

## **Northwest Orthodontics - re-opening after Covid 19 lockdown**

The safety of our patients and staff is extremely important to us so we have changed the way we work to ensure our patients and staff are protected when we re-open.

To protect your safety prior to re-opening all our staff have undergone Covid 19 specific training in.

- The COVID-19 case definition, guidance, and patient management.
- Policies and procedures to facilitate social distancing
- Cross-infection Control measures and Environmental cleaning
- Use of clinical clothing and PPE
- Hand hygiene and cough hygiene
- Management of medical emergencies and Safeguarding

The information below outlines the protocols we have in place to protect your safety but if you need any further information please feel free to contact us.

### **New Patient journey through the practice**

We have put in place measures to keep our patients safe as they move through the practice. These measures include social distancing, personal protective equipment, hand cleaning facilities, cough etiquette and a restructuring of our appointment bookings.

#### **Prior to attending the practice**

##### *Patient Triage and Prioritisation*

The health board is planning a phased re-introduction of orthodontic services and we will be rebooking our current patients to reflect this policy.

This may mean that some patients may have to wait longer than others to be seen in the practice.

##### *Booking your appointment*

We will be contacting you to pre-book your appointment and only patients with a pre-booked appointment will be admitted into the practice.

If you need an emergency appointment or need to change your appointment time, please phone us on 02871 369050 and a new appointment will be organised for you.

We would ask you to attend at your appointment time as we may not be able to see you if are late for your appointment. This is to allow social distancing within the practice.

If you are running late could you contact us to see if we will need to re-organise another appointment for you.

Interpreting services to be provided through The Big Word telephone interpretation service if needed.

We may update your medical history prior to the booking of your appointment.

*Who should attend the practice and what can they bring with them?*

Ideally you should attend alone but children under 16 or vulnerable patients can be accompanied by one person with parental or caring responsibility.

The parent or carer will typically be asked to remain in the waiting room but need to speak to the orthodontist this can be arranged.

Patients, parents, and carers should minimise any personal belongings brought into the practice so that they do not have remove any clothing or put down bags etc.

Ideally the patient to be seen in the surgery should enter the building ready to sit in the dental chair.

#### *Patient COVID Screening*

We will ask you the following questions to all prior to booking you an appointment and then again prior to your attendance:

- Have you tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 7 days?
- Have you had any of the following symptoms in the past 7 days?
  - A new persistent cough (coughing for more than an hour or more than three coughing episodes in a 24-hour period)
  - A high temperature or fever
  - Loss of, or altered, sense of smell or taste
- Has anyone in your household had any of the same symptoms in the past 14 days?
- Have you been advised to self-isolate as part of the “Test, Trace and Protect” strategy?

If you answer “Yes” to any of the above screening questions you will be advised not to attend or enter the practice and make another appointment when you are symptom free.

Unfortunately, patients, or staff, who are confirmed or displaying signs of COVID-19 infection cannot be seen within the practice until they are symptom free.

If you feel you have developed symptoms of Covid -19 on the morning of your appointment please phone us and another appointment will be organised for you.

If your treatment cannot be postponed, then referral to an Urgent Dental Care centre will be organised for you.

If you are shielding or vulnerable consideration will be given to treating remotely or postponing treatment if possible. Where an appointment is necessary consideration will be given to scheduling the appointment at the start of a session.

### Attendance at the practice

#### *Once you are outside the practice*

The outside front door will be open, but the inside porch door will be locked so please wait at the bottom of the steps until being called into the practice.

Signage will be placed outside the practice to remind you to wait outside prior to being invited in for your appointment.

#### *Upon entering the practice*

You will be invited into the practice by a member of staff wearing door and directed through the practice by a staff member wearing PPE.

Typically, patients will be asked to go directly to the surgery and any parents or carers will be advised whether to proceed to the surgery or wait in the designated waiting area.

Hand hygiene facilities will be provided as you enter and the practice and we would ask that you sanitise your hands as you enter the practice.

Information posters in relation to COVID diagnosis, social distancing, cough etiquette and hand hygiene will be displayed throughout the practice and we would ask you to read these and follow their instructions.

Tissues and a foot-pedal operated bin will be available in the reception hall and throughout the practice

### *Patients' waiting area's*

To maximise social distancing the use of the waiting area's is to be minimised as much as possible.

The waiting areas have been re-organised to allow 2m social distancing and floor markings have been placed to help demonstrate the 2-metre distancing.

We have removed all unnecessary fixtures in the waiting rooms but toothbrushes, mouthguards etc and still available upon request from the main waiting area.

To protect our staff a Perspex screen has been placed between the reception and the main waiting area. We would ask that you remain 2 metres away from the reception desk unless asked to approach it by a member of the reception team.

### *Forms and payments*

Health service forms no longer need to be signed by you, but we will make a copy of the form available on our website for you to read. We will record your consent of the health service terms and conditions in your patient notes.

Ideally payments will be taken using contactless card or credit card number, but we are still accepting cash payments if card payments are not possible.

### *Patient toilet facilities*

The health board has recommended the use of toilets to be restricted as far as possible, so we recommend using the bathroom before attending the practice.

The toilet will still be available for use, but patients should ask a member of the reception team if they need to use this facility.

We would ask that you brush your teeth and braces before attending the practice as the toilet will no longer be available for this purpose.

### *In the surgery/Leaving the practice*

The process will be the same as normal, but the clinical and nursing staff will be wearing PPE such as masks, aprons and eye protection.

Ideally we are aiming to minimise the number of people in the surgery so we are asking parents/carers to remain in the waiting room unless they need to speak to the orthodontist or the orthodontist needs to speak to them.

For certain procedures you may be asked to sanitise your hands before leaving the surgery.

### *Leaving the practice*

Once your treatment has been completed, we will ask you to return to the main waiting area to make a new appointment.

If you parent or carer is in the waiting area, we will have already organised the appointment with them on your behalf.

### **Final comments**

We understand that this is a very different way of operating and we ask that you be patient with us as it is as new to us as it is to you.

Our aim is to keep everyone as safe as we possible and we would like to thank you for your patience and understanding during this unprecedented time.

