

Practice Policy

What we provide for patients

- Our practice aims to provide dental care of a consistent quality, for all patients. We have management systems to help us, and which define each practice member's responsibilities when looking after you.
- In proposing treatment, we will take account of your wishes. We will explain options and costs, so that you can make an informed choice. We will always explain what we are doing.
- We will do all we can to look after your general health. We will ask you about your health, and about any medicines being taken. This helps us treat you safely. We keep all information about you confidential.
- Infection and cross contamination control is also essential to the safety of our patients. Every team member receives training in practice systems for cross contamination control.
- We screen all patients for mouth cancer at routine check-ups. We ask patients about tobacco and alcohol use because they increase your oral cancer risk
- Practice working methods are reviewed regularly. We encourage all staff members to make suggestions for improving the care we give patients.
- We regularly ask patients for their views on our services. We have systems for dealing promptly with patient complaints and for ensuring that lessons are learnt from any mistakes we make.
- All dentists and dental care professionals in the practice take part in continuing professional education meeting the General Dental Council's requirements. We aim to keep up to date with current thinking on all aspects of general dentistry including preventative care, which reduces your need for treatments.
- All members of the practice know of the need to ensure that dentists are working safely. In the unlikely event that a dentist in this practice becomes unfit to practise, we have systems to ensure that concerns are investigated and, if necessary, acted upon.

What we ask from patients

- As a patient of Hopton Dental Surgery you agree to attend the practice when invited to do so for check-ups or treatment. All patients are advised of their recall period (when we next need to see you for a check-up). Failure to attend may result in a deterioration of your oral health and we may be unable to see patients who have missed their recall period.
- All patients are provided with a treatment plan and estimate before the treatment commences which has details of the payment terms and the fees payable for treatment. To avoid unnecessary costs or inefficiency fees are collected before each treatment plan has been completed, with the fees payable as treatment progresses, with the full balance due before the final appointment.
- In the eventuality that fees are outstanding at the end of the treatment plan, the balance is collected at the last visit of the course of treatment. If there are fees outstanding after the last visit, the practice will write to or telephone the patient to request payment. Reasonable steps will be taken to collect outstanding fees before a third-party agent is instructed or legal action is initiated.
- We ask that patients accept the advice and recommendations from the treating dentist in respect of remedial work which safeguards your general dental health and inform the treating dentist of any injury, difficulty or other relevant matter affecting your dental health generally.
- The dentist may offer you some different treatment options and you have the right to choose whichever treatment option you prefer however we always advise you of any consequences of not following the clinician's recommendations. You have the right to decline treatment at which point the dental team will gain consent for this.
- If a patient fails to attend an appointment or cancels without 24 working hours' notice, we reserve the right to charge patients for missed appointments. If a patient fails to attend an appointment or cancels without 24 working hours' notice three times, the patient may be informed that they may no longer have access to treatment at the practice.

- The practice is committed to fulfilling a duty of care to protect staff and other patients and adheres to a zero-tolerance policy. This policy defines the practice guidance for refusing access to patients to minimise potential risk to other patients and staff. We define zero tolerance as unacceptable behaviour, including threatening behaviour, physical abuse, verbal abuse, race, gender or any other form of discrimination or other unreasonable behaviour. Fraudulent or criminal behaviour, including deliberately obtaining drugs for non-medical reasons, attempting to use the dentist to conceal or aid criminal activity, stealing from practice premises.
- When the relationship between the clinician and the patient breaks down to the point where the dentist no longer feels capable of providing a quality level of patient care and feels that the patient's needs would be better served elsewhere, we would ask a patient to find an alternative provider. Before we end a professional relationship with a patient, we ensure that our decision is fair, and we always justify our decision. We would write to the patient to tell them our decision and our reasons for it.