



THE RIPLEY FAMILY DENTAL CENTRE

RE-OPENING POLICY

14 DERBY ROAD, RIPLEY, DERBYSHIRE, DE5 3HR

WWW.RIPLEYFAMILYDENTAL.CO.UK



A hand is shown from the right side, holding a piece of white chalk. The hand is in the process of drawing the word "POLICY" in large, capital letters on a dark grey, textured surface. The word is already mostly drawn, with the final stroke of the 'Y' being completed. A thick white line is drawn horizontally across the bottom of the word.

POST COVID-19 REOPENING POLICY

This policy has been created based on multiple updated sources from within the medical professions and the government.

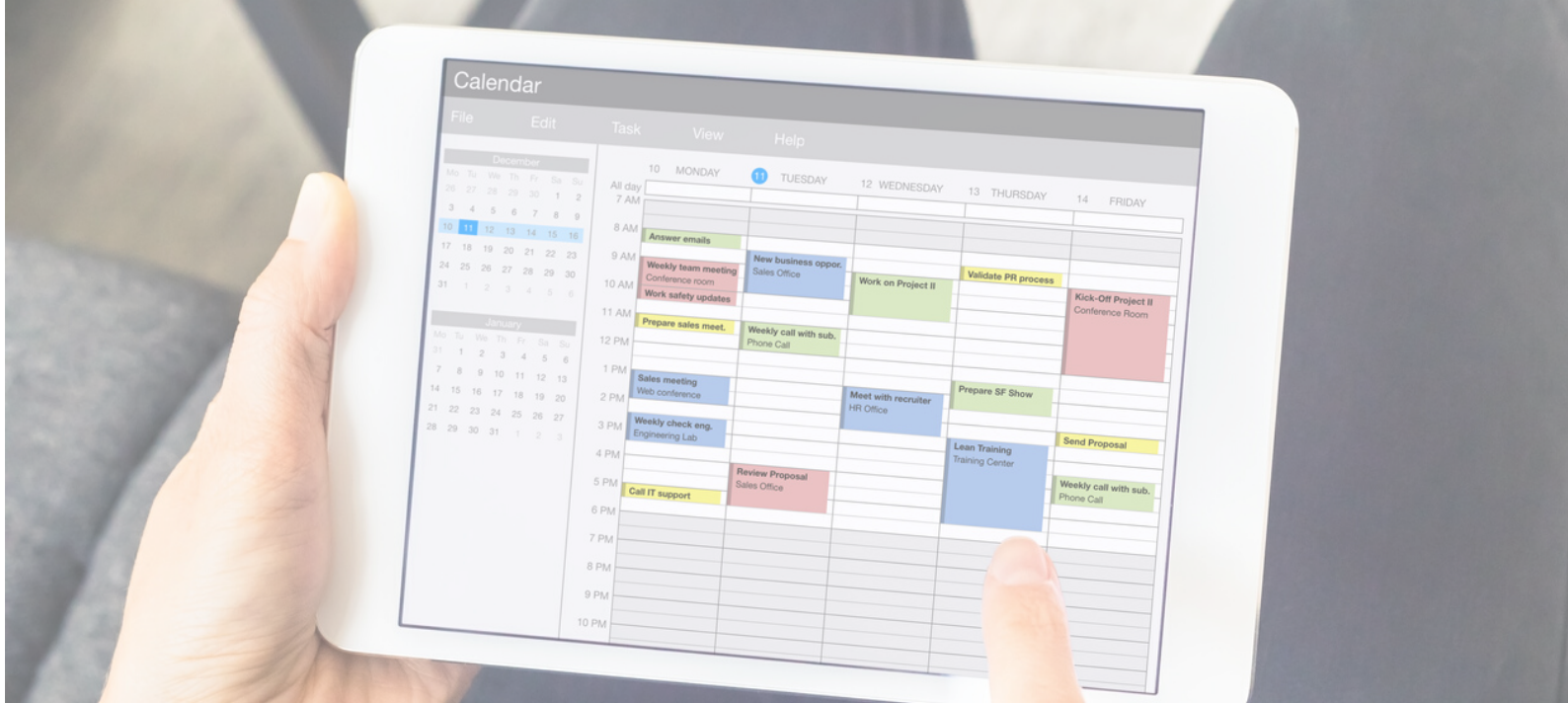
It outlines modifications to our normal procedures that we intend to employ once the practice can be reopened after the COVID-19 pandemic peak has subsided.

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.

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 during the period of temporary practice closure and for their understanding and cooperation whilst we implement new measures at the practice.

We will of course be providing dental care to all of our patients in the safest possible environment. We greatly appreciate your assistance with any new or modified procedures at the clinic.



PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

It is our intention for the practice to re-open for patients on Monday 8th June 2020 unless an extension to the current lockdown is mandated by the government or professional bodies.

The team here at The Ripley Family Dental Centre will prepare the practice for reopening and practising our updated procedures before patients return to the practice.

We will be prioritising in this order:

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

After the Covid-19 threat level has been reduced by governing bodies we will begin with non-essential treatment when it's safe to do so with correct personal protective equipment in this order:

- Patients with treatment that was incomplete before the practice was temporarily closed.
- Patients who are due orthodontic reviews.
- Patients who were due for routine examinations and hygienist visits during the period of closure.

PATIENT COMMUNICATION BEFORE REOPENING

Our reception team will be contacting patients and confirming appointments ahead of their scheduled time.

We will request that all patients, who are attending the Practice, update their standard Medical and Dental Questionnaire beforehand. We will send all forms digitally where possible to reduce contact within the surgery.

