

**COVID-19 Coronavirus Patient information. Updated on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020.**

### **Current Practice Arrangements**

Since Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March, the Practice has been required to follow the advice given by the Chief Dental Officer of Wales and reduce its comprehensive service to **Urgent and Emergency care** (explained below). **This affects both NHS and Private Patients.**

The health and safety of our staff and patients has been our priority during this pandemic and we know that you will fully understand our position. That said, we appreciate it is a worrying time for us all and so, with that in mind, we have prepared the following answers to questions we are receiving at present. If your question is not below and you still require assistance, please contact us by phone or email and team will respond as soon as we are able.

### **Why has the practice closed?**

The practice has closed for normal business as we feel this is how best we can protect the staff and public during this challenging time. Also, it is possible that our clinicians may be redeployed to other areas of the NHS to assist the fight against the virus. It is also to encourage people to reduce journeys and social interaction in line with the government's request.

### **Will you be open for emergencies?**

YES. Currently the practice is open to take emergency calls and triage from 9:30am to 4:30pm, weekdays. There is currently no additional in practice emergency care at weekends and you would be prompted to access NHS emergency care via the NHS Direct 0845 46 47. Private patients are able to access the usual on-call service on 01244 355240 during evenings and at weekends. We will update you on this post when anything changes, otherwise please continue to call the practice during the working week either by:-

phone: 01978 364390

or

email: [info@wrexhamdentist.co.uk](mailto:info@wrexhamdentist.co.uk)

Please DO NOT use Facebook messenger at this time as our reception team cannot access it securely.

### **Is the practice dangerous?**

**No.** We have very high standards of cross-infection control. The decision to close has been taken to conform with the social isolation advice given by the government and public health advisors.

### **What is a dental emergency?**

Trauma including facial/oral cuts and/or jaw injuries, for example knocking an adult tooth out.  
Oro-facial swelling that is significant and worsening. ie. if you have a temperature or feel that you are having difficulty breathing.

Bleeding after you have had a tooth out that is not able to be controlled with the advice you have been given at your appointment.

Dental problems that make you feel unwell with a raised temperature, perhaps as a result of dental infection.

Inability to open your jaw as normal that is making breathing and eating difficult.

Oro-dental conditions that are likely to worsen systemic medical conditions such as diabetes, cancer or other serious illnesses or diseases.

The main issue for your dentist is that they are now prevented from using their dental drills, air tips and anything else that will create an aerosol.

If you have any of the above, please contact the surgery by telephone during the hours of 9.30am & 4.30pm or by email at any time. E-mails will be read and answered through the day.

### **What is an aerosol?**

This refers to the fine mist of spray and saliva created when a dentist operates their drill, air tips and scalers. If a patient attends, who is carrying the virus, whether knowingly or not, using a dental device that creates this mist increases the risk to anyone within 3 metres of them becoming infected. This is why we need to STOP DRILLING AND PROTECT EACH

OTHER.

**What if I have toothache or something that is not on the list above?**

We are happy to help you with other dental issues. Firstly, we ask for you to contact the practice by phone or e-mail and we can then assist you with a telephone triage. If we can, and it is safe, we will arrange an appointment to assess and treat you.

**What if I have a denture problem?**

The practice is currently unable to deal with denture issues. However, if you are a registered patient and require assistance, please call or email the practice during weekday hours 9.30am 4.30pm and we can offer advice and place you on a priority list to treat, as soon as we are able.

**What if my child has a dental problem?**

We know how distressing it is to have a poorly child. Please feel free to contact the surgery by phone or e-mail so our triage team can give you the best advice.

**Should I try and get my dental problem checked and sorted or just leave it for now?**

We strongly encourage you to call at the appropriate time to speak with our highly trained dental team. If we cannot treat you then at least we can give you the best advise possible and the advice is free!

**Can I just turn up at the practice?**

Please do not turn up without an appointment. You will not be seen. All appointments need to be made through the practice telephone number or email.

**What if I think I or someone who I live with might have coronavirus and have a dental emergency?**

Emergency/urgent dental patients with confirmed or suspected coronavirus or who are required to self-isolate because of possible exposure (e.g. living with a suspected case) should be treated at designated coronavirus emergency/urgent dental care site. Please contact the practice via phone or email and we will try to help arrange an appointment for you. In the event that you are unable to reach the practice, contact NHS Direct Wales on 0845 46 47 or 111 who will also assist you to get an appointment.

