



Reece Associates Dental Practice

REOPENING POLICY



Reece Associates
refresh. revitalise. recreate.



Post-COVID-19 Reopening Policy

This policy has been created based on multiple updated sources from within the dental and medical professions and guidance put forward by the government.

The policy outlines all changes and modifications we have made as a Practice in order to safely and securely open the Practice following the subsidence of the COVID-19 pandemic peak.

As of the initial publishing of this policy, we do not currently know for certain how long these changes and modifications will remain in place. We accept and are prepared for the reality that they may remain as a permanent feature within dentistry in order to ensure patient and staff safety.

The COVID-19 pandemic which has covered the globe is still being studied, evaluated and considered. Therefore the policies and recommendations are likely to change in the future in line with forthcoming evidence.

We thank all of our patients for their understanding and patience during the period that Reece Associates underwent temporary closure. We are also grateful for your cooperation and further understanding during the implementation of any and all new measures. It is through these changes that we will be able to ensure we are offering the best possible dental care in the very safest environment we can.

Re-Opening Timescale

The Practice remained open for triage and non-contact treatment of emergency patients at all points during the pandemic.

From Monday 8th June 2020, however, the Practice reopened for Private Plan Patients, as well as some continued care for NHS Emergencies. From Monday 15th June 2020, this extended to all patients registered with the Practice.

As of January 2021, the country has entered its third lockdown. During this lockdown, the Practice intends to continue with full provision of services for all patients unaffected by COVID-19.

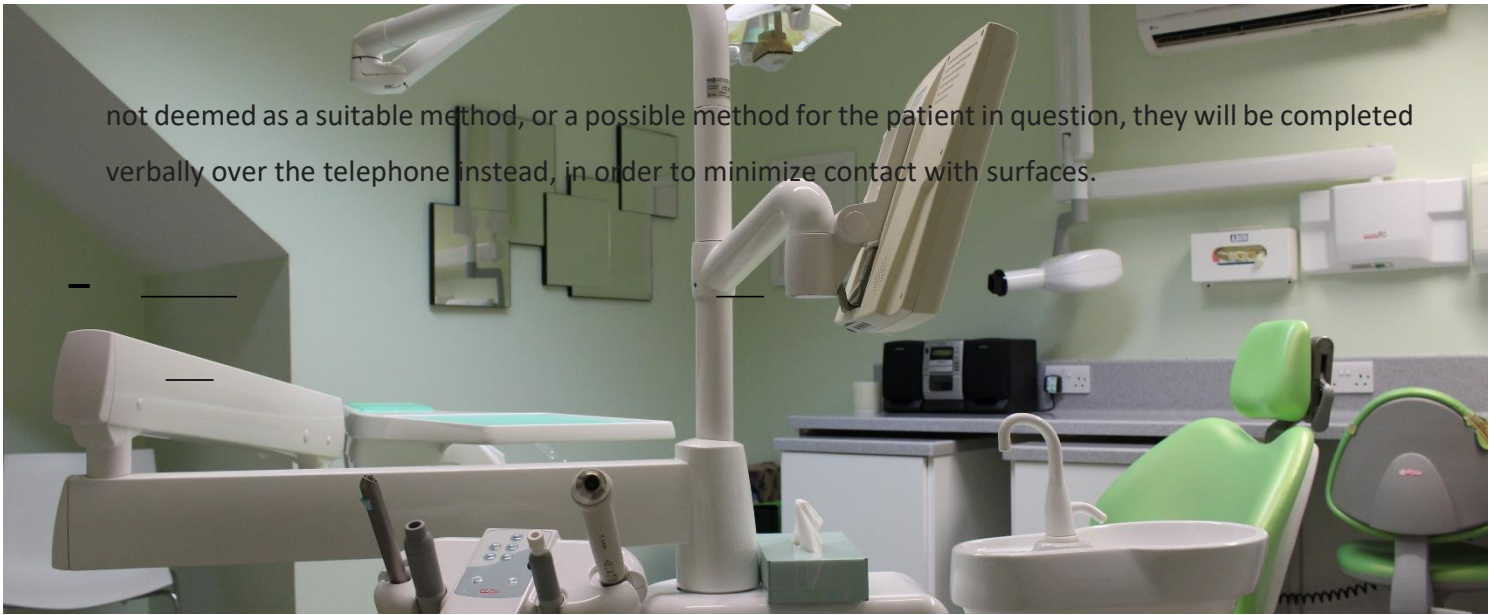
Communicating With Patients

We will be contacting patients and confirming appointments ahead of their scheduled appointment date.

We will request that all patients who are attending Reece Associates update their standard medical and dental history forms beforehand, in order to ensure the safety of all our patients and staff. These forms will be sent to patients prior to attendance as an electronic link via text message or email. Where this is



not deemed as a suitable method, or a possible method for the patient in question, they will be completed verbally over the telephone instead, in order to minimize contact with surfaces.



New Measures to Reduce The Risk Of COVID-19 Transmission

Our existing cross-infection control protocols against all previously known pathogens are already woven into all clinical activity carried out at Reece Associates.

It is worth noting that a Dental Practice is by its nature a very clean environment compared to most public areas. There is also a complete lack of evidence that COVID-19 transmission rates are increased within Dentists or their staff.

