



1st June 2020

Alrewas Dental Practice Post-COVID-19 return to work policy

This policy has been created based on multiple updated sources from within the dental and medical professions. It outlines modifications to our normal procedures that we intend to employ once dental practices can be reopened once the COVID-19 pandemic peak of infection has subsided. It is not known at this time whether these procedures are temporary or whether they will become a permanent feature of the way dental practices must be run to ensure patient and staff safety in the future.

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 patience and forbearance doing this long period of practice closure and for their understanding and cooperation whilst we implement new measures at the practice.

It is envisaged that the practice will reopen on **Monday 8th June**.

Patient communication before reopening

We would of course like to continue providing necessary dental care to all of our patients in the safest possible environment. We therefore respectfully request your full cooperation with any new or modified procedures at the practice. Our reception team will be contacting patients who require ongoing treatment and confirming appointments to continue with current courses of treatment during the **second part of June**.

New measures at Alrewas Dental Practice to reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission

Our normal cross-infection control protocols at Alrewas Dental Practice against all previously known pathogens are already woven into all clinical activity carried out. It should be remembered that the dental practice is already a very clean environment compared to public areas and it is not possible for us to control sources of infection outside the dental practice.

There have been multiple suggestions from many sources as to how the risk of transmission of COVID-19 can be reduced in a dental clinical environment. We have collectively evaluated all of these and feel that the following measures will reduce risk to an acceptable level at the practice.



Please be assured that all of our clinical staff will also be complying with these procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection in both directions.

Before attending the practice

We will assess your risk factor for COVID-19 by asking the following questions. Please could you inform us as early as possible prior to your appointment of the following:

Covid-19 risk assessment:

Any new continuous cough: Yes/No

Temperature over 37.8C? Yes/No

Loss or change in sense of smell or taste? Yes/No

Shortness of breath: Yes/No

Self-isolating: Yes/No

Anyone at home with symptoms: Yes/No

Living with C-19 +ve person: Yes/No

Over 70 yrs old: Yes/No

Underlying MH risk: Yes/No

C-19 +ve diagnosis: Yes/No

If we feel that you are a high risk of being infected with Covid-19, we will request for you to delay booking any appointments with us for at least one month.

We recommend that patients in high risk groups delay non-essential dental treatment for as long as possible until the trend of the pandemic becomes clear.

To find out if you are in a high-risk group, please see the link below:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/>

When travelling to the practice, we would recommend that you limit your close contact with other members of the public as far as possible. If you are able to drive or be driven and picked up by somebody with whom you live, this would be ideal.

Please carry hand sanitiser with you at all times, use regularly and avoid touching your face. Please wash your hands thoroughly for at least 30 seconds at every opportunity.



Arriving at the practice

When you attend the practice, we will welcome you and digitally take your temperature. If your temperature is above 37.8°C, you would not be permitted to enter the practice and will be asked to return home and self-isolate as per current government guidelines.

If you are well, we would request that you do the following before commencing your appointment:

- Thoroughly wash your hands for 30 seconds with the antiseptic hand wash provided
- Carry out a 60 second dilute hydrogen peroxide mouthwash and gargle. This has been shown to rapidly reduce any viral load even if you are asymptotically infected.
- When using the restrooms, please do your best to ensure that you leave the facilities as you would expect to find them. The restrooms will be regularly disinfected between patients.
- Chairs in the waiting room will be spaced out to ensure social distancing measures are maintained.
- Our reception area will have a Perspex screen to protect both you and our staff from any droplet particles that may occur during conversation.

Practice procedures

The Alrewas Dental Practice team will have spent time critically looking at every aspect of the practice with a view to removing all non-essential items in the open to reduce the number of objects that may act as fomites (surfaces on which microorganisms may reside and can potentially be the cause of cross infection). You will find that the practice may appear to be quite bare when you attend.

All clinical and common areas including door handles and surfaces will be disinfected.

Please could we kindly request that you pay by card wherever possible, to avoid handling of cash.

Dental procedures

All dental staff will be upgrading their 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 garb may make us appear impersonal and distant, please be assured we are still the same friendly team underneath it all!

We are especially mindful that most dental treatments are aerosol-generating procedures (AGP's). It is almost impossible for us to carry out meaningful dental procedures without generation of some level of aerosol. Aerosol suspended in the air is a potential source of infection which we wish to keep to a minimum. Currently the dental literature suggests:

- Our use of our normal high-volume suction reduces aerosol production by over 90%.



- The use of dental rubber dam which is also routine in our practice further reduces bio aerosols by a further 30 to 90%
- Our regular facemasks filter approximately 60% of remaining airborne particles.
- FFP3 masks filter 99% of airborne particles in both directions (patient to clinician and clinician to patient). We therefore feel that our normal dental procedures can be carried out with minimal risk with use of high-volume suction, dental dam and FFP3 in high aerosol generating procedures.

This document will be updated as new data arrives.

Summary

At the time of writing there are **2183** known cases of coronavirus in Staffordshire out of a local population of 875,219 (less than 0.25% infection rate – source: bbc.co.uk). This means that the vast majority of our patients are otherwise healthy without coronavirus infection and we would like to be able to provide normal dental care for these patients in as normal an environment as possible while bearing in mind our responsibilities to mitigate risks of infection spread as far as is practically possible. This policy will be constantly reviewed and updated as necessitated by circumstances over time. If you have any questions regarding this policy or about your dental care at Alrewas Dental Practice please do not hesitate to contact us on info@alrewasdental.co.uk.

Yours sincerely

Dr Sunil Parmar BDS

Principal: Alrewas Dental Practice