



Reece Associates
Dental Practice

REOPENING POLICY



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 throughout the pandemic.

From Monday 8th June 2020, however, the Practice re-opened 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.

Communicating With Patients

As before the pandemic, we will be sending automatic text and email reminders for appointments prior to the day.

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. This should be completed via the Patient Portal, which all patients receive a link to in their reminder texts/emails.

We will also ensure COVID-19 pre-appointment screening is completed a couple of days prior to the appointment, as well as further screening upon arrival, in order to ensure the minimum amount of risk.

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

As a Practice, we will be using the new online Patient Portal for the majority of our updating of your personal details, as well as pre-appointment COVID-19 screening. It will be checked, prior to your appointment, that this has been completed, and if not a member of our team will contact you directly to ensure the relevant details are gathered.

Using the Patient Portal, we will be regularly checking your personal contact information as well as your Medical History details. We will also include a formal COVID-19 Pre-Appointment Assessment form which will be updated in line with the most recent Governmental changes as and when they happen.

For patients who find these online forms difficult, we will always accommodate a verbal format instead, which can be completed over the telephone.

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 a fortnight. 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.

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 ensure that we only allow access to individuals who have cause to enter the building, maintaining the lowest possible levels of risk.

Please do not bring additional people with you to your appointment, unless they are happy to potentially be asked to wait outside of the Practice, depending on the capacity of the waiting room at the time. 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.

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.

[Reviewed and Amended on 21/12/21 by D. Greenfield]

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*