



COVID-19 Practice Reopening Policy Patient Information

This policy outlines the adjustments to our normal procedures that we intend to employ once the practice can be reopened after the COVID-19 pandemic peak 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.

We would like to thank all of our patients for their patience during this uncertain time and for their understanding and cooperation whilst we implement new measures at the practice. While many things have changed, one thing has remained the same: our commitment to your safety.

Provisional Timetable

The practice will re-open on 1st July 2020.

We will initially be seeing:

- Urgent patients with emergency problems or other dental problems that require urgent assessment and treatment

And then:

- Patients who were due for routine examinations and hygienist visits during the period of closure;
- Patients who require routine or other planned treatment.

Patient communication before reopening

We will be contacting patients and confirming appointments ahead of their scheduled time.

We will request that all patients who are attending The Keith Dental Practice update their standard medical history forms beforehand.

These forms will now be in electronic format and emailed to you prior to your appointment. Alternatively, we can go through the form with you on the telephone. We will also have COVID-19 pre-assessment questionnaire which will allow us to assess your level of risk for coronavirus infection before you attend the surgery.

New measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission

We have collectively evaluated all of the updated guidance and observed what measures have been put in place in other countries. We feel that the measures which are outlined in this policy will reduce risk to the minimum level at the practice.

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

Before attending the practice

We intend to eliminate waiting inside the practice and at reception. Accordingly, appointments will be staggered so that patients do not arrive or leave at the same time as other patients as far as we are able to manage.

However, this does mean that there will be fewer appointments available in the day, so there may be reduced options for schedule appointments.

We will communicate with you beforehand to ask some COVID-19 screening questions, which you will be asked again at your appointment

We would prefer forms to be filled in electronically where possible (medical history etc.) before you attend your appointment. These can be completed on a smartphone/tablet/laptop/computer.

Our staff will contact you to remind you of this if we have not received your completed forms. If you have any difficulties with completing the forms we can help you with this over the phone

If we feel that you are at risk of having possibly been infected, even if you are asymptomatic, we will respectfully request for you to delay booking any appointments with us for at least one month.

We recommend that patients in the high-risk groups for developing complications from coronavirus delay non-essential dental treatment for as long as possible until the end of the pandemic becomes clear. If you are in a high risk group and do require treatment we will endeavour to schedule your appointment at the beginning of the day.

The Keith Dental Practice will be operating contactless payment systems going forwards and would encourage the use of card payment rather than cash at the time of your visit. If you need to use the keypad, please be reassured that the machine will be wiped down after each use using the appropriate wipes.

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 meet all patients outside the building and bring them straight into the surgery, where possible. One adult is able to attend with a child; please do not bring additional family members with you unless they are able to wait in the car or outside the building.

Arriving at the practice

When you attend the practice, the front door will be locked. If you have travelled by car, please wait in your car and we will collect you when it is time for your appointment.

If you have not travelled by car, please call the practice and we will let you in to wait in the waiting area.

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 and self-isolate as per current government guidelines.

When using the restroom, please do your best to ensure that you leave the facilities as you would expect to find them and wash your hands thoroughly. Please let a member of the team know if you have used the restroom so that we can thoroughly disinfect it after each use in line with updated guidance.

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

- Use the hand sanitiser in the reception area or
- Thoroughly wash your hands for 30 seconds with the antiseptic hand wash provided in the surgery
- Rubber dam or other barrier mechanisms will be used for more procedures than previously.

Practice Procedures

The team have spent time critically looking at every aspect of the practice with a view to removing all non-essential items that can potentially be the cause of 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 regularly disinfected in addition to our normal surface cleaning protocols between patients.

The Keith Dental Practice will be providing a buffer period between patients to allow additional time for additional decontamination procedures, allow for any treatment overruns and allow preparation time for the next patient so that they do not need to wait in the reception area.

All future appointments will be made and confirmed by telephone to limit your time spent at reception.

Dental Procedures

All 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 masks may make us appear impersonal and distant, please be assured we are still the same friendly team underneath it all!

Despite the financial impact of the coronavirus, The Keith Dental Practice will not be increasing its normal fees unless absolutely necessary.

How you can help

- With the exception of children and patients with carers, patients should come alone.
- Please bring as few belongings as possible into the building.
- A distance of at least 2 metres must be observed if another patient is present in the practice.
- Payment should be made by contactless card where possible.
- Staff will not shake your hand.
- If you show COVID-19 symptoms after booking your appointment, or after you have attended the practice, please contact the practice by phone on 01542 886251.
- Please do not arrive more than 5 minutes early to the practice.
- Please do not attend the practice without an appointment.

Summary

The vast majority of our patients are otherwise healthy without coronavirus infection and we are confident that we are able to provide 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 The Keith Dental Practice please do not hesitate to contact us on 01542 886251 or email info@keithdental.co.uk