

# DENTAL ELEMENTS

## RE-OPENING POLICY 04.06.2020

PATIENT INFORMATION

LATEST INFORMATION  
REGARDING SAFE PROVISION OF DENTAL CARE

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# DENTAL ELEMENTS POST-COVID-19

## RE-OPENING 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 once the practice can be reopened after the COVID-19 pandemic peak has subsided.

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 worldwide COVID-19 pandemic is still being evaluated and studied and 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.

The team at Dental Elements are looking forward to welcoming back patients and are preparing for a phased re-opening from Tuesday 16th June 2020. We will aim to start seeing patients as soon as we can ensure we can do so in a safe manner and in accordance with government and dental guidelines



# WELCOMING BACK PATIENTS

## A PHASED APPROACH

We will be prioritising:

- Patients with urgent emergency problems or other dental problems that require urgent assessment and treatment
- Patients with emergency problems or other dental problems that require assessment and treatment
- Patients with treatment that was incomplete before the practice was temporarily closed
- Patients who require routine examinations and hygienist appointments

We have had a significant volume of patients contact us during the temporary closure for a variety of reasons. If you have already contacted us about a problem or for a routine appointment please bear with us and we will contact you, as soon as we are able to make an appointment for you.

During this period we may still have our answer machine on. As always, please email or leave a message and we will get back to you as quickly as possible.



## PATIENT COMMUNICATION

### BEFORE OPENING

Our Dental Elements reception team will be contacting patients and confirming appointments ahead of their scheduled time. We will request that all patients who are attending Dental Elements update their standard Medical and Dental Questionnaire beforehand. These forms include a new, more detailed, section which will allow us to assess your level of risk for coronavirus infection before you attend the surgery.



## NEW MEASURES

## AT DENTAL ELEMENTS TO REDUCE RISK OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION

Our normal cross-infection control protocols at Dental Elements against all previously known pathogens are already woven into all clinical activity carried out at the practice to the high.

It should be remembered that a dental practice is already a very clean environment compared to public areas and there is no evidence of COVID-19 transmission occurring in increased rates in dentists or their staff.

We have collectively evaluated all of the updated guidance and observed what measures have been put in place in other countries. We feel that the following measures will reduce risk to the minimum level at the practice. Please be assured that all of our clinical staff will also be complying with these procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection in both directions.



# BEFORE ATTENDING THE PRACTICE

- We will carry out a pre-attendance assessment via your completed Medical History/Assessment forms at least three days 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. 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.
- In view of the potential seriousness of this disease, please note that we respectfully insist that the Medical and Dental Questionnaire (MDQ) is completed at least three days before your appointment. If we do not receive the completed questionnaire in time and we are unable to contact you, we may need to cancel your appointment. You may be charged for the appointment if we are unable to fill it at short notice as per our normal terms and conditions.
- We would 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. To find out whether you are in a high or very high-risk group please see the link below:  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/>
- If you are in a high risk group and do require treatment we will schedule your appointment at the beginning of the day to limit your potential exposure to other patients and aerosols.
- Dental Elements will be operating contactless payment systems going forwards, and we would request that payment is made online or over the phone for your appointment prior to you attending if you do not have a means of making contactless payment with Apple Pay at the time. 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.

**[www.dentalelements.co.uk](http://www.dentalelements.co.uk)**

**If you have any questions please call us on 01372 897197**

# WHEN ARRIVING AT THE PRACTICE

- 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 as far as we are able to manage.
- We regret that during this interim period, we will not be providing our normal tea and coffee services in the interests of reducing all opportunities for cross infection to a minimum.
- When you attend the practice, we will welcome you, and ask for you to place your coat and belongings in a plastic box at the entrance to the practice. The front door will remain locked, however we cannot accept liability for personal items so please limit what you bring into the building. 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.
- If you are well, we would 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 a Hydrogen Peroxide mouthwash before some dental treatments are provided
  - Rubber dam or other barrier mechanisms will be used for more procedures than previously.
- 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 hands thoroughly. The restrooms will be regularly disinfected between patients .



# PRACTICE PROCEDURES

- The Dental Elements 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 will find that the practice may appear to be quite bare 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.
- Dental Elements 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 do not need to wait in the reception area.
- All future appointments will be made and confirmed by email or telephone to limit your time spent at reception.

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# 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 (AGPs). 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 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 dental procedures can be carried out with minimal risk by the use of high-volume suction, rubber dam and FFP2 / 3 masks as appropriate.





# SUMMARY

**Stay well, stay safe.  
Best wishes from  
The Dental Elements team**

The vast majority of our patients are otherwise healthy without coronavirus infection and we are confident that we are able to provide normal 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.

This 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 Dental Elements please do not hesitate to contact us on [info@dentalelements.co.uk](mailto:info@dentalelements.co.uk)

Yours sincerely

Jon and the Dental Elements team

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