

## **Appointment Management and Cancellation Policy**

It is the aim of this practice to provide quality dental care to our patients and to use clinical time effectively. To achieve this aim, we have an appointment management and cancellation policy.

### **Management of appointments**

We invest in the latest technology, including modern telephone equipment, to allow our patients to make or reschedule appointments easily. Our appointment system supports timely access to care and treatment, allows patients to access services at a time that suits them and minimises the length of time people have to wait. Appointments can be made or rescheduled by calling our dedicated appointments line on 0114 2661335.

### **Reminders**

E-mail and/or Text reminders are sent to patients 3 days before any appointment.

### **Cancellation or delay of an appointment by the practice**

We will only cancel or delay a patient's appointment in unavoidable circumstances. In such cases, we will take the following steps:

- The patient will be contacted as soon as the practice is aware of the need to cancel or delay the appointment. We will explain the reason for the cancellation or delay
- At the time of contact, the patient will be offered a new appointment at the earliest time available
- If the patient is unable to commit to a new appointment during that contact, we will ask them to get in touch at a later time, when we will offer them a priority appointment

### **Cancellation of an appointment or missed appointment by a patient**

Patients are requested to give at least 24 hours' notice to cancel a dental appointment. Cancellations should be made by telephone on: 0114 2661335. Late cancellations and missed appointments may represent a cost to the practice, when other patients could have been seen in the time set aside for the patient.

We do not make a charge for NHS patients for a late cancellation or missed appointment. However, we reserve the right to ask a patient to find another dental practice if they continue to miss appointments.

If more than two dental appointments are missed or cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice, we do not guarantee being able to complete a patient's treatment or offer them treatment in the future.

There is a fee for private dental appointments that are missed or cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice. The fee is based on the length of the appointment.

It is our aim to write to patients after a missed appointment to understand the reason for non-attendance and to inform them about any fee or decision about their dental care. We understand that cancellations are sometimes unavoidable due to illness or emergencies and we will take account of all valid circumstances.

Any appeals about missed or cancelled appointment decisions by a patient should be made in writing to the Practice Owner.

## **Appointment Cancellations or Failure to Attend**

As an NHS service School Road Dental Surgery is under pressure to save money and staff time by reducing the number of failed appointments and cancellations made at the last minute.

Each year around 54,000 appointments are missed at dental practices in Sheffield.

We are aware that many patients have genuine difficulties attending for appointments and may find that they cannot always attend on the day of an appointment due to ill health, a carer unavailable to bring them, anxiety or simply a prior engagement.

Our service will always try to allow for these problems but in order to reduce these failed appointments and late cancellations it has been necessary to introduce the following policy:

- Failure to attend 2 appointments will result in no further appointments at School Road Dental Surgery.
- Cancellation of 2 appointments less than 24 hours before the appointment is due and the patient will be unable to make any further appointments at School Road Dental Surgery.

Please let us know in good time if you are unable to attend an appointment, so that the time can be offered to other patients

Please also be aware that failing to attend or cancelling a private appointment with less than 24 hours notice is chargeable.

Our staff will always try to be sympathetic when there are genuine reasons for cancellation.