

Dear patients,

Firstly, all of us here at Lightwood genuinely hope that you and your loved ones have been keeping safe and well and continue to do so during the COVID 19 lockdown.

We are pleased to let our patients know that we have been seeing patients face to face since 15th June when our personal protective equipment (PPE) first became available, this was to enable us to initially concentrate on more urgent dental cases. However we are now risk assessing all our patients to enable us to continue with routine dental care (This arrangement has the potential to change as Public Health England is in control of all PPE stock if it does change, we will let you know, so please keep checking our website and social media sites for further updates).

Ahead of patients attending the practice we are sharing the following important information with the intention of minimising patient inconvenience and maximising safety for us all.

Please could you take some time to read this carefully as it will directly affect your visits to the practice.

In line with national guidelines, we have had to make some significant changes in our procedures in order to ensure the safety of patients and staff. We are introducing a new pathway for dental visits which will remain in operation for the foreseeable future.

Firstly, in order to reduce any concerns you may have, we would like to remind you that in general, dental practices are, by the nature of what we do, probably some of the safest places to visit in the current climate. Our team, collectively, have decades of experience in cross infection control. We are confident that the procedures and protocols we are implementing are effective, robust and evidence-based. Your dental visits will continue to be safe and of the same high standard that you have come to expect from our team. The look and feel of your future visit will however, by necessity, be different. We have therefore put together some guidance on what to expect on your return to Lightwood Dental Care.

Until further notice due to social distancing, we will operate a 'closed-door' policy which means we will no longer be able to accept unannounced visits to the practice. **All** patient visits must be scheduled, and this includes visits for purchasing toothbrushes, TePe's, etc. or to discuss treatment options. But remember that we are here for you. Please call us if you are unsure. We will endeavour to answer any queries and we will even arrange to get supplies of brushes and other oral health products to you if necessary. We appreciate that this is far from ideal, but it is necessary in order to keep us all safe in the current COVID alert level. We are also available to answer queries via our email (info@lightwooddental.co.uk)

Before Your Appointment

- We will contact you before your appointment. We will request an updated Medical History and we will supply any information about your appointment regarding the time, the duration and, if an emergency appointment, the dentist you will be seeing. This information can be via telephone or email if requested.
- There may be occasions when we ask for additional forms to be completed and returned to us, preferably via email, ahead of your appointment. If we are not confident that we have the correct information, your appointment may have to be rescheduled.

- Please ensure that we have your mobile phone number. If you do not have a mobile phone, please let us have an alternative contact, such as landline or relative's number.
- Where there is an expected fee, you are welcome to pay in advance as this reduces the time spent within the practice.

On the Day of Your Appointment

Before leaving home for the Surgery

- Please ensure you have been to the toilet. As the patients' toilets are communal, they pose a potential risk of cross-infection and therefore our facilities at the practice will remain closed except in emergencies, until further notice.
- Ensure that you have brushed your teeth
- Any coats, bags, etc. will need to remain outside of the clinical areas, therefore only bring essential items with you.

Arrival

- If you arrive by car, please remain in your vehicle and telephone reception to tell us that you have arrived.
- If you arrive on foot, as our front door must remain closed, please ring the doorbell and wait for a staff member to acknowledge your arrival.
- Please arrive unaccompanied unless you need another person for assistance.

Payments

- Wherever possible, please make payments by card.

Entering the Building

- At the front door, you will be asked questions relating to any COVID 19 symptoms within the past 7 days.
- You will need to sanitise your hands with hand gel once in the practice.
- A team member will guide you through the practice at all times during your visit, whilst maintaining social distancing.
- Leave any bags/coats etc. in the area provided outside the treatment room.
- Please maintain social distancing measures and observe floor signs at all times during your visit.

Dental Treatment

- In the surgery, you will notice staff wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This may include masks, visors, gowns etc. Please do not be concerned over the appearance of the PPE, it is there for all of our benefit!
- As we know, COVID 19 most often spreads via aerosol droplets being inhaled or via contact with eyes. The majority of dental treatments such as fillings, etc. are known as 'Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGP's)'. Any treatment which is likely to produce an AGP will require an appropriately increased level of PPE protection.
- In order to limit your time within the practice, we will, unfortunately, have to limit interaction as much as possible. We will all miss those chats with our patients!

After Treatment

- After treatment has been completed, we will ask you to re-sanitise your hands, collect your personal items and leave the surgery promptly.
- If you have any queries unrelated to your appointment you are attending for then we would encourage you to telephone or email the practice later to discuss further.

- If you have attended the surgery for treatment you will still receive a post-treatment courtesy call as usual.

We understand that many people may regard some or all of these measures as daunting, but please be aware that these protocols are implemented for everyone's safety during these trying times.

The protocols we have used to develop our re-opening plan have been drawn up and published by The Faculty of General Dental Practice of The Royal College of Surgeons. The implementation and maintenance of this protocol will be continually monitored by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The advice on which we base our protocols is being continuously updated as more scientific evidence emerges. Therefore, we, in turn, will be updating our protocols regularly, in order to ensure that they continue to provide the most effective and safe solution. We will keep you informed of any changes which may directly affect you.

WE WOULD ALSO ENCOURAGE YOU ALL TO NOW CLICK THE RESOURCES TAB AT THE TOP OF THIS WEBSITE AND READ THE INFORMATION THERE REGARDING PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions on any aspect of the practice. We thank you for your patience and understanding at this time.

Kind Regards

Dr Tony Cowan Dr Neil Austin