



Gentle Dental  
re-opening policy

[www.Gentle-Dental.co.uk](http://www.Gentle-Dental.co.uk)



## 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 when the practice reopens after the COVID-19 pandemic peak has subsided.

We do not know whether these procedures are temporary or whether they will become a permanent feature of the way we will have to work to ensure clients and staff safety in the future. As new scientific evidence emerges we will alter our policies and recommendations in line with it.

We would like to thank all of our clients for their patience 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 clients in the safest possible environment and really appreciate your assistance with any new or modified procedures at the practice.

## **Provisional Timetable**

The practice will re-open for patients who require essential dental treatment in mid to late June. We are sorry we cannot give a precise date but it is dependent on receiving the necessary PPE.



The Gentle Dental team will spend the next few weeks preparing the practice for reopening and training on our updated procedures before your return to the practice.

We will initially be seeing:

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

Our next priority will then be

- Clients with treatment that was not completed prior to the lockdown;
- Clients who were due for routine examinations and hygienist visits during the period of closure;
- Clients who are due orthodontic reviews.

## **Client communication before reopening**

We will be contacting all clients and rebooking appointments.

We will request that all clients who are attending for appointments to update their standard medical and dental history forms beforehand. These forms will now be in electronic format and where possible we will no longer be using paper forms.

The pre-appointment assessment will include a phone call which will allow us to assess your level of risk for coronavirus infection before you attend the clinic.



## **New Measures To Reduce The Risk of Covid-19 Transmission**

Our normal cross-infection control protocols to reduce the risk of cross-infection between clients are already woven into all of our appointments.

Gentle Dental is already a very clean environment compared to public areas and there is no evidence of COVID-19 transmission occurring in increased rates in dental staff or clients who have attended prior to lockdown.

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 measures which are outlined in this policy will reduce an already low risk to a minimal level at the practice.

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

## **Before Attending the Practice**

We apologise in advance if any of these measures seems harsh but we have a duty of care to all clients and our staff to ensure everyone's safety.

We will carry out a pre-attendance assessment via your completed Medical History/Assessment forms at least seven days before your appointment and, if necessary, a follow-up telephone conversation to assess relative coronavirus infection risk. The reception team 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, the team will be more than happy to help you with this over the phone. Rob may also carry out a video consultation with you to assess your dental problem prior to your visit so that, where possible, a treatment plan and cost estimate can be sent to and discussed with you in advance.

If you feel that you are at risk of having possibly been infected, even if you are asymptomatic, we will ask for you to delay booking any appointments with us for at least one month. If we have not received your completed questionnaire and we are unable to contact you prior to your appointment, we hope you understand that we may need to cancel the 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. To find out whether you are in a high or very high-risk group please see the link [here](#).

To reduce unnecessary contact and the use of PIN entries on payment card terminals at reception, where possible, we will be operating contactless payment systems going forwards and ask that payment is made electronically or over the phone prior to your appointment.

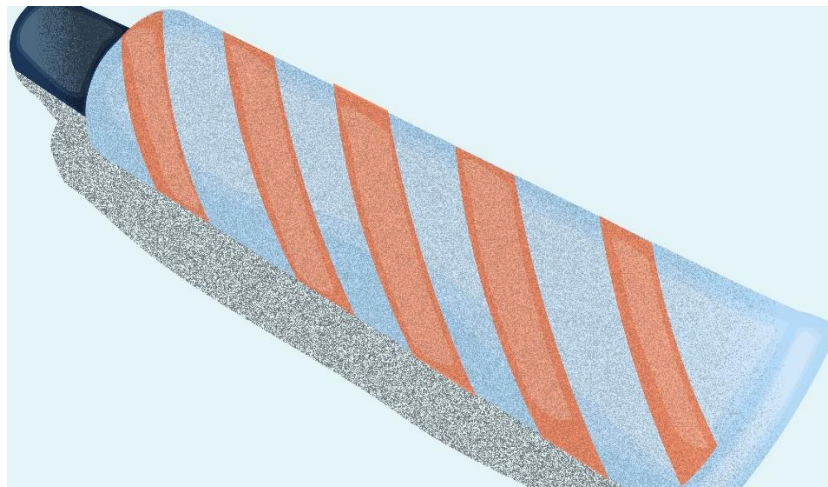
A huge departure for Gentle Dental is that our door will be locked and we will employ the use of a door entry system. The welcome will still be smiley and friendly but may be from behind a face visor. Where possible please do not bring additional family members with you unless they are happy to wait in the car or outside the building and can we ask that for a child's appointment just one adult attends.



## Arriving at the Practice

When you attend the practice we will welcome you and ask for you to place your coat or jacket and all other items such as a handbags in a plastic box so please limit what you bring into the building where possible.

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



We intend to eliminate waiting inside the practice and at reception so appointments will be staggered to avoid clients arriving or leaving at the same time. After sanitising your hands, you will be taken directly to the treatment room.

The bathroom will be available and will be disinfected between uses. We respectfully ask that you wash your hand thoroughly after using the bathroom. All door handles will also be disinfected regularly between clients.

We will be providing a buffer period between clients to allow time for additional decontamination procedures, treatment overruns and preparation time for the next client so as to eliminate the need for any client to wait in the lounge.

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



## Practice procedure

As part of our reopening risk assessment we have looked at every aspect of the practice with a view to removing all non-essential items that could potentially be the cause of infection. So, you may find that the practice appears to be quite bare. Unfortunately, this also means we will not be providing our normal tea/coffee and magazine interlude in order to minimize the opportunity for cross infection.

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 Procedures**

All dental staff will be using personal protective equipment in line with current recommendations and we apologise in advance for the reduction in social interaction this will cause.

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 virtually any 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 (a rubber sheet placed over the teeth) 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 (client to clinician and clinician to client).

We therefore feel that our normal dental procedures can be carried out with minimal risk by the use of high-volume suction, rubber dam where appropriate, surgical and FFP2/FFP3 masks as appropriate. We will also employ the use of air filtration systems in the treatment rooms to further reduce any risk.

Currently it is not our intention to increase our fees. However, additional PPE costs and fallow time between appointments as required by our regulators for cleaning/disinfection may mean we need to revisit this later in the year.



# *Summary:*



We are confident that we are able to provide dental care for our clients in a safe and as normal an environment as possible while bearing in mind our responsibilities to mitigate risks of infection spread as far as is practically possible.

We will constantly review and update this policy as research emerges and we learn more about this virus.

If you have any questions regarding this policy or about your dental care at Gentle Dental please do not hesitate to contact us on [info@gentle-dental.co.uk](mailto:info@gentle-dental.co.uk) or call the practice number for advice on how to get in touch by phone. 01722411311

*With Kind Regards,  
Rob, Niamh & the Gentle  
Dental team*

