



## POST COVID-19 REOPENING POLICY

This policy has been created based on multiple Welsh Regulatory sources from within the Dental and Medical professions and Welsh Government.



**This policy outlines the modifications to our normal working and workflow procedures that we are employing with the practice reopening after the lockdown and restricted phases of the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided.**

**Many of our new procedures and workflow will stay in place for some time and we will have to come to terms with the risks of living with the Covid-19 virus and possibly any future virus that may arise. We must ensure and mitigate the safety of all our staff, patients and visitors.**

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 understanding during the recent period that has restricted us to emergency and urgent telephone advice and extremely limited emergency treatment.

We will continue to provide dental care to all of our patients in the safest possible environment as time goes on and will greatly appreciate your assistance and understanding with our new and modified procedures at the practice as detailed in this document.

### **New Provisional timetable**

Our current timeline is that our current level of service under amber alert will continue into the near future as it has for the past 2 months from 1 August 2020.

**Having eased the lockdown restrictions, from 1 July 2020, we are contacting and trying to see the following groups of patients**

- All those patients with emergency problems or other dental problems that require urgent assessment and treatment who have been in contact with us over the past few months
- Patients with treatment that was not completed prior to the lockdown to reassess their needs, in particular any treatment that may need more urgent care in the near future
- Patients with orthodontic problems and open courses of orthodontic treatment
- Routine examinations
- Patients with more urgent hygiene needs

We will be contacting patients and confirming new appointments going forwards.

## **Patient communication before attending your appointment**

We will request that all patients who are attending Bay House Dental Practice update their standard medical and dental history forms beforehand.

The assessment forms include a new section which will allow us to assess your level of risk to the coronavirus infection before you attend the surgery. Your overall risk assessment of attending the practice will be assessed prior to your visit.

We may perform some of your basic dental information gathering by telephone or video-consultation before you attend to limit the time you spend at the practice

## **New measures to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission**

Our normal cross-infection control protocols at Bay House Dental Practice against all previously known pathogens are already a daily part of our workflows and routines.

It should be remembered that Bay House Dental Practice is already a very clean environment compared to other public areas. There is no evidence of COVID-19 transmission occurring at increased rates at dental surgeries and our processes are already up to date to protect all our staff and patients.

We have re-evaluated all of the updated recent relevant guidance in relation to Covid-19 and are putting into place all the recommendations made by Welsh Government and our regulators. We feel that the measures that are outlined in this policy will reduce risk to the minimum level at the practice. We have already invested in enhanced Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Clean Air Filtration for the general practice environment and each individual clinical area.

Please be assured that all of our clinical staff will also be complying with our updated procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection to our patients, staff and visitors. All our staff will comply with the social distancing recommendations where possible within our practice environment but you will notice that this may not be possible in some areas, in particular the clinical surgery areas when treating our patients. This will be mitigated by the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that we will all be wearing.

You will notice that all our staff will be wearing masks at all times and we will ask all our patients to wear a mask when not in the clinical surgeries.

Please respect this policy that we believe is keeping everyone safe.

We will also keep the number of patients in the practice and waiting room to a minimum and may ask you to wait in your car if needed until we are ready to see you. If you walk or come to the surgery on public transport the waiting room will be available providing there are not too many other patients in the practice environment.

## Before Attending the Practice

We will carry out a pre-attendance assessment via your completed Medical History/Assessment forms before your appointment by telephone or video-consultation and, if necessary, a follow-up telephone conversation to assess relative coronavirus infection risk on the day of or the day before your appointment.

Our staff will contact you to remind you if we have not received your completed forms. If you have any difficulties in completing the forms, we can help you with this over the phone. A dentist may also carry out a telephone or video consultation with you to assess your dental problem and needs prior to your visit so that a treatment plan and a possible cost estimate can be discussed and if needed sent to you. We would be grateful if you could make sure we have updated contact information including your mobile telephone numbers and an email address.

If we feel that you are at risk of having possibly been infected, even if you are asymptomatic, we will request that you 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. 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 recommend that patients in the high-risk groups developing complications from coronavirus or those advised to shield delay all non-essential dental treatment for as long as possible until we are clear that the reinfection rates are lower or an effective vaccine is available. If you are in a high-risk group and do require treatment, we will schedule your appointment at the beginning of the day if necessary, that will reduce your risk of coming into contact with the virus even further.

Bay House Dental Practice will be operating contactless payment systems going forwards, and we will request and encourage that all payments are made over the phone prior to you attending if you do not have a means of making contactless payment at the time of your visit. 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 ask you to contact us by telephone when you arrive and we will meet all patients at one of the doors into the building and bring you 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.



## Arriving at the Practice

Please telephone the practice when you arrive and we will let you know whether to come into the building or if there is a delay. We would respectfully ask you to bear with us in these difficult times as there may, on occasion be a delay to your appointment time, but we will let you know. Our cross infection processes will mean that the gaps between appointments will be much greater enabling our staff to safely clean the clinical areas.

