



COVID-19 Reopening Policy

This policy has been created based on multiple updated sources from within the dental / 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, so policies and recommendations are likely to change in line with new scientific evidence over time.

We would like to thank our patients for their forbearance during this period of temporary practice closure and for their understanding whilst we implement new measures at the practice. Our first priority is the well-being of our patients and staff and this will continue to be the case. 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 for patients who require **essential** dental treatment on Monday 15th June 2020. This will be extended to other patient groups as the lockdown restrictions are eased further.

We will prepare the practice for reopening and practising our updated procedures before patients return to the practice. We will initially be seeing:

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

When the lockdown restrictions are further lifted we will be able to see:

- 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

Bottesford Dental Practice

35-37 Queenswood Road, Bottesford, North Lincolnshire, DN16 3QS

Call: 01724 868 099 Email: bottesford.dental@outlook.com

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Patient communication

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

During this phone call we will ask that you update your dental and medical history records, so please have your prescriptions ready. We will also go through a Coronavirus screening questionnaire, which will allow us to assess your risk level before you attend the surgery.

Appointments will be managed to allow for social distancing between patients. That might mean that you're offered fewer options for scheduling your appointment.

New measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmissions

Our normal cross-infection control protocols 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 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 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 carrying out training and complying with our updated procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection in both directions.

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Before attending at the practice

We will carry out a pre-attendance assessment via telephone where we will update your Medical History before your appointment and, if necessary, a follow-up telephone conversation to assess relative coronavirus infection risk. A dentist may also carry out a telephone consultation with you to assess your dental problem prior to your visit so that a treatment plan and cost estimate can be discussed with 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 you do not arrive at the practice at your allocated time or you do not attend we will have to place you on our list again and you may not be offered another appointment quickly due to high demand. If you are a private patient, you may be charged for the appointment as per our normal terms and conditions.

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;

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/>

We will be operating contactless payment systems, where possible, going forwards and we will request that payment is made over the phone for your appointment prior to you attending if you do not have a means of making contactless payment at the time of your visit please bring the exact amount in a sealed clear bag . This reduces the requirement for unnecessary contact or use of pin entries on the card terminal 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. Once you arrive, please phone us and we will meet all patients outside the building and bring them straight into the surgery. You must arrive alone for your appointment. One adult is able to attend with a child; please do not bring any additional family members with you.

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Arriving at the practice

When you attend the practice, please stand in front of the door and telephone us to inform us that you are here, and then wait for the door to be opened. The front door will remain locked at all times. Do not bring any belongings into the practice with you (like coats or bags etc.) Please ensure that you place your mobile phone and keys into your pockets prior to entering. If you are unable to do this, you will be asked to place these items into a clear bag, which will be returned to you on leaving.

Please be patient as the previous patient has to leave before you can be admitted. The chaperone will introduce themselves to you and you will then be asked to step inside. Please remember social distancing and remain a clear distance from your chaperone at all times. The chaperone will ask you to clean your hands with an alcohol rub and then you will be escorted into the surgery.

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.

Practice procedures

The 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.

All future appointments will be made and confirmed by 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 (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. We will follow strict guidelines where AGP's are required. You may find that not all procedures will be available at this current time.

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 needed, surgical masks and, in aerosol generating procedures FFP3 masks as appropriate.

Summary

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 Bottesford Dental Practice, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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