



Passage House Dental Care

*modern dentistry for all*

## **Appointment Management Policy (Including Missed and Late Cancelled Appointments)**

It is the aim of Passage House Dental Care to provide the highest quality dental care to our patients by using our clinical time effectively. To achieve this aim, we have an appointment management policy.

At Passage House Dental Care, we have always been very lenient to missed appointments, but the need for our services has grown exponentially and we need to implement a more effective policy. This will be in line with other dental practices in Bristol and has the support of the local NHS Dental Area Team.

As you may be aware, NHS dentistry is in a very difficult place and we currently have a very large waiting list of patients who wish to join the practice. Every missed appointment whether it be NHS or private costs the practice dearly not only in monetary terms but in the ability to offer new patients much needed dental care. As each NHS appointment is missed, it lessens our chance of meeting contractual targets. This leads to funding being withdrawn and could reduce our ability to offer future NHS services.

Missed private appointments directly affect our self-employed dentists and hygienists along with the ability to pay for the running of the practice.

Most of our patients attend their appointments and provide us with adequate notice if they need to change or cancel an appointment and we thank you for this. We also provide a free of charge text reminder service (please keep your mobile number up to date with us) which is sent 48 hours prior to your appointment to help.

### **Cancellation or changing appointments by a patient**

Patients are requested to give at least 24 hours' notice to cancel or change a dental appointment. Cancellations or changes should be made by telephone on: 0117 9503141 or via email on: [info@passagehousedental.co.uk](mailto:info@passagehousedental.co.uk). (If emailing, ensure you get a confirmation reply.)

### **NHS Patients**

For NHS patients, we are unable to charge a fee for late cancellations or missed appointments, but as mentioned previously it has a negative effect on the practice. Therefore, we reserve the right to ask a patient to find another dental practice if two NHS dental appointments are missed or cancelled with less than 24hours' notice each time. For a first missed or late cancellation appointment a letter will be sent out. If a second appointment is missed or late cancellation given, a letter will be sent informing the patient of the withdrawal of NHS dental services. If this happens, we will be unable to either complete a patient's NHS treatment or offer them NHS treatment in the future.

### **NHS 'registration'**

Many patients believe that by being an NHS patient you are 'registered' at a dental practice. This is not correct. We only have a legal responsibility to see a patient if they are undergoing a current course of treatment (unless the patient fails to attend as highlighted above).

### **NHS 'registration' continued**

To be deemed a patient of the practice under the NHS, we request that a patient must be seen at least once in 26 months from their last dental appointment (this does not include emergency or hygiene appointments). If outside the 26 month window, we would be unable to offer further dental care, even urgent care, but would consider a patient re-joining our waiting list where possible.

### **Private Patients**

There is a fee for private dental appointments that are missed or cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice. The fee is based on the length of the appointment and will need to be paid prior to any rebooking of further appointments.

On a private basis we would expect all patients to have had at least one dental appointment in a 26 month period from their last appointment (this does not include emergency or hygiene appointments). If outside of this timeframe we would not be able to offer any urgent dental appointments until a new dental examination has taken place.

### **Rearranging of a dental appointment by the practice**

We will only rearrange a patient's appointment in unavoidable circumstances. In such cases, we will take the following steps:

- The patient will be contacted as soon as the practice is aware of the need to rearrange the appointment. We will explain the reason for it (most often this would be due to illness or annual leave of the clinician). At the time of contact, the patient will be offered a new appointment or be asked to contact the practice to do so.

### **Running Late – NHS and Private**

At Passage House Dental Care we pride ourselves on running as close to appointment times as possible. Our appointment books are extremely busy and each patient's check-up or treatment is assigned a certain time. If we do run late it is often due to something out of our control for example a more complex tooth extraction. We will inform you and on the very rare occasion may ask to rebook that appointment. Please be understanding in the rare event of this happening.

If a patient is late to their appointment and is still expecting to be seen it will have a knock-on affect to the day's appointments. Therefore, if a patient is late, it is highly unlikely that we will be able to carry out that appointment, but where possible we will try our very best, however, please do not expect to be seen in these circumstances and be understanding with the reasons outlined above.

Any appeals about missed or late cancelled appointments should be made in writing to:  
The Practice Manager  
Passage House Dental Care  
227 Passage Road  
Henbury  
Bristol BS10 7DL

Thank you for your help with keeping the practice running effectively.

**The Passage House Dental Care Team**

Last updated: March 2023