Collectively, the Reece Associates team has undergone constant evaluation of guidance and measures released both Nationally and Internationally. Therefore, we are confident that the measures we have implemented and will detail within this policy will reduce risk to the minimum possible level.

All team members at Reece Associates are dedicated to upholding these procedures and methods, in order to minimize the risk for every person within the Practice

Prior To Attending The Practice

We will be checking and updating your personal and details verbally over the telephone when booking new appointments for you. Using these details, we will then send you a link to the Patient Portal, where you will be able to update your Medical History, as well as completing some screening questions pertaining to COVID-19. Upon completion of these documents, we will then carry out an assessment, using this information, of any relative COVID-19 risk. Should the Patient Portal not be accessible for individual patients, we may elect instead to gather this information verbally.

Our team will ensure that these forms have been completed prior to your appointment, and may place a follow-up phone call should we not be in receipt of the necessary details.

Upon completion of our assessment, if it is felt that you are at risk of being infected, even if expressing asymptotically, we will respectfully request for you to delay your appointment with us for at least two weeks. This request may also be made if we are unable to receive the necessary information from you (i.e., Medical History and assessment information) prior to your appointment. Should we be unable to fill this appointment at short notice, we may then levy an appropriate fee which would need to be settled before further bookings could be made.

Reece Associates continues to recommend that patients in the highest-risk groups for COVID-19 infection and complications delay non-essential treatment for as long as possible, or until the National risk lowers to a sufficient point. If you are in one of the highest-risk groups, and do require treatment, we will be happy to work with you to schedule an appointment at the beginning of the day where possible.

When making payments at the Practice, we will request that contactless payment methods are used in as many instances as possible.

Arriving At The Practice

When travelling to the practice, we would recommend that you limit close contact with other members of the public as far as possible.

We will meet all patients at the doors to the Practice in order to check temperatures with a non-contact thermometer. A reading of 37.8 degrees or above will result in a repeat reading, in order to prevent false positives. Should this reading persist, we will unfortunately have to rescind your appointment, for the safety of our patients and staff.

Following this, we will ask you to store any and all possible personal items securely within our Reception area, before seating you in a suitable location to await your appointment. Please do not bring additional people with you to your appointment, unless they are happy to wait outside of the Practice. During this process we will also direct you to follow the most recent applicable hand and oral hygiene guidance at our designated stations.

Practice Procedures

Our team have spent a great deal of time looking critically at every possible aspect of the Practice in order to remove every item that could potentially risk infection and is non-essential. As a result, it may seem that the Practice looks quite bare when compared to previous experiences.

We also regret that we will not be providing our tea and coffee offerings as before, again to reduce infection opportunities. All clinical and common areas and associated surfaces will be disinfected regularly, in addition to our existing cleaning protocols between appointments.

Reece Associates have implemented a period following every necessary treatment appointment where the vacated surgery will then remain empty in order to allow additional time for further decontamination procedures and processes.

We will be minimizing appointments made at Reception, instead guiding towards booking via email or telephone, in order to limit your time at Reception and within the Practice.

Dental Procedures

All staff at Reece Associates will be utilizing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in line with current Recommendations, and the best available evidence.

As a result, we apologise in advance for the necessary reduction in social interaction this will necessitate. Whilst our masks hide the friendly faces you're used to seeing, rest assured that we remain the same welcoming team underneath!



One of our biggest concerns remains Aerosol-Generating Procedures (AGP's). It remains difficult for us to carry out some dental procedures and treatments without the generation of some level of aerosol, which is a theoretical source of infection we wish to keep to a minimum. As of the production of the policy, best practice at the moment dictates:

- The use of Dental Rubber Dams wherever possible, to reduce bioaerosols by 30-90%
- The use of surgical facemasks to filter 60% of airborne particles
- The use, where necessary, of FFP2 and FFP3 masks to filter 94-99% of airborne particles

As a result, we feel that our normal, non-aerosol generating procedures can be carried out with minimal risk by making use of these above procedures.

Despite the financial impact of COVID-19, Reece Associates remains dedicated to keeping our fees for dental treatments at the existing price point. Unfortunately, for the security of the future of the business, we will be passing some of the cost of necessary PPE on to patients following visits for AGP's. As of January 2021, this fee is £25. Patients who pay a monthly Direct Debit to belong to one of our Maintenance Plans will receive their usual 20% discount on this, bringing the fee down to £20. Reece Associates is constantly reviewing this fee, and as soon as it can be lowered, we will aim to do so immediately; the amount needing to be charged is controlled by the inflated prices being given to us by PPE suppliers.

As part of the Nation's continued battle against COVID-19, and the part we all must play within it, attendance to the Practice does require consent for your details to be passed on to the secure NHS Track & Trace scheme, should there be any infection or point of concern within the Practice. It is assumed by you attending an appointment at the Practice that you are giving your consent to this, due to its vital nature.



Summary:

The vast majority of our patients are otherwise healthy without COVID-19 infection and we are confident that we are able to provide dental care for these patients in as normal an environment as possible while bearing in mind our responsibilities to mitigate risks of infection spread as far as is practically possible.

This policy will be constantly reviewed and updated as necessitated by circumstances over time.

If you have any questions regarding this policy or about your dental care at Reece Associates please do not hesitate to contact us at hello@reeceassociates.co.uk.



*With Kind Regards,
Reece Associates*