These forms include a new, more detailed, section which will allow us to assess your level of risk for coronavirus infection before you attend the surgery.

Where possible, the dentist will aim to contact the patient via telephone or video consultation to gather as much information as possible and may request photographs of the affected tooth/teeth.

NEW MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF COVID-19

Our normal cross-infection control protocols at The Ripley Family Dental Centre against all previously known pathogens are already woven into all clinical activity carried out at the practice.

It should be remembered that a dental practice is already a very clean environment compared to public areas and there is no evidence of COVID-19 transmission occurring in increased rates in dentists or their staff.

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 following measures will reduce risk to the minimum 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 carry out a pre-attendance assessment via your completed Medical History/Assessment forms at least three days before your appointment and, if necessary, a follow-up telephone conversation to assess relative coronavirus infection risk. 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.

In view of the potential seriousness of this disease, please note that we respectfully insist that the Medical and Dental Questionnaire (MDQ) is completed at least three days before your appointment. If we do not receive the completed questionnaire in time and we are unable to contact you, we may need to cancel your appointment. You may be charged for the appointment if we are unable to fill it at short notice as per our normal terms and conditions.

We would 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 trend of the pandemic becomes clear. To find out whether you are in a high or very high-risk group please see the link below or see [appendix 1]:

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

If you are in a high risk group and do require treatment we will schedule your appointment at the beginning of the day to limit your potential exposure to other patients and aerosols.

If you fall into the vulnerable category or high risk category, please attend the practice wearing a mask. If you do not have one we will provide you with a mask.

The Ripley Family Dental Centre will be operating contactless payment systems going forwards, and we would request that payment is made online or over the phone for your appointment prior to you attending if you do not have a means of making contactless payment with Apple Pay or Google Pay at the time. This reduces the requirement for unnecessary contact or use of pin entries on card terminals at reception.

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.

One adult is able to attend with a child; please do not bring additional family members with you unless they are happy to wait in the car or outside the building.

If you require your carer to be with you, please kindly ask them to read this document as well.

Please clean your teeth and use the toilet at home before you attend to reduce the need of using the toilet at the practice.



ARRIVING AT 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.

When you attend the practice, we will welcome you, and ask for you to hang your coat or jacket at the entrance to the practice. A bag will be provided for your personal belongings. The front door will remain locked, however we cannot accept liability for personal items so please limit what you bring into the building and leave additional bags at home or in your car if they are not needed.

If we think you look or feel unwell, 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.

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.
- We may ask you to use a Hydrogen Peroxide mouthwash before some dental treatments are provided
- Rubber dam or other barrier mechanisms will be used for more procedures than previously.

Please avoid using the patient toilets, however if you need to use them then please do your best to ensure that you leave the facilities as you would expect to find them and wash your hands thoroughly. The patient toilets will be regularly disinfected between patients .

PRACTICE PROCEDURES

The Ripley Family Dental Centre 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.

A Perspex protective screen has been put up on reception to protect patients and staff alike if needing to interact with the staff.

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 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 email or telephone to limit your time spent at reception.

Windows throughout the practice and surgeries will be kept open to allow air exchange.

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!

We are especially mindful that many dental treatments are aerosol-generating procedures (AGP's). It is difficult for us to carry out some dental procedures without generation of some level of aerosol. Aerosol suspended in the air is a theoretical source of infection which we obviously 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 where possible reduces bio aerosols by a further 30 to 90%
- Our regular facemasks filter approximately 60% of remaining airborne particles.
- FFP2 and FFP3 masks filter 94% and 99% respectively of airborne particles in both directions (patient to clinician and clinician to patient).

We therefore feel that our normal dental procedures (non-AGP) can be carried out with minimal risk by the use of high-volume suction, a visor and Fluid resistant surgical masks and, in high aerosol generating procedures FFP2 or FFP3 masks as appropriate.

Despite the financial impact of the coronavirus, The Practice will not be increasing its normal fees for the foreseeable future unless absolutely necessary. However, the time taken to carry out treatment sessions may need to be extended by approximately 30 minutes which will be included into the fees for your procedure.

SUMMARY

The vast majority of our patients are otherwise healthy without coronavirus infection and we are confident that we are 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 The Ripley Family Dental Centre please do not hesitate to contact us on rfdc@btinternet.com

Yours sincerely

The Ripley Family Dental Centre

APPENDIX 1

People at high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable):

- have had an organ transplant
 - are having chemotherapy or antibody treatment for cancer, including immunotherapy
 - are having an intense course of radiotherapy (radical radiotherapy) for lung cancer
 - are having targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system (such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors)
 - have blood or bone marrow cancer (such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma)
 - have had a bone marrow or stem cell transplant in the past 6 months, or are still taking immunosuppressant medicine
 - have been told by a doctor they have a severe lung condition (such as cystic fibrosis, severe asthma or severe COPD)
 - have a condition that means they have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID or sickle cell)
 - are taking medicine that makes them much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppressant medicine)
 - have a serious heart condition and are pregnant
- People at moderate risk (clinically vulnerable)
- are 70 or older
 - are pregnant
 - have a lung condition that's not severe (such as asthma, COPD, emphysema or bronchitis)
 - have heart disease (such as heart failure)
 - have diabetes
 - have chronic kidney disease
 - have liver disease (such as hepatitis)
 - have a condition affecting the brain or nerves (such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis or cerebral palsy)
 - have a condition that means they have a high risk of getting infections
 - are taking medicine that can affect the immune system (such as low doses of steroids)
 - are very obese (a BMI of 40 or above)
- Patients with head and neck cancer / post radiotherapy/ chemotherapy may also be more vulnerable although they were not officially included in the patient list