**My appointment is due soon or it has been cancelled?**

Please be patient, we have over 500 appointments per week in the practice and are working our way through them. You will either receive a direct call cancelling and rebooking for after July 1st, you may get a text cancelling your appointment and asking you to rebook in due course. We will endeavour to reach everyone over the next few weeks but the most important information is not to worry, we will get to you. There will be no NHS penalties, fines or missed appointment fees levied during this period. We just ask you to be patient with us.

**The new appointment I've been given isn't convenient, what should I do?**

Firstly, don't worry. It is unlikely based on the government's predictions that we will be back to normal service, much before the start of July 2020. If things change, of course we will be in touch to change your appointment. If you find that you need to rebook, please either email us or phone and we will do our best to response promptly.

**I am due to have teeth out for braces, is this a problem?**

Please do not worry about this as your orthodontist will already know. We will arrange for the teeth out, as soon as we return to normal service.

**I have a problem with my braces, what should I do?**

Orthodontic emergencies occur occasionally but are usually fairly simple to resolve by patients or parents. For step by step advice on dealing with all types of orthodontic emergencies at home please read our latest news article 'Advice for Orthodontic Emergencies during Covid 19' on our website [www.wrexhamdentist.co.uk/news](http://www.wrexhamdentist.co.uk/news)

**I have outstanding dental work that needs to be completed, including crowns and**

### **dentures. What will happen?**

Currently, we are being told **not** to proceed with these appointments to reduce social interaction and to minimise the risk of infection from aerosol. These patients will have been contacted and will be in close communication with our team to be seen at the earliest possible opportunity. If an issue arises whilst you are waiting for treatment to be completed, absolutely let us know over the phone or by email.

### **Should I cancel my private dental plan?**

We would encourage you **not to** as the plan offers some very useful features such as free emergency assessment at the practice, x-rays included and a 10% reduction on any treatments needed. This in itself covers the monthly fee for the next 3 months. If you are laid off, you can apply to Practice Plan for 3 monthly payment holiday - this is due to be reviewed and possibly broadened over the next few weeks. The dental plan runs for twelve months and so although you pay monthly, you are covered for a full 12 months. The practice hopes to begin routine work as soon as we can and once up and running, we will be right back in touch to make sure you get the care you have invested in.

### **I am a private patient and am paying monthly for my care. When will I receive it?**

Please be assured, we will be arranging your appointment as soon as we return to normal service. At present the 1st of July is our practice's own target to return but this may change, depending on government direction. Any overdue hygiene appointments, dentist appointments or other will be honoured and you will not be required to pay anything in addition.

### **As a private patient, will I need to pay for my emergency visit, if I need one?**

If you are a monthly practice plan patient, there is **NO CHARGE** for any emergency appointments during this period, saving you £49.99. Your x-rays will also be included and the cost of any treatment is discounted by 10%, as long as you remain a plan member. If you are a regular non-plan patient, the examination fee is £49.99 which includes x-rays but not treatment.

**What if I have paid a deposit for treatments that I have not received?**

The intention is to complete the treatments you have paid for, so nothing has changed contractually, other than time scale. Any treatments involving lab work **will not** be refunded, however we will review all other requests on an individual basis and if at all possible, refund part or all of the deposit.

**What can I do to make sure I am looking after my teeth and gums?**

You can maintain excellent oral hygiene using a toothbrush twice daily and brushing for two minutes. Using cleaning aids between your teeth such as floss, interdental brushes or an airfloss/waterpik will also help. Always use a fluoride toothpaste and try a mouthwash at a different time of day to brushing. If you have a dry mouth, try chewing sugar free gum. We will be posting videos across social media whilst we are away to help #mybestmouth

**Can I buy tooth whitener, interdental brushes, mouthwash or other dental products from you?**

If you send us an email with your request we will look into providing this and either post it to you or arrange for it to be collected from the practice. Keep an eye out on facebook and instagram for our product range promotions.

**I need a repeat prescription for de-sensitising tooth paste.**

We would advise until the practice reopens that the use of sensodyne pro-enamel is a suitable short-term alternative.

**When are you like to be open as normal?**

This is very hard to say. We hope that it will be no later than the 1st July but we will continually update our status across social media and our website in order for patients to be well informed.

**We appreciate that this is frustrating for everyone, but we are acting in good faith for the protection of us all. We are all in this together, so we ask that you continue to be patient, polite and respectful to us during this difficult time.**

