronic mental illness.

Sub Condition 2 – the medical treatment you (or your dependant) need is not readily available through the public health system.

Condition 2 – you have not yet paid the expense. The ATO can only approve compassionate release of super to help you with unpaid expenses. If you have already paid the expense, using a loan, a credit card, or other means, you do not meet the eligibility requirements.

Condition 3 – you can't afford to pay part or all the expense without accessing your super. That is, you can't pay the expense by getting a loan, using your savings, selling shares / investments / assets.

Condition 4 – you are or have been a citizen or permanent resident of Australia or New Zealand.

Condition 5 – you provide all required supporting clinical evidence and financial evidence. If your application doesn't include all supporting evidence, there may be delays in assessing it or it may not be approved.

Financial Evidence: To assess your application, the ATO will also need to see the unpaid expenses that show the amounts you're seeking to release from your super account. This can include an itemised quote or an unpaid invoice that shows the amount and a description of each component. You will need to provide a treatment plan to show how those unpaid expenses are connected to the medical treatment you submit in your application.

***Clinical Evidence:** You will need to provide two (2) written medical reports to validate the treatment plan, connecting those unpaid expenses. One from a Medical or Dental Specialist and another from a Dentist or Medical Practitioner. The registered medical specialist must be specialised in the area in which they are giving their opinion. The medical reports must be completed, signed and dated less than six months before you submit your application.

EARLY RELEASE OF SUPER DENTAL CRITERIA

Dental Treatments that can be accessed by early release super are Dental Implants, Root Canal Therapy, Crowns, Periodontal Treatment, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Orthodontics and Braces.

STEPS TO ACCESS SUPER FOR DENTAL TREATMENT

Steps to access your Superannuation funds for dental treatment.

Step 1: Confirm Your Eligibility

You need to confirm your eligibility for the early release of your Superannuation. Check the eligibility criteria on the ATO website or contact a financial advisor to see if you qualify.

Step 2: Get A Quote For Your Dental Treatment

Obtain a dental treatment quote before you apply. This quote should contain a treatment plan, item numbers, and costs. You can get it from your dentist or dental clinic.

Step 3: Complete The Early Release Of Super For Dental Treatment Form

The next step is to complete the Early Release of Super for Dental Treatment form. You can obtain the form from the Australian Taxation Office website or your Superannuation fund. The form requires your personal details, Superannuation details, and details of your medical condition and treatment.

Step 4: Submit The Form To Your Super Fund

Once you have completed the form and gathered all the necessary supporting documents which should include your dental report, apply to your Super fund. Then they will review your application and supporting documentation.

Step 5: The Outcome Of Your Application

Finally, you wait for the outcome of your application. This time can vary, and you may be asked for additional information or documentation.

Patients must apply through the ATO and receive approval before funds can be released.