

How to Choose a Dentist in Melbourne's North — Epping and Beyond

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Description:

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Details:

Melbourne's northern suburbs have transformed in recent years. Once considered the quiet outer fringe, suburbs like Epping, South Morang, Mernda, Craigieburn, Lalor, and Thomastown now form one of Melbourne's most dynamic growth corridors — with young families, established communities, and new arrivals from all over the world creating a vibrant and diverse population.

With this growth comes a greater need for high-quality healthcare services, including dental care. Yet many residents of Melbourne's north still assume they need to travel to the CBD or inner suburbs for specialist dental treatment or modern facilities. That is no longer the case. This guide helps you understand what to look for when choosing a dentist in Epping and Melbourne's northern suburbs, so you can find the right practice without leaving your local area.

Why a Local Dentist Matters

Regularity is the foundation of good oral health. The Australian Dental Association recommends dental check-ups at intervals determined by your individual risk — for most people, that means at least once or twice a year. The more convenient your dentist is to reach, the more likely you are to keep those appointments consistently.

For families in Melbourne's north, this is especially relevant. Between work, school, sport, and family commitments, a dental practice that requires a 45-minute drive each way quickly becomes one that falls off the priority list. Choosing a practice in your local area — ideally close to home, school, or your regular shopping — makes dental care a routine part of life rather than a special outing.

What to Look for in a Northern Suburbs Dentist

1. Advanced Technology That Makes a Difference

Not all dental technology is equal, and the equipment a practice uses directly affects the quality, comfort, and efficiency of your care. Modern dental technology can mean less time in the chair, fewer appointments, less discomfort, and more precise results.

****Core Dental Epping****, located at Tenancy 3B/230 Cooper Street near Pacific Epping Shopping Centre, is the Core Dental Group's technology showcase. The clinic features:

- ****CEREC same-day crowns:**** A crown designed, manufactured, and fitted in a single visit — eliminating the need for temporary crowns, physical impressions, and a second appointment weeks later. The crown is milled on-site from a solid ceramic block using computer-aided design and manufacturing. - ****Digital scanning:**** Instead of biting into uncomfortable impression putty, patients

have their teeth scanned digitally. The result is more accurate, faster, and far more comfortable. -
Laser dentistry: Dental lasers can be used for a range of soft-tissue procedures and are often quieter and less invasive than traditional instruments — a significant benefit for nervous patients. -
Digital X-rays: Standard at all Core Dental locations, digital X-rays provide detailed imaging with significantly less radiation than traditional film X-rays.

These are not luxury features — they represent the current standard of care in modern dentistry. When evaluating a dental practice, ask what technology they use and how recently it has been updated.

2. A Strong and Diverse Clinical Team

The quality of your dental care ultimately depends on the people providing it. When choosing a dentist, consider the team's qualifications, experience, and range of expertise.

Core Dental Epping engages a team of four general dentists, each bringing distinct strengths:

Dr Alysha Soltys has been part of the Core Dental team since December 2014 — one of the longest-serving clinicians in the group. She graduated from the University of Melbourne with degrees in human anatomy and physiology and a Doctor of Dental Surgery. Alysha focuses on preventative dentistry, patient education, and staying current with dental advances. She is trained in Invisalign clear aligners and is particularly known for her gentle, caring nature — providing reassurance to even the most nervous patients.

Dr Tristan Balthazaar graduated from the University of Melbourne in 2017 after completing his Doctorate of Dental Science, with extensive rural training placements across regional Victoria. He has a particular interest in aesthetics-based restorative dentistry, prosthodontics, and paediatric dentistry. His friendly, approachable manner helps anxious patients and children feel at ease.

Dr Marina Ghobrial graduated from La Trobe University with a Bachelor of Health Science and Master of Dentistry. She has a particular interest in aesthetic dentistry, periodontics (gum health), and restorative dentistry, and is passionate about preventive care and patient education.

