

## **Managing Missed and Cancelled Appointments**

To manage our appointment system effectively and provide high quality service, it is important that patients attend for their appointments as planned. Our appointment system allows patients to access our service at a time that suits them and minimises waiting times. Appointments can be made or rescheduled by calling 01562 883 177. If you have any queries or concerns about an appointment, please call the Practice to speak to our team. With enough notice this means that if you need a shorter appointment time or do not want to go ahead with treatment, we are able to offer an appointment to someone else.

### **Reminders**

Email and telephone reminders are usually sent 2 working days before an appointment and patients are requested to inform the practice of any changes to their contact details. Email reminders are sent from the following email address, please make sure the email address is saved as a contact to avoid the email being diverted to spam or junk mail: [hagleydentalreception@gmail.com](mailto:hagleydentalreception@gmail.com).

Patients can log into our patient portal to update their details. Please note that email and phone reminders are sent as a courtesy and emails may not be sent/received for reasons out of our control (IT failure, change in email address etc). Therefore, failure to attend, by not receiving an email, will not be considered a valid exception of our policy. We will offer a paper appointment card to all patients. If you are unable to keep your dental appointment, then please call the Practice giving us as much notice as possible- at least 1 full working day- so that we can offer your time slot to another patient. If less notice is given without a valid reason, the appointment will be considered to have been broken and may incur a charge. Please note, Saturdays are not considered a working day and therefore Monday appointments should be cancelled before we close on Fridays.

### **Rescheduling or Delay of Appointments by the Practice**

We will only reschedule or delay a patient's appointment in unavoidable circumstances, in such cases we will:

- Contact the patient as soon as we are aware of the need to reschedule or delay and explain the reason why
- At the time of contact we will offer the earliest next available appointment
- If the patient is unable to commit to an appointment at that contact, then we will ask the patient to contact us and will book a new appointment at the earliest time available.

### **Cancellation of an Appointment or a Missed Appointment by the Patient**

Failure to attend is defined as:

- Arriving late for an appointment (5 minutes late or more)
- Not arriving for an appointment
- Not giving enough notice of not being able to attend (Short Notice Cancellation)-we generally require 1 full working days' notice
- Not arriving for an appointment due to not receiving an email or phone reminder

## **NHS Appointments**

Although missed NHS appointments cannot be charged for, we have a very firm policy regarding non-attendance. Patients who fail to attend two NHS dental appointments are unlikely to be offered any further appointments in line with NHS regulations (missed appointments do not have to be consecutive). Your dentist can terminate your treatment if you miss your appointment without letting the dental surgery know. You may then need to pay again for a new course of treatment.

While surgeries cannot charge you for not turning up, NHS England has the right to ask you to find another dental surgery if you continue to miss appointments (What happens when you visit an NHS dentist, 2021) <https://www.nhs.uk/nhsservices/dentists/what-happens-when-you-visit-the-dentist/>

If you miss an NHS appointment and do not attend again within 24 months, we may not be able to see you again. As per NICE guidelines the dentist will invite you to book an examination appointment at the end of your course of treatment to ensure you receive ongoing dental care. If you choose not to book an examination at this point, the practice may later send you a recall letter. However, it is a patient's responsibility to attend regularly and keep track of dental appointments. If you have not been seen at the practice for more than 24 months, we may be able to place your name on our NHS waiting list to contact you when a place becomes available.

## **Private and Plan Appointments**

Patients who attend a Hygienist appointment pay a reservation fee which is half of the hygienist fee. If a Hygienist appointment is cancelled by the patient at short notice (less than one full working days' notice) or missed, then this payment will be lost, and a new fee will need to be paid before a new appointment can be booked. A fee will be payable for Dental Plan patients who miss a Hygienist appointment. If a patient fails to attend a Private or Plan dental appointment with the dentist, they will be charged for some or all of the cost of that appointment, in proportion to the length of the appointment and any laboratory fees incurred. The final decision is at the discretion of the Practice owner. We reserve the right to ask for a deposit for private and plan appointments with our dentist, which will be forfeited in the event of failure to attend as outlined above. If more than 2 appointments are missed, future appointments may not be offered.