

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 procedures that we intend to employ .

It is not known at this time 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 policies and recommendations are likely to change in line with new scientific evidence over time.

We would like to thank all of our patients for their patience and forbearance during the period of temporary practice closure and for their understanding and cooperation whilst we implement new measures at the practice.

We will of course be providing dental care to all of our patients in the safest possible environment. We greatly appreciate your assistance with any new or modified procedures at the practice.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

The practice opened for patients who require essential dental treatment on Monday 8th June 2020.

The All Smiles in Finchley team has prepared the practice for reopening and practising our updated procedures .

We will initially be seeing:

Patients with emergency problems or other dental problems that require urgent assessment and treatment;

Patients with treatment that was not completed prior to the lockdown;

Patients who were due for routine examinations and hygienist visits during the period of closure; we will be offering full dental hygiene.

Patients who are due orthodontic reviews.

Patient communication before reopening

We will be contacting patients and confirming appointments ahead of their scheduled

time.

We will request that all patients who are attending the All Smiles in Finchley update their standard medical history forms beforehand. These forms will be emailed to you in word document format.

The assessment forms include a new section which will allow us to assess your level of risk for coronavirus infection before you attend the surgery.

NEW MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION

Our normal cross-infection control protocols at The All Smiles in Finchley against all previously known pathogens are already woven into all clinical activity carried out at the practice.

It should be remembered that a dental practice is already a very clean environment compared to public areas.

We have collectively evaluated all of the updated guidance. We feel that the measures which are outlined in this policy will reduce risk to the minimum level at the practice.

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

BEFORE ATTENDING AT THE PRACTICE

We will carry out a pre-attendance assessment via your completed Medical History/Assessment forms before your appointment and, if necessary, a follow-up telephone conversation to assess relative coronavirus infection risk. Our staff will contact you to remind you of this if we have not received your completed forms. If you have any difficulties with completing the forms we can help you with this over the phone. The dentist may also carry out a video consultation with you to assess your dental problem prior to your visit so that a treatment plan and cost estimate can be sent to you.

If we feel that 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 the completed questionnaire in time and we are unable to contact you, we may need to cancel your appointment.

We recommend that patients in the high-risk groups for developing complications from coronavirus delay non-essential dental treatment for as long as possible until the trend of the pandemic becomes clear.

If you are in a high risk group and do require treatment we will schedule your appointment at the beginning of the day.

We will request that payment is made online or over the phone for your appointment prior to you attending.

This reduces the requirement for unnecessary contact or use of pin entries on card terminals at reception.

When travelling to the practice, we would recommend that you limit close contact with other members of the public as far as possible. We will meet all patients outside the building and bring them straight into the surgery.

One adult is able to attend with a child; please do not bring additional family members with you unless they are happy to wait in the car or outside the building.

You will be asked to arrive wearing a mask .

WHEN ARRIVING AT THE PRACTICE

The front door will remain locked.

We will ask you to call the practice on arrival. We will meet you at the front door.

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

You will be asked to sanitise your hands with alcohol hand gel.

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

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

If you are well, we will direct you straight to the surgery. before and during the treatment.

We may ask you to use a Hydrogen Peroxide mouthwash before some dental treatments are provided.

Rubber dam or other barrier mechanisms will be used for more procedures than previously.

PRACTICE PROCEDURES

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

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We 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 .

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

DENTAL PROCEDURES

All dental staff will be using personal protective equipment in line with 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 dental literature suggests:

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 procedures 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 as appropriate.