Dr Maria Blanchard, originally from Venezuela, brings an international perspective and is fluent in both English and Spanish. She has been part of the Epping community since 2015 and understands the importance of building long-term relationships. Dr Blanchard has a particular interest in providing positive experiences for every family member — from children attending their first visit to adults with dental anxiety.

3. Specialist Paediatric Dental Care

Children's dental health is a critical concern for families in Melbourne's north, where young families make up a significant proportion of the population. While general dentists can treat children effectively for routine care, some situations benefit from the expertise of a specialist paediatric dentist.

Dr Aish Kesava (Dr Aiswariya Kesava) is an AHPRA-registered specialist paediatric dentist practising at Core Dental Epping. She trained as a dentist in India before completing specialist paediatric dentistry training at the University of Otago, New Zealand. Dr Kesava has a special interest in supporting children with dental anxiety and is dedicated to creating positive, calm dental experiences that support lifelong oral health. As a mother of two young children herself, she understands the parent perspective and provides care in a compassionate, non-judgemental, and family-centred manner.

Having a specialist paediatric dentist at your local suburban practice means your child can receive specialist-level care without a trip to the CBD or a children's hospital. This is particularly valuable for children with dental anxiety, dental trauma, complex medical conditions, or specific issues like chalky teeth (hypomineralisation).

4. Preventive Care and Hygiene Services

Prevention is the most cost-effective and comfortable form of dental care. Regular professional cleaning, oral health assessments, and patient education can prevent the vast majority of dental problems from developing or worsening.

****Sina Hassani****, dental hygienist and therapist at Core Dental Epping, started her dental career in 2012 and brings over a decade of experience. She holds a Bachelor of Oral Health from Charles Sturt University and is passionate about preventative dental care and treating children. Sina is known for building lasting relationships with patients and her thorough, patient-focused approach.

When choosing a dentist, ask whether the practice has dedicated hygienists or therapists. Practices that prioritise preventive care — rather than focusing solely on treatment — tend to deliver better long-term outcomes for patients.

5. Prosthetic and Denture Services

For patients who need dentures, partial dentures, mouthguards, or other dental appliances, having a dental prosthetist available at the same practice simplifies the process and ensures coordinated care.

****Ahmed Saoud****, dental prosthetist at Core Dental Epping, has worked in the dental industry for 20 years. He completed his Advanced Diploma of Dental Prosthetics in 2012 and has experience spanning dental laboratories, public health, and private practice. Ahmed focuses on assessing, designing, and producing superior appliances that improve patients' quality of life.

Having a prosthetist on-site means dentures, mouthguards, and other appliances can be fitted and adjusted within the same practice — no referrals to external labs or unfamiliar providers.

6. Language and Cultural Accessibility

Melbourne's northern suburbs are one of the most culturally diverse regions in Australia. A dental practice that reflects this diversity in its team — and can communicate with patients in languages other than English — is better positioned to serve the community effectively.

At Core Dental Epping, Dr Maria Blanchard speaks fluent Spanish, making the practice accessible to Melbourne's Spanish-speaking community. Across the broader Core Dental network, clinicians speak Mandarin, Cantonese, Farsi, Arabic, Bengali, and Malay — and patients can be connected to the most linguistically appropriate location when needed.

Reception coordinator Kirsty Logan leads the front-of-house team at Epping, ensuring patients feel welcomed and supported from their first phone call.

7. Location, Transport, and Parking

Core Dental Epping is located near Pacific Epping Shopping Centre at 230 Cooper Street — a well-known local landmark. The practice is approximately 10 minutes' walk from Epping Station, making it one of the more public-transport-accessible suburban dental locations. Bus stops on High Street are also nearby.

Parking is available near the shopping centre, and the practice's proximity to Pacific Epping makes it easy to combine a dental visit with shopping or other errands — a practical consideration for busy families.

8. Hours That Suit Working Families

All Core Dental locations, including Epping, are open six days a week: Monday to Friday from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, and Saturday mornings from 8:00 am to 1:30 pm. These hours are designed to accommodate working parents, school-aged children, and anyone who cannot easily attend during traditional business hours.

