



*Specialist Dental Care for Everyone*

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## **Our Terms & Conditions for private patients of our practice**

At Sandstone Dental Practice it is an honour and privilege to care for you. We endeavour to assist our patients whenever we can. This document should give you a clear understanding of the terms and conditions of our service to you. If you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact us by telephone or email and we will be happy to help.

The relationship between patient and clinician is very important and based on mutual trust and respect. We would like to highlight what you can expect from our team and what we expect in return from you, as we work in partnership to achieve your oral health goal.

### ***What you can expect from us***

#### **Communication**

We aim to provide a service that is easy to access, where you receive treatment of the highest standard, where you are informed of all your treatment options and given the opportunity to ask questions about your treatment and receive answers which you can understand.

All patients will receive a written treatment estimate and information leaflets relevant to the treatment, outlining the risks and benefits where appropriate.

Information will be given in the form of verbal communication from the clinician. This will also be added to with information leaflets that can be provided via e mail or printed at the time of your appointment. There is also advice available on our website.

If we have an up-to-date contact number, you will receive a text message, which reminds you of your appointment in good time.

#### **Confidentiality in the practice**

Patient confidentiality is respected and always maintained. Please be aware that we cannot discuss treatment, including costs and appointment times of our adult patients with other family members. If you wish to give us authority to discuss any aspect of your dental care with a third party, you should do so in writing.

We will discuss children's dental care with parents or any registered carer.

#### **Record keeping**

We endeavour to maintain very clear and detailed notes of your treatment. We will also retain any details of phone or face-to-face communication you have with our team and any email / written correspondence.

If you request a copy of your notes and / or x-rays they will be provided within 40 days in line with current guidelines.

Request for dental records need to be made in writing.

## **Practice Environment**

Our small team aim to ensure that everyone who walks into our practice feels welcome and comfortable.

To help you feel comfortable, we will ensure we provide clean, tidy, and uncluttered waiting areas. Hot and cold drinks are available in disposable cups on request.

Please inform the team if you are not able to make it up the stairs and we will endeavour to make sure the ground floor surgery is available for your appointment.

## **Emergency Appointments**

We aim to accommodate you, whenever possible, on the same day if you have a dental emergency.

We consider a dental emergency to be the following:

- Trauma to the mouth / teeth
- Severe tooth pain, swelling, or bleeding.
- Fractured / broken teeth which are sharp and causing discomfort
- A broken tooth, crown, bridge, or denture that is clearly visible.

We aim to have the same dentist undertake your treatment. However, because we are a group of Dentists who are either GDC registered Specialists or Dentists with a Special Interest, we may recommend that you see a particular person for complex treatment items, if we feel it is in your best interests.

If treatment is required at short notice and your usual dentist is not available, we will offer an alternative dentist.

If you have a severe dental emergency out of practice opening times, please call the practice and listen to the instructions on the answerphone.

## **Treatment Quality**

We pledge to provide you with the best possible standard of treatment set by our profession. We employ a very highly qualified experienced team who are highly respected by our professional colleagues in the local area. Many of our team are involved in the teaching of other dentists at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Our fees will be transparent and competitive with practices of a comparable standard.

## **Access to appointments**

The practice is open Monday – Saturday with varying hours of opening. Please see our website for up-to-date opening hours.

## ***What we expect from you as a patient or a member of our practice***

### **Communication**

Please let us know in good time if you cannot make an appointment.

Here at Sandstone Dental Practice, we take it very seriously if a member of staff is treated in an abusive or violent way. To successfully provide our services a mutual respect between all the staff and patients has to be in place. All our staff aim to be polite, helpful, and sensitive to all patients' individual needs and circumstances. We would respectfully remind patients that very often staff could be confronted with a multitude of varying and sometimes difficult tasks and situations, all at the same time. The staff understand that ill patients do not always act in a reasonable manner and will take this into consideration when trying to deal with a misunderstanding or complaint.

However, aggressive behaviour, be it violent or abusive, will not be tolerated and may result in you being removed from the Practice list and, in extreme cases, the Police being contacted.

For our full "zero tolerance" policy, please refer to our website.

### **Confidentiality is Vital**

Patient confidentiality is very important to us, please do not request any clinical or financial information about another adult patient as this may put members of our team in a difficult position when having to refuse.

### **Records**

It is not possible for our clinicians to have lengthy telephone conversations regarding your treatment, simply because it is not feasible for the records of the conversation to be easily transferred to your clinical notes.

It is very important that you give a full medical history and details of any medication you take. Should this change in any way, it is important for you to tell the Dentist or Hygienist at the earliest opportunity.

