

# Sundon Dental Practice

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## NEW PATIENT ASSESSMENT APPOINTMENT POLICY

At our practice we will endeavour to manage our appointments system to avoid delays in appointment times and minimise loss of surgery time through cancellations and failed appointments.

### In our practice we

- Communicate with patients in a courteous, friendly, professional manner
- Make sure that patients receive full information about our services, their treatment and its cost
- Provide advice and treatment outside normal surgery hours where necessary
- Refer patients for further professional advice and treatment where appropriate

### In our practice we will

- Manage our appointments system so that treatment appointments are booked no more than 2 weeks ahead, subject to annual leave and factors outside of our control.
- Ensure that patients should have to wait no longer than 10 minutes to be seen. Where there is a further delay we will explain the reasons.
- Where possible, remind patients of their appointment by phone, email or text (as preferred) where the appointment time exceeds 30 minutes.
- Monitor our waiting times for (i) treatment and (ii) for booking appointments
- Provide as much notice as possible when appointments have to be changed or cancelled and explain the reasons
- Advise patients if there is a change of dentist

### In return, we would like you to

- Participate in your dental treatment, particularly any advice about prevention and diet that we have asked you to continue at home
- Arrive on time for your appointment. Please give the practice at least 24 hours notice if you are unable to keep your appointment. We may charge for missed appointments where we have not been notified. If you miss an appointment on more than one occasion without letting us know, we may need to review future provision of treatment for you at the practice.
- Advise us of any changes to your contact details (address, telephone numbers, email) to help us keep our records up to date and ensure that we are able to contact you

### Failed Appointments

If you are unable to keep an appointment, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can use the appointment slot to see another patient. **Failing to attend** an appointment wastes valuable NHS resources and surgery time. Wasted appointments are a huge problem throughout the NHS. The issue of **Failing to attend** (FTAs) is a continued frustration for both patients waiting to get an appointment with the Practice and for those working in the Practice. The effect of FTAs is:

- An increase in the waiting time for appointments
- Patient needing care not being able to see their dentist.
- A waste of resources

Failure to attend the new patient assessment appointment will result in the patient's name being removed from our waiting list and an alternative NHS provider for care will need to be found by the patient. The patient will then be notified in writing that they will no longer be seen at the practice.

Policy Reviewed and Updated: August 2022

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