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ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT IN IRELAND
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Orthodontics is a dental specialty that focuses on genetic variations and developmental abnormalities in the dentofacial region. Its purpose is to improve oral function, produce resistance to dental disease, improve dentofacial aesthetics and promote psychosocial bearing. The public perception of orthodontics, is profoundly centered on beauty care products and correction of crooked teeth, which falls in line with the developing trend for beautification in developed countries.

Orthodontic treatment in Ireland can be divided into Public - meaning that it will be paid by the National Health System Executive and Private meaning that all expenses will be covered by the family or the person themselves.

Public orthodontic treatment in Ireland is available for free from the Health Service Executive (HSE) if you have a severe problem with your bite. Referrals to the HSE service need to be made before 16 years of age and are typically made at the time of the 6th class dental check-up. HSE orthodontic treatment is not available for adults. Average waiting time for HSE orthodontic treatment is around 5 years. How does one know if they qualify for free dental treatment?

In 2006 the HSE Orthodontic Review Group recommended the introduction of a modified version of the internationally validated Index of Orthodontic Treatment Need (IOTN). The Index strives to measure particular malocclusion qualities and identify orthodontic patients who have a substantial dental need (grade 4 and 5 of IOTN) and will benefit from the intervention from those who have a minimal oral health requirement and will receive just aesthetic advantages.

Prioritizations of care in this way ensures that limited public funds are diverted to patients with the greatest need, and that the resource-limited orthodontic workforce is able to function within its HSE services contracts.

Private treatment is widely available for people who do or do not fall the IONT criteria for HSE orthodontics. Fees for private orthodontic treatment typically start around €3,500 but can tend to be much higher depending on the type of orthodontic material used. There is no waiting time for private orthodontic treatment.