

North Street Dental Practice Covid 19 Pandemic Q & As – May 2020

In an effort to ensure that patients are kept up to date with the key issues during the closure of North Street Dental Practice and planned reopening, it is hoped that the following questions and answers will help to address any concerns that patients may have at this time.

I hope that you find the following useful and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me via the email below – Thank you.

Mr Mischa Butler

Practice Manager

mischabutler@nsdp.co.uk

Q. When will you reopen?

A. At the time of writing this question and answer page, we do not have a confirmed date for opening despite the lockdown restrictions being eased by the Government. It is important to note that social distancing remains which is a challenge in the environment that North Street Dental staff work. We will keep all patients up to date with our reopening date when we know, and you are advised to monitor our Practice webpage or Facebook page.

Q. Why did you have to close?

A. We were instructed by our national governing bodies to close to treatment and we did so on the 24th March 2020. The main reason apart from the rules regarding non-essential travel, social distancing etc, the work that dentists do creates an aerosol when we use any motorised instrument (drills) in your mouth. This aerosol remains in the atmosphere and increases the risk to patients and staff of contracting the Covid 19 virus.

Q. I had some dental work done before lockdown and need a follow up. When will I have that?

A. Once we know when we are going to reopen, your dentist will review the list of all patients who were postponed because of the Covid 19 pandemic and make contact with you in part to see how you are but also to undertake a pre-assessment of you current health. Due to what we may be able to do as a result of the continued high risk from Covid 19 exposure in the dental surgery environment, treatment for you may be delayed further. Your dentist will talk to you about the arrangements when they telephone you on reopening.

Q. I was undergoing root canal treatment before the practice was closed and my appointments for ongoing treatment have been postponed. When can I be seen again?

A. The complex nature of this treatment will mean that some treatment will have to wait until relevant restrictions are lifted. Each case will be reviewed individually and discussed with the patient either by phone or Zoom consultation. We may have to alter some aspects the treatment plan to comply with restrictions. These patients will be prioritised accordingly but if you have any concerns please contact Martin Lunn on 07801474297.

Q. I am a Denplan patient, how does the current situation affect me?

- A. If you have a dental emergency or any concern about your dental health please do contact Martin Lunn on his mobile number 07801474297 and he can offer advice and is triaging the patients who are calling.

We have had to clear the appointment books of routine appointments, but we will be rebuilding these as soon as we can when we know what guidelines will determine the layout of the days work.

If you have a question about your plan, please call Martin on his mobile phone number or if you prefer you can contact Denplan directly. They are not able to answer all the calls because their staff are working remotely.

You can leave a message on 0800844999 and they will ring you.

Alternatively you can use their live chat option on the Denplan website or email at cae@denplan.co.uk

Q. My appointment was cancelled due to your closure. When can I expect to be contacted about a new appointment date?

- A. This will depend on what our national governing bodies advise as to what treatments we are able to provide when we reopen. Your dentist will be reviewing all patients who were postponed, and he/she will make contact with you to discuss plans. It is anticipated that due to the nature of the infection control precautions that we will have to take that there will be reduced capacity when we reopen. We are looking at how we can extend our days in order to see more patient.

Q. What precautions are you taking to prevent me from getting Covid 19 if I come for treatment at your Practice?

- A. Please refer to our May Newsletter that was emailed to you (if we have an email for you) or our website www.nsdpc.co.uk where you can find it in the section on our Homepage called Covid 19 Updates. We would like to advise you that we will be following strict infection control routines, wearing protective equipment such as surgical gowns, face masks, eye protection with a high degree of cleaning between patients. Your safety and that of our staff is our priority and we will not compromise that.

Q. Will I be able to bring someone with me to my appointment when you reopen?

- A. In order to manage social distancing in the Practice we ask that you do not bring anyone with you to your dental appointment. We will only have seating for 4 people in our waiting room at any one time and we will structure the appointments to manage this. The exceptions will be one parent accompanying their child to an appointment or where the patient requires the support of a carer.

Q. I had emergency temporary treatment whilst you were closed and have been advised to be followed up by my dentist. When can I see you?

- A. Our national governing bodies will advise us as to what treatments we are able to provide when we reopen. Your dentist will be reviewing all patients who were postponed, and he/she will make contact with you to discuss plans. It is anticipated that due to the nature of the

infection control precautions that we will have to take that there will be reduced capacity when we reopen. We are looking at how we can extend our days in order to see more patient.

Q. I had an urgent problem during your closure which you helped me with on the telephone. I still need to be seen by you, but I am not sure if I should contact you or you will contact me.

A. Your dentist will have kept records of all patients that they spoke to and gave advice to. This will be used by your dentist when we reopen and as such, they will make contact with you to discuss what happens next. If you are worried at all then please do not hesitate to contact your dentist or the Practice once we advise you that we have reopened.

Q. Will I be able to see a hygienist when you reopen?

A. The work that the hygienist does falls into a high-risk category due to Covid 19. We will be advised by our national governing bodies whether hygienists are able to use equipment/instruments that create an aerosol and as such create a high risk for our patients and them. We will contact you if you are due for a review but again, we will be on reduced appointment availability due to the enhanced precautions that we will have to take as a result of Covid 19.

Q. Will I have to wear a face mask when I visit you?

A. That is not a requirement but if you have a facemask of your own and want to wear one then you are free to do so. Our staff will be wearing face masks and other protective equipment during your visit and treatment.

Q. I need some teeth extracted. Can I still have that done when you reopen.

A. Our dentists will be reviewing all patients who have been postponed due to Covid 19 as well as those who need further review after a problem during our closure and they will prioritise according and make direct contact with you before proceeding further. We will also be governed by our national bodies regarding what treatments we can provide when we reopen.

Q. Are you taking on any new NHS patients?

A. Please contact us when we reopen.

Q. Where can I find out information about what is happening regarding the Practice, Covid 19 and your plans to reopen?

A. We are updating our website with information which can be found in the section on our front page called Covid 19 Updates. We also have a Facebook page www.facebook.com/NSDPLewes and we will update our telephone answerphone.

Q. Is it safe for me to come to your Practice in light of the Covid 19 virus?

A. We will be taking all of the necessary infection control precautions to ensure your safety and that of our staff should you need to attend the Practice when we reopen. Further information can be found in our May Newsletter which is on our website www.nsdpc.co.uk under the section Covid 19 Updates.

Q. I have had Covid 19. Can I still come for treatment?

A. If you have had Covid 19, are symptom free, and you are no longer under self-isolation then you can come for treatment. All of our patients who we are able to see under the instructions

of our national governing bodies will be pre-assessed by telephone prior to being given an appointment.

Q. I am a high-risk category patient. Should I still come for treatment?

A. All of the patients who we are able to see under the instructions of our national governing bodies will be pre-assessed by telephone prior to being given an appointment. The nature of why you need to see your dentist will be discussed and it may be that you are advised at this time to wait until the risk to you dissipates.

Q. Have staff at the Practice been tested for Covid 19?

A. Yes, all staff prior to reopening the Practice will have been tested for Covid 19.

Q. Will my treatment costs go up as a result of Covid 19?

A. In order for the dentist to see you during the pandemic, there will be a requirement to wear expensive protective equipment and to do further decontamination of areas. It is anticipated that some of the cost of this will unfortunately have to be passed onto you.