



Jessie Drahm-Webb with her mother Elaine. Picture: G. FLYNN

Reason to smile

Humpty Doo teenager Jessie Drahm-Webb has plenty of reason to smile this week - she will have new braces - put on for free.

"I feel like I've won the lotto," said the 14-year-old, who is receiving free orthodontic treatment as part of the new national Give a Smile program.

The aim of Give a Smile is to enable orthodontists to help Australians whose financial circumstances prevent them from accessing treatment through the private health system.

Each Give a Smile orthodontist has pledged to accept a minimum of one patient per year from the public health waiting list into their practice.

Each treatment takes about two

years and would normally cost about \$5000-\$7000 per patient. All the work the orthodontist will undertake will be pro-bono.

The program also takes strain off the public waiting lists.

Public dental health waiting lists have decreased by 10 per cent since the launch of Give a Smile in June last year - a saving more than \$1 million a year for taxpayers.

Jessie was nominated by a local Give a Smile screener, who is responsible for identifying potential Give a Smile patients.

Jessie's treatment will include removing several teeth and placing braces on in an effort to straighten her "badly twisted" back teeth and severe overbite.

For more information about Give a Smile visit www.giveasmile.org.au or call 1300 661 613.