We will ask you to bring as little as possible into the practice for your safety, such as hats, coats, handbags etc. and we cannot accept any liability for any personal items that are not in your personal possession when in the practice.

You will be met by a member of our team in appropriate Personal Protective Equipment including face mask and eye protection. 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 to self-isolate and get a Covid-19 test as per current government guidelines. You can arrange a test by telephoning 119 or arrange a test online. We will also ask you to use our hand sanitiser when entering and leaving the practice.

We intend to limit or eliminate waiting inside the practice and in reception. Appointments will be staggered so that patients do not arrive or leave at the same time as far as possible. We will ask you not to use our toilet but if absolutely necessary please do your best to ensure that you leave the facilities as you would expect to find them and wash your hand thoroughly. Please let reception know that you have used the toilet and we will disinfect the area as soon as possible.

If you are well, we will direct you straight to the surgery if possible and request that you do the following before or during your appointment

- Use the hand sanitiser in the reception area
- Thoroughly wash your hands for 30 seconds with the antiseptic hand wash provided in the surgery
- Rubber dam or other barrier mechanisms may be used for more procedures than previously.
- An air suction unit will be placed near your mouth for some treatments

## Dental Procedures

All our 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 PPE may make us appear impersonal and distant, please be assured we are still the same friendly team and people underneath it all! We want your experience to be similar to the service you received before this Covid crisis.

We are very aware that many dental treatments are aerosol-generating procedures (AGP's). It is difficult for us to carry out some dental procedures without the generation of some level of aerosol. Aerosol suspended in the air is a theoretical source of infection that we obviously wish to keep to a minimum.

Following Welsh Government advice, we can presently carry out AGP's. We have risk assessed each clinical area within the practice to carry out AGP's and have enabled the necessary precautions allowing us to carry out AGP's that are mainly needed to complete fillings and crowns etc.

We are at present only offering hand scaling with the hygienist but will be able to offer deeper cleaning in the future that normally involves an AGP procedure.

We appreciate your anticipated understanding at this time.

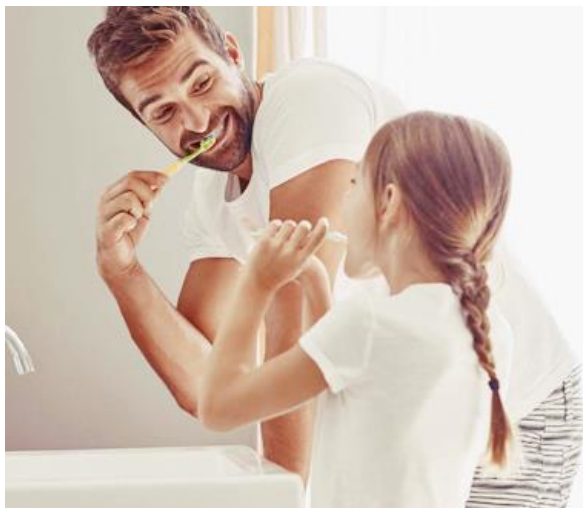
To mitigate the risk to Covid-19 during treatment to all our patients and staff we have the following in place

- Continued and deep cleaning of the surgeries after each patient treatment
- 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 used for check-ups and simpler procedures, including extractions.
- FFP2 and FFP3 masks filter 94% and 99% respectively of airborne particles in both directions (patient to clinician and clinician to patient) used when using our aerosol producing handpieces.
- We will use an extra-oral (outside mouth) suction device close to your mouth that will collect and filter most of the remaining aerosol
- Each surgery and reception will be fitted with an air filtration device to clean the circulating air.

Despite the financial impact of the coronavirus, Bay House Dental Practice will try to mitigate the costs of all the additional processes and costs involved in these new measures, particularly in relation to the additional time taken for each procedure and using more extensive PPE. We will be reviewing our fee structure as time goes on and will keep all our patients informed of any such changes to our fees in light of the additional time and equipment needed.

You may currently notice a small increase in our fee structure to take account of our extra precautions and additional time needed to complete treatments.

## Some Perspective



The vast majority of our patients are otherwise healthy without the Covid-19 infection. We are confident that we are able to provide urgent and routine dental care in as normal an environment as possible at present while bearing in mind our responsibilities to mitigate the risks of infection spread as far as is practically possible.

We are also confident that we will reach a stage when we will be able to continue with a full range of dental treatments, all but in a different way.

This policy will be constantly reviewed and updated as necessitated by circumstances and regulation over time.

If you have any questions regarding this policy or about your dental care at Bay House Dental Practice, please do not hesitate to contact us on [contact@bayhousedentalpractice.co.uk](mailto:contact@bayhousedentalpractice.co.uk) or telephone on 029 20231258

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V.3 14 October 2020