### **Practice Environment**

We ask that you please dispose of rubbish in the bins provided and limit mobile phone conversations in the waiting room to a minimum. We politely request that you refrain from putting your feet on the seats. When moving around the practice, please wear a mask.

### **Emergency Appointment Requests**

We understand that if you have an emergency, you may be worried and want to be seen quickly. Our team will ask some questions to ascertain the nature of your problem and you will be offered an appointment as soon as is feasible, providing you contact us in good time.

If you have a dental emergency, please contact us via email or telephone so we can arrange your appointment.

Please understand that our team are highly trained and if your emergency request does not fall under our list of 'same day emergencies' you may be offered an appointment on an alternative day. It may be that our reception team need to take your details and then call you back once they have spoken to the dentist to accommodate you so, please understand if this may be necessary to find a suitable time for you to be seen.

Emergency examinations carry a fee of £70 and there may be an additional fee for any small Xrays that are required to diagnose the problem. It is usually not possible to carry out any definitive treatment at an emergency slot.

Patients who are plan members will not pay the emergency fee and will only pay for any treatment carried out at the emergency appointment, they also benefit from a 20% discount on any general treatment they require.

We will endeavour to accommodate your emergency appointment at a convenient time, however as our dentists are often very busy, it may not always be possible to give you a same day appointment. If it is a true emergency, you may have to make the decision to attend at the time offered or to attend another day.

### **Treatment Quality and Fees**

We promise to provide you with the very best standard of treatment set by our profession. It is very important that if you are going to have difficulty in paying for your treatment costs that this is communicated to us before you have had the treatment.

Our written estimates inform you of what fees are due for each appointment and as such we expect patients to pay for any treatment completed on the day. For any work involving the use of laboratories, for example crowns, bridges and dentures, your estimate will inform you of the payment due on the day of impressions, to allow us to request the work from the laboratory with the balance being paid once the work is fitted.

We will request a deposit/part payment of any treatment at the time of booking the appointment.

We are here to work with you to improve your teeth and smile and as such we expect you to take on board any

advice we give you – we will always be open and honest with you about things that we feel will benefit your oral health.

### Keeping your appointments

Unfortunately, despite our text message reminder system, some patients forget to attend appointments or cancel at short notice. Always try your best to remember your appointment time and arrive punctually. It is your responsibility to remember the appointment made and you should not rely on our text reminder service that we provide as a courtesy to our patients. If for any reason you cannot make an appointment, please give us as much notice as possible.

We take payment in advance of all our appointments, and we require two working days' notice if you need to reschedule your appointment. This allows us to offer the appointment to another patient who may require it. If you wish to cancel your appointment for any reason, your payment will either be refunded or left as a credit on your account if you give more than two working days' notice. If two working days' notice is not given, your deposit will be retained by the practice and no refunds will be given. As a private practice with no external funding, it is necessary for Sandstone Dental Practice to cover the running costs of the practice.

We require all new patients to attend a new patient consultation, the cost of which starts at £95.00 and is to be paid when booking the appointment. This is non-refundable and if the appointment is cancelled less than 48 hours prior or you fail to attend your appointment you will be required to pay an additional fee to book another appointment.

If you decide to become a member of the practice after your new patient appointment, you will be allowed to take advantage of the benefits of your membership after making at least three consecutive monthly payments, however as a thank you for your commitment to becoming a member, you will be given 20% discount on any applicable treatment fees from the time you sign up for the membership plan. Please note that our membership plan is specifically designed for patients who have stable oral health and require routine hygiene treatment, alongside routine examinations and x-rays. If you have unstable dental health that requires treatment, for example, more comprehensive treatment for periodontitis (gum disease) you will be offered treatment, which will carry a charge to cover the additional time required (a discount will be applied to any treatment you require).

**We reserve the right to decline an appointment should you arrive too late to be treated. This may result in you being charged for this appointment and it may be classified as failed to attend.**

### Patient Satisfaction and Customer Service

We constantly strive to enhance the service we provide for our patients. We encourage patient feedback, to help us understand where we are performing well or conversely, to identify how we can improve and to ensure that we always meet your expectations.

We will deal with complaints courteously and promptly and aim to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you wish to provide any feedback on the service we provide or suggest any ways that we could have made your experience any better, please contact Jenny Fearn, our Patient Relations Manager, whose details are below:

By telephone on [0151 342 4007](tel:01513424007)

- By email at [management@sandstonedental.co.uk](mailto:management@sandstonedental.co.uk)
- By post to [102 Telegraph Road, Heswall, CH60 0AQ](mailto:102TelegraphRoad@sandstonedental.co.uk)
- Or alternatively in person if you prefer.