

# Guidance to Dentists on the Isle of Man – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020

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From Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020, dental practices providing both NHS and private services, who have undergone a Quality Assurance visit by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), will continue to provide the full range of dental treatments (both non-aerosol generating procedures and aerosol generating procedures). All dental providers will be receptive to future supportive visits from the DHSC.

Dental providers will continue to:

- Ensure they work to the current Standard Operating Procedures agreed by the DHSC with the profession.
- Assess every patient who makes contact with their service against Covid-19 and categorise patients into low or high risk<sup>1</sup> using the risk assessment questions demonstrated below.
- Keep a record of every patient who has attended the practice and each staff member who has interacted with the patient.
- Operate safely with the continued telephone triage and advice prior to any appointments taking place and to ensure patients attending for appointments are met at the practice entrance for a temperature check and to be asked specific questions pertaining to Covid-19 prior to entering waiting areas or reception desks.
- Refer any high risk patients presenting with symptoms of Covid-19 to 111 and offer an AAA approach to these patients until such time they can present as low risk with the following exceptions:
  - A requirement for emergency dental treatment that cannot wait until the patient has cleared their 14-day self-isolation period and AAA approach will not be sufficient
  - A patient already as an exception to self-isolation rules due to their line of work and has requested an amendment to their exemption certificate to allow for a dental appointment.

The Community Dental Service will:

- Continue to see patients who do not have regular dentist but who have urgent dental needs
- Continue to provide Special care dentistry
- Increase on domiciliary dental services where possible
- Increase on the delivery of Paediatric surgery

## **General Guidance**

### **Social distancing, workplace hygiene and good hygiene practices**

Practices will be expected, within their premises, to continue to follow current Isle of Man guidance in relation to social distancing, workplace hygiene and good hygiene practices.

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<sup>1</sup> Any patient presenting as high risk will be treated by AAA only (Advice, Antibiotics or Analgesia only) or be seen and treated under the direction of the DHSC if emergency treatment is required

## Providing treatment to patients

Every patient will be triaged and the most appropriate treatment provided. Face to face treatment should be provided where necessary and clinically safe to do so i.e. for low risk patients all treatments can be offered (routine, urgent and emergency) and dental providers will, upon seeing a patient for an urgent appointment, also deliver (if appropriate) a full dental examination to minimise the need for the patient to return to the practice again in a short period of time.

All treatments can take place, with the appropriate risk assessment, cleaning procedures and personal protection equipment (PPE) with particular attention maintained regarding the management of patients and staff re appointment times, patient access and infection Control Standards (HTM01-05).

## Risk Assessment

Each Practice will carry out and document their own risk assessments in line with their insurance and regulator guidance for all elements of the Practice and will follow the risk assessment questions below.

Each practice will initially risk assess every patient to determine if the patient is considered low or high risk by asking the following COVID-19 related questions on initial telephone triage:

- a) Do you have a new or persistent cough?
- b) Do you have a fever or temperature over 37.8C?
- c) Do you have a change in your sense of smell or taste?
- d) Have you had contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
- e) Have you travelled off-Island in the last 14 days?
- f) Is there anybody currently in your household isolating?

A patient will be considered **high risk** if they answer 'YES' to any of the questions (a-f) related to Covid-19. High risk patients will be treated via AAA approach by the dental practice or treated with obtained permission by the DHSC if emergency intervention is required and cannot wait (either at the patient's dental practice dependent on circumstances for the patient being high risk or via referral using the appropriate pathway with Primary Care Services).

A patient will be considered **low risk** if they answer 'NO' to all of the questions.

Upon arrival for an appointment the dental practice will confirm the patient's responses to the questions again and keep a record in the patient's notes of their responses. If a patient attends a practice as a walk-in patient with no pre-arranged appointment, they should not enter the waiting/reception area and be asked the specific Covid-19 related questions to determine their potential risk level. If a patient at this point is categorised as high risk they must be asked to leave the premises immediately and call the premises to discuss their dental matter via the telephone in the first instance.

Someone who has recovered from Covid-19 infection is classified as **low risk** when they meet the following criteria:

- It has been at least 14 days since the onset of the Covid-19 symptoms and;
- You do not have a fever/high temperature or cold symptoms

## PPE

Practices will be equipped with the relevant PPE. However practices may still be able to receive PPE from the Department at cost, under contract arrangements. The minimum PPE required for the treatment of each **low risk** patients is:

- Surgical mask (IIR)<sup>2</sup>
- Eye protection (Safety glasses that have side vents; or goggles; or prescription glasses covered with a full face shield/visor<sup>3</sup>)
- Gloves
- Apron

The PPE required for treating a patient considered **high risk** who has obtained written permission to attend for an dental appointment by the DHSC or been referred to the provider for high risk care is:

- FFP2/FFP3 Mask
- Eye protection (Safety glasses that have side vents; or goggles; or prescription glasses covered with a full face shield/visor)
- Gloves
- Apron
- Gown

### **Specific Guidance**

Where required, face to face consultations can be arranged and patients should be asked to arrive as close to their appointment time as possible to keep numbers of patients waiting within the same area to a minimum. Appropriate time in-between patients to ensure the surgeries are appropriately decontaminated, ensuring all areas the patient may touch or access have been thoroughly wiped down, must be allowed for.

The safety of both patients and staff should be of paramount importance to contain potential spread of the virus, bearing in mind that patients may be asymptomatic for COVID-19 and may still be infected or infectious unknowingly.

Patients considered clinically vulnerable or extremely clinically vulnerable should be offered appointments at the beginning of the day or the practice must ensure they are given an appointment which prevents them crossing over with other patients within the surgery.

Where a patient presents as 'high risk' and the clinical opinion of the treating dentist is that the patient requires urgent treatment (where a AAA approach will not be sufficient), they should only see a patient once they have established the patient has obtained permission for the appointment from the DHSC and; the patient should be seen at the end of the day ensuring there is no cross-over with other patients. The dental surgery should be left to fallow and cleaned thoroughly following the patient's visit. Where it is not deemed appropriate for the practice to treat a high risk patient themselves a referral will be made to Primary Care Services on behalf of the patient.

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<sup>2</sup> Sessional use masks and visors can be used if appropriate and providing items have remained uncontaminated during procedures – if contaminated they must be discarded after the patient appointment and replaced with new PPE.

<sup>3</sup> Prescription glasses are not considered as eye protection