

The great bulk of the dental treatment for adolescents is done by private practitioners under social security. Following are the statistics under this heading for the year under review :—

Number of persons enrolled under the Social Security (Dental Benefit) Regulations as at 31st March, 1949—			
For general dental benefits	..	..	67,945
For special dental benefits	..	..	9,015
			76,960
Number of persons who during the year under review ceased to be enrolled for dental benefits—			
General benefits : Patients who attained the age of sixteen years prior to 31st March, 1949	..	..	9,674
Special benefits : Patients whose treatment was completed prior to 31st March, 1949	..	..	9,330
Amounts paid for dental benefits for the year ended 31st March, 1949—			
		£	s. d.
For general dental benefits	..	203,128	14 11
For special dental benefits	..	23,244	9 6
Total	..	£226,373	4 5

Number of completed treatments in respect of which the above sums were paid—			
General dental benefits	..	..	64,566
Special dental benefits	..	..	9,345
Average cost per completed treatment—			
		£	s. d.
General dental benefits	..	3	2 11
Special dental benefits	..	2	9 10

NOTE.—The aim is to give a complete treatment every six months to every person enrolled for general dental benefits.

Owing to the time lag that occurs in calling up patients and in rendering and meeting claims for treatment, it is found in practice that two payments are not necessarily made in respect of every enrolled person within the financial year. The average cost of general dental benefits per person is therefore shown as the average per completed treatment. The cost per year per person would be approximately twice this figure. In future annual reports it is proposed to show the number of persons in respect of whom two payments and one respectively were made during the financial year, together with the average cost per person *per year*.

Of the 672 private dental practitioners holding annual practising certificates as at the 31st March, 488 had contracted to provide treatment under the dental-benefits system. The latter figure does not include dentists who are employed by contracting dentists as assistants, and therefore the figure 488 does not represent the total number of dentists engaged in providing dental benefits.

#### SCHOOL DENTAL SERVICE

Thirty-two additional treatment centres have been established during the year, making the total number 508, as against 476 at the end of the previous year. At the 31st March, 1949, the staff numbered 759, including 202 student dental nurses in training.