



**PORCHESTER**  
DENTAL PRACTICE

# COVID-19 UPDATE - 22/9/21

**PLEASE READ THE UPDATE IN FULL AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTIONS.**

Dear Patients

Once again thank you for all your support and patience over the past 18 months, you have been amazing. The events and changes that have occurred over this period have affected all of us in our work and home life in many ways, and some changes have become the new normal. At the practice we have been extremely busy treating emergencies and completing treatments as well as trying to accommodate check-ups for children and high needs patients. We are still working to the standard operating procedures as set out by NHS England and our governing bodies to protect patients and staff from contracting Covid. All healthcare settings are still high-risk environments for the transmission of Covid and we ask that all patients maintain wearing masks upon arrival to the practice, unless exempt.

The standard operating procedures mean we must still space appointments so that effective cleaning can take place in between, and if treatment has been carried out that generates an aerosol, then we must observe a fallow time before we clean the surgery. This means we still can not book as many appointments into the day as we did pre covid, thus making waiting times longer.

From Monday the 4th October we will be able to book check-up appointments and will be prioritising those that were cancelled during the first lockdown plus all children under 18 and patients that were receiving treatments for gum disease. Unfortunately, the routine scaling and polish to remove tarter and stains does not fall within this priority. As we have a limited number of appointments allocated for each session, we simply cannot offer every check-up appointment a scale and polish as its classed as an aerosol generating procedure (AGP) and we would have to wait 20minutes before we can clean the room. We can still effectively remove tarter using a hand instrument at the appointment.

The weekly diary time is split for NHS Contracted activity and for separate private sessions. Patients can request a private scale and polish and can be seen by any dentist during their private session. If you are having any worries or queries regarding your dental health, our reception team are happy to help and offer advice and can direct your concerns to a dentist who will check your records and book an appointment if necessary. Patients with fractured fillings or teeth with no pain will be allocated a non-urgent appointment for a check-up before their treatment appointment is booked. Those registered patients with extreme pain or swelling will be seen within 24 hours if during the week and booked as an emergency appointment, which may incur an emergency fee of £23.80. We would only be able to offer the NHS emergency appointment within 24 hours if you are registered.

As we have such a backlog of check ups to be seen, it is impossible to register new NHS patients at this time. This simply would not be fair to those registered patients that had their appointments cancelled during 2020 or who were due to be seen.

There have also been some staff changes, dentist Sheena Patel left on maternity last year and is

taking a break from practice and Renata Noori has moved to work at another practice. We have been welcomed by Dr Shema Oomen and Mr Dipak Basi who have been working hard helping me work through the back log of treatments and dealing with emergencies.

Emergency dental appointments will be allocated to the next available dentist as will routine check-up appointments based on how busy the diary is for each dentist. We will continue to try and accommodate everyone's needs in a safe environment and get through these next few winter months safely. Hopefully, 2022 will be more positive for all of us and life in general return to pre covid freedom.

So, to summarise, from the 4th October we will be prioritising all children under 18 as well as patients who were on regular scaling appointments for gum disease and those that were due for check-ups during 2020. It is likely the phone line will be very busy as it has been, so you can email the practice for a call back on [info@porchesterdental.co.uk](mailto:info@porchesterdental.co.uk) . Patients not falling within this priority group will be allocated check up appointments accordingly based on availability in the diary for each dentist. Please supply the practice with a current email as upon making appointments as you will be sent the appointment confirmation with a link to complete some forms. These forms must be completed prior to your appointment, or you may not be seen on time or even miss your appointment. If anyone has difficulty completing these forms our reception team are happy to help, or alternatively those without emails can come to their appointment 10minutes early and complete the forms on our tablet. Also, payment by card is preferable but if paying by cash then please bring the correct amount as we have very little change or cash on the premises.

When you visit the practice, please continue to be mindful of other people and maintain a safe distance keeping your mask on as there may be vulnerable patients in the waiting area. If you are exempt from wearing your mask, we will ask that you wait outside till the dentist is ready to take you in.

You may see some staff members wearing heavy personal protective equipment (PPE) which is required for the AGP treatments so please be aware and perhaps reassure the younger children it's just extra dress up! Also, we must keep surgery rooms aerated with open windows and air con, so please dress warm or keep your outerwear on as the rooms can get very cold.

Finally, on a closing note, thank you again for your patience and support. We look forward to seeing you at Porchester Dental Practice and hope you like the new refurb in the reception/waiting area, it was time well spent during the first lockdown!

Thank you for your understanding. You are welcome to email us if you have any worries or questions at [info@porchesterdental.co.uk](mailto:info@porchesterdental.co.uk)

For more information, visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> and also <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

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