



Total Dental Care

Post COVID-19 REOPENING POLICY

This policy has been created based on multiple updated sources from within the dental and medical professions and the government. It outlines modifications to our normal procedure that we intend to employ once the practice can be reopened after the COVID-19 pandemic peak has subsided.

It is not known yet whether these procedures are temporary or whether they will become a permanent feature of the way dental practices must be run to ensure patient and staff safety in the future.

The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic is still being evaluated and studied and policies and recommendations are likely to change in line with the new scientific evidence over time.

We would like to thank all our patients for their patience during this time of the practice being temporary closed and their cooperation whilst implement the new measures.

We will of course be providing dental care to all of our patients in the safest possible environment.

Provisional Timetable

The practice will re-open when it is safe to do so and when the government guidelines have been changed. First of all it will be for patients who need essential dental treatment.

This will be extended to all other patients when the Chief Dental Officer allows.

Total Dental Care team will be preparing the practice to reopen and practising procedures before patients are able to return to the practice. Initially we will be seeing;

- Patients with emergency dental problems
- Anyone who has contacted the practice during the temporary practice closure due to an emergency problem will be a priority.

When the Chief Dental Officer eases the restrictions even more, we will be able to see;

- Patients who have treatment outstanding and was due to be completed before the lockdown
- Patients who are due for their routine examination's visits during the period of temporary closure of the practice.

Patient Communication before reopening

Patients will be contacted prior to their appointments to confirm their attendance and timings.

We will be requesting patients who are attending the practice to update their standard medical history and contact information forms

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beforehand. These forms will be sent out electronically as we will no longer be using paper forms.

NEW MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION

Our normal cross-infection control protocols at Total Dental Care against all previously known pathogens are already carried out in clinical activity in the practice.

Please remember that a dental practice is already a very clean environment and there has been no evidence of COVID-19 transmission occurring in increased rates in dentist or their staff.

We have evaluated all of the updated guidance and been keeping up to date with measures which have been put into place in other countries. We feel that the measures which will be outlined in the policy will reduce the risk to the minimum level within the practice.

Please be assured that all our clinical staff will also be complying with our updated procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection in both directions.



Before patients attend the clinical

Before attending the clinic, the members of staff will carry out a pre-attendance assessment via your completed medical history and assessment forms, this will be done at least three days before. If necessary, a follow-up telephone conversation to assess relative coronavirus infection risk. If we have not received your forms a member of our staff will contact you to remind you of this, if you do have any difficulties with completing the forms, we can help with this over the phone. Do not hesitate to contact us.

If we feel as a practice you are at risk of having possibly been infected, even if you are asymptomatic, we will respectfully request for you to delay booking any appointments with us for at least one month. If we do not receive your medical history and assessment forms in time and are unable to contact you, we may need to cancel your appointment.

Patients that are in the high-risk groups for developing complications from coronavirus we are recommending to delay non-essential dental treatment for as long as possible until the pandemic becomes clear. If you are in a high-risk group and do require treatment, we will schedule your appointment at the start of the day.

Total Dental Care will be operating contactless payment for any NHS charges which will be applied for non-exempt patients.

When travelling to the practice for your appointment we would recommend that you limit close contact with other members of the public as much as possible. We will be meeting each patient outside the building and bring them straight through to the surgery. One adult is allowed to attend with a child please do not bring additional family members with you unless they are happy to



either wait in the car or outside the building.

Arriving at the practice

When attending the practice, we will let you in the building and ask you to hang your coat or jacket near the entrance. The front door will remain locked throughout your visit at the practice, however we cannot accept liability for personal items so please try and limit what you will bring in the building.

We will need to take your temperature with a no-touch thermometer. If your temperature is above 37.8 you will be unable to enter the practice. We will ask you to return home and self-isolate as per current government guidelines.

We intend to eliminate waiting inside the practice and at reception. Accordingly, all appointments will be staggered so that the patients do not arrive or leave at the same time as other patients at the practice.

When using the bathroom, please do your best to ensure that you leave the facilities as you would expect to find them and wash your hand thoroughly. The bathroom will be regularly disinfected between patients throughout the day.



If you are well we will direct you straight to the surgery and request that you do the following before or during your appointment;

- Use the hand sanitiser in the reception area or
- Thoroughly wash your hands for 30 seconds with the antiseptic hand wash provided in the surgery
- We may ask you to use Hydrogen Peroxide mouthwash before some dental treatments are provided
- Rubber dam or other barrier mechanism will be used for more procedures than previously.

Practice Procedures

The Total Dental Care team have spent time critically looking at every aspect of the practice with a view to removing all non-essential items that can potentially be the cause of infection.

You may find the practice to be quite bare looking when you attend.

All clinical and common areas including door handles and surfaces will be regularly disinfected in addition to our normal surface cleaning protocols between patients.

Total Dental Care will be providing a buffer period between patients to allow additional time for additional decontamination procedures, allow for any treatment overruns and allow preparation time for the next patient so that they don't need to wait in the reception area.

All future appointments will be made and confirmed by email or telephone to limit your time spent in reception.



Dental Procedures

All dental staff will be using personal protective equipment in line with the current recommendations and evidence.

We apologise in advance for the necessary reduction in social interaction that this will necessitate. Whilst our masks may make us appear impersonal and distant, please be assured we are still the same friendly team underneath it all.

We are especially mindful that many dental treatments are aerosol-generating procedures (AGP'S). It is difficult for us to carry out some dental procedures without generation of some level of aerosol. Aerosol suspended in the air is a theoretical source of infection which we obviously wish to keep to a minimum. Currently the dentist literature suggest:

- Our use of our normal high-volume suction reduces aerosol production by over 90%
- The use of dental rubber dam where possible reduces bio aerosols by a further 30 to 90%
- Our regular surgical facemasks filter approximately 60% of remaining airborne particles
- FFP2 AND FFP3 masks filter 94% and 99% respectively of airborne particles in both directions (patient to clinician and clinician to patient).



We therefore feel that our normal dental procedure can be carried out with minimal risk by the use of high-volume suction, rubber dam, surgical and FFP2 masks and in aerosol generating procedures FFP3 masks are appropriate.

Summary

The vast majority of our patients are otherwise healthy without coronavirus infection and we are confident that we are able to provide dental care for these patients in as normal an environment as possible while bearing in mind our responsibilities to mitigate risks of infection spread as far as is practically possible.

The policy will be constantly reviewed and updated as necessitated by circumstances over time.

If you have any questions regarding this policy or about your dental care at one of the Total Dental Care practices please do not hesitate to contact us.