

Appointments and Failure to attend policy

At our practice we will endeavour to manage our appointments system to avoid delays in appointment times and minimise loss of surgery time through cancellations and failed appointments.

We will

- Communicate with patients in a courteous, friendly, professional manner.
- Make sure that patients receive full information about our services, their treatment and its cost.
- Refer patients for further professional advice and treatment where appropriate.
- Ensure that patients should have to wait no longer than 20 minutes to be seen. If there is a further delay we will explain the reasons.
- Remind patients of their appointment by phone or text or email (as preferred).
- Monitor our waiting times for (i) treatment and (ii) for booking appointments.
- Provide as much notice as possible when appointments have to be changed or cancelled and explain the reasons.
- Advise patients if there is a change of dentist.

In return, we would like Patients to:-

- Participate in your dental treatment and prevention of further dental disease, particularly any advice about prevention and diet that we have asked you to continue at home
- Arrive on time for your appointment. If you arrive too late for your appointment we might not be able to see you. This would be considered as a 'Fail to Attend'.
- Advise us of any changes to your contact details (address, telephone numbers, e-mail) to help us keep our records up to date and ensure that we are able to contact you.
- **Please give the practice at least 24 hours' notice if you are unable to keep your appointment. We can then offer that slot to another patient in need, for example a child suffering from dental pain.**

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If you do not turn up for your appointment without letting us know:-

- **We can terminate your course of NHS treatment if you miss your appointment without letting us know. You will then have to pay for a new course of treatment.**
- **If you miss an appointment on more than one occasion, or cancel them without giving us 24 hours' notice, without letting us know, we may need to review future provision of treatment for you at the practice, especially if you have already been warned about your previous attendance. It may mean you will have to find another dentist willing to take you on as a patient.**
- **We reserve the right to charge patients for failing appointments where private dental treatment is to be provided. This will be charged at a rate of £2.00 per minute wasted.**
- Text and e-mail reminders are available for all appointments. All text messages sent by our system are logged when successfully sent. It is your responsibility to check your text and e-mail messages and to ensure that we are informed of any changes to your mobile phone number or e-mail address. We will assume that you have received your reminder if it has been successfully sent. Text messages and e-mails are sent out of courtesy, not necessity. It is your responsibility to turn up on time for an appointment. Failure of the text messaging system for any reason is not sufficient reason for failing to attend or turning up too late for your appointment.
- Discretion will be used if there is good reason for the appointment to be missed. However, this will not be considered if more than one appointment has been missed in a row.

Last review: 26 September 2024

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