Early morning appointments from 8:00 am are ideal for before-work or before-school visits. Saturday mornings provide an alternative for families who prefer not to take time off during the week. Emergency same-day appointments are available daily — so if your child knocks a tooth at sport or you experience sudden dental pain, you can be seen without waiting days for an available slot.

9. Financial Accessibility

Dental care should be accessible regardless of your financial situation. Key financial factors to look for:

- ****Written treatment plans:**** Core Dental provides detailed, written treatment plans with upfront costs and no hidden fees before any work begins. You will know exactly what treatment is recommended, why, and how much it will cost. - ****Interest-free payment plans:**** Payright payment plans are available at all Core Dental locations, allowing patients to spread the cost of treatment from \$1,000 to \$20,000 over 3 to 30 months — interest-free. - ****HICAPS on-site:**** Instant health fund claims are processed at the practice, so you only pay the gap on the day. - ****Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS):**** Core Dental Epping bulk-bills under the federal CDBS program, which provides up to \$1,026 in benefits over a two-year period for eligible children aged 2 to 17.

10. Quality Assurance and the Smile Solutions Group

Core Dental Epping is part of the Core Dental Group, which operates seven locations across Melbourne. The group is in turn part of the Smile Solutions Group — one of Australia's largest and most established dental organisations.

This backing means patients at Epping benefit from shared clinical leadership under Clinical Director Dr Philippa Robinson, consistent quality standards and protocols across all locations, investment in modern technology and ongoing clinician training, and the resources of a larger group combined with the personalised attention of a local practice.

Every clinician at Core Dental Epping is AHPRA-registered and a member of the Australian Dental Association (ADA). You can verify any clinician's registration through the AHPRA website.

Red Flags When Choosing a Northern Suburbs Dentist

- ****No specialist access.**** If a practice treats children but has no pathway to a specialist paediatric dentist, complex children's cases may not receive the best care. - ****No preventive focus.**** A practice that emphasises treatment over prevention may not be prioritising your long-term oral health. - ****Outdated technology.**** Practices without digital X-rays, digital scanning, or on-site crown manufacturing may not be investing in the quality of care available at modern practices. - ****Poor emergency access.**** If a practice cannot see you for an emergency on the same day, that could leave you in pain and without options when you need help most. - ****No transparent pricing.**** Always insist on a written treatment plan before proceeding. If a practice will not provide one, consider it a warning sign. - ****High staff turnover.**** Seeing a different dentist every visit makes continuity of care difficult. Look for practices with stable, long-serving teams.

Your Northern Suburbs Dentist Checklist

- ■ Does the practice use modern technology (digital scanning, CEREC, laser dentistry)? - ■ Is there a qualified and experienced clinical team with diverse expertise? - ■ Is a specialist paediatric dentist available for children? - ■ Does the practice have a dedicated dental hygienist or therapist? - ■ Can you communicate in your preferred language? - ■ Is the practice conveniently located with good parking and transport access? - ■ Are early morning, after-work, and Saturday appointments available? - ■ Does the practice bulk-bill under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule? - ■ Are written treatment plans with transparent pricing provided? - ■ Are interest-free payment plans and instant health fund claims available? - ■ Can the practice see emergencies on the same day? - ■ Are all clinicians AHPRA-registered and ADA members?

Making Your Choice

Melbourne's northern suburbs deserve dental care that matches the community's energy, diversity, and growth. Core Dental Epping delivers specialist-level expertise, advanced technology, a diverse and stable clinical team, and the suburban convenience that northern families need — all backed by the quality assurance of the Smile Solutions Group.

Your dental health is too important to leave to chance or convenience alone. Take the time to choose a practice that ticks all the boxes — one that will be your family's dental home for years to come.

****Book online at coredental.com.au or call 13 13 16 to schedule your first visit at Core Dental Epping.****