



## Patient Charter

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At our dental practices, we are committed to providing care that is not only of the highest quality, but also genuinely centered around each individual patient. Our goal is to make every visit feel welcoming, safe and respectful, while continually improving how we work so that our services fit seamlessly into your life.

To help us achieve this, we have created a Patient Charter – a shared understanding of how we can work together. It sets out the standards, responsibilities and values that ensure the best possible care for everyone.

Your comfort, safety, and dignity are our top priorities. Please let us know in advance if you require any specific assistance.

We appreciate your understanding and commitment to our Patient Charter, as it plays an important role in helping us deliver effective, patient-focused care.

Thank you for your support.

Dr Jeff Sherer  
Clinical Director  
The Dental Design Studios

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### Inclusion and Accessibility

We are committed to providing a welcoming and accessible environment for all our patients. To support this, we offer:

- **Translation services** – our team speaks several languages and we also provide translation services.
- **Chaperone services** - while we do not provide chaperones, patients are always welcome to bring a chaperone for their comfort during examinations or treatments.
- **Guide and support dog access** - we gladly welcome guide and support dogs to assist patients with visual impairments and other needs.
- **Hearing loop system**: we have a portable system to assist patients with hearing difficulties.
- **Ground floor access (at most practices)**: ensuring easy entry for patients with mobility needs.
- **Safeguarding**: we prioritize the protection and well-being of all patients.
- **Autism and learning disability training**: our staff receive regular training to better support patients with diverse needs.

## Medical History Updating

We take the time to understand your medical background to provide safe and personalized care. In line with British Dental Association guidelines, we kindly ask you to complete a new medical history form at the start of each course of treatment. This can be done online or on paper.

If you have a prescription list, feel free to share it with us so we can update your records. Need help? our team is always happy to assist.

## Feedback and Complaints

We welcome all feedback and encourage you to share your thoughts. A suggestions box is available in our reception area, and we have a formal complaints procedure in place should you wish to raise a concern.

## NHS Waiting Lists

Most of our practices operate an NHS waiting list. If you are currently a private patient and would like to transfer to NHS care, you will need to submit an expression of interest through the waiting list.

Please note that in some areas, the waiting time can be up to 18 months. For more details and to join the list, please speak to the practice team.

## Children Attendance

We follow a 'Was Not Brought' policy for children's appointments. If your child/children miss their appointment, we record it and may need to share concerns with our safeguarding partners, this can include health visitors, social care, or the child's school - if this happens repeatedly.

If your child is not brought, we will write to you in the form of an email, please remember it is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to ensure children attend.

## Your NHS Dental Treatment

Our NHS services cover all clinically necessary treatment to help keep your mouth, teeth, and gums healthy and free from pain. Treatment decisions are based on a thorough clinical assessment and your dentist's professional judgement.

Your dentist will clearly explain:

- Which treatments are available on the NHS,
- Which options are only available privately, and
- The costs associated with each.

If you choose a private treatment option, this will be outlined in your treatment plan, along with the proposed care and all associated fees.

If you decide not to proceed with a recommended treatment, please inform your dentist, as declining certain care may lead to complications or affect your oral health.

**Missed NHS Appointments:**

If you miss an appointment, we reserve the right to withhold further appointment bookings.

**2-Month Treatment Policy:**

If you do not return to complete your treatment within 2 months, your treatment plan will be closed. A new examination and associated charges will be required to initiate a new plan.

**Regular Attendance:**

To help manage access to NHS care, the practice will automatically archive NHS patients who have not attended for routine dental care for over 2 years.

Please note that, due to high demand, we cannot guarantee future NHS appointment availability once a patient has been archived. No reminder or notification is sent before this happens.

This policy allows us to offer appointments to new patients in need of NHS dental care.

**Your Appointments Matter to Us****Cancelling Appointments**

If you need to cancel or reschedule, we kindly ask for at least 24 hours' notice. This helps us offer the appointment to someone else in need.

Please note: repeated short-notice cancellations may affect your ability to book future appointments.

Private patients - late cancellation fees may apply.

**Missed Appointments**

In the event of a missed appointment, we retain the right to withhold further appointment offerings. Should you wish to appeal this decision, please make a written request to the Practice Manager.

Private patients – missed appointment fees may apply.

**Arriving On Time**

To help us run smoothly and see all patients on time, please aim to arrive promptly.

We recommend arriving 5 minutes early to allow time for any updates to your details.

If you are running late, we will do our best to accommodate you — but your appointment may need to be rescheduled.

**Appointment Reminders**

We offer reminder messages as a helpful courtesy. However, we kindly ask that you keep track of your appointments independently to ensure continuity of care.

**Our Appointment Times**

We always aim to run on time, but occasionally delays may occur due to unforeseen circumstances. If this happens, we'll let you know as soon as possible and offer either a suitable alternative time or the option to see another available dentist.

If you choose not to accept the alternatives offered, please note that this may result in a longer wait for your appointment. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we do our best to care for every patient.

**New Patients**

For new patients, if the initial appointment or any subsequent appointments during the first course of treatment are missed, we regret that we may not be able to offer further appointments.

Please note that missed appointment fees apply to private patients.

**Appointment Charges**

You may be asked to pay for your treatment in full or provide a deposit in advance. This will be communicated clearly when booking.

## **Safety & Communication**

To ensure a safe and respectful environment for all patients and staff, our practice enforces a Zero Tolerance policy towards violent, abusive, or aggressive behaviour. Any patient exhibiting such conduct will not be accommodated and may be asked to leave the premises immediately.

We are committed to providing care in a safe, calm, and professional atmosphere for everyone's benefit.

## **Dental Chair Limitations**

For safety reasons, our dental chairs have a maximum weight limit of 20 stone (approximately 127 kg). Unfortunately, we are unable to provide treatment to patients exceeding this limit.

We are committed to ensuring patient safety and will gladly provide referrals to alternative services that are better equipped to accommodate specific needs.

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