

Guidance to Dentists on the Isle of Man – 16th July 2020

From Thursday 16th July 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 be able 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.

During this next phase dental providers will:

- 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 risk¹ 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.
- Refer any high risk patients presenting with symptoms of Covid-19 to 111 and offer an AAA approach only to these patients until such time they can present as low risk.
- 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.

The Community Dental Service will:

- Continue to see patients who do not have regular dentist but who have urgent dental needs
- Continue with the start-up of Special care dentistry
- Increase on domiciliary dental services where possible
- Plan the re-start 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.

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

¹ Any patient presenting as high risk will be treated by AAA only (Advice, Antibiotics or Analgesia only) or referral if emergency treatment i.e. life threatening is required

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 protocol (appendix 1).

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

- a. Do you have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19?
- b. Are you waiting for a COVID-19 test or the results?
- c. Have you had close contact with other people in the last 14 days who are probable or confirmed to have COVID-19?
- d. Have you travelled overseas in the last 14 days?
- e. Have you had close contact with someone in the last 14 days who has recently travelled overseas? Includes border (international airport and maritime port), quarantine and isolation facility staff, air crew, travellers
- f. Do you have new or worsening respiratory symptoms including one of the following symptoms:
 - o cough
 - o sore throat
 - o shortness of breath
 - o runny nose, sneezing, post-nasal drip (coryza)
 - o loss of smell (anosmia)with or without fever?

*Overseas includes any travel off-island

A patient will be considered **high risk** if they answer 'YES' to any of the questions related to Covid-19 (questions a to e) irrespective of their response to the respiratory question (f). High risk patients will be treated via AAA approach by the dental practice or referred to Oral Surgery if emergency intervention is required.

A patient will be considered **low risk** if they answer 'NO' to all of the questions. If a patient answers 'YES' to having new or worsening respiratory symptoms (question f), it is considered that this patient may have another acute respiratory illness, rather than Covid-19 and this can be effectively managed by the standard precaution measures described for **low risk**.

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 still be able to receive PPE from the Department at cost, under contract. The minimum PPE required for the treatment of each **low risk** patients is:

- Surgical mask (IIR)²
- Eye protection (Safety glasses that have side vents; or goggles; or prescription glasses covered with a full face shield/visor³)
- Gloves
- Apron

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 will refer the patient to the Oral Surgery Department at Noble's Hospital.

Situation reports

All dental providers must provide a weekly 'situation reports' using a form of data collection provided by the Department.

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² 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.

³ Prescription glasses are not considered as eye protection

A special thank you to New Zealand for the production of their specification and guidance in June/July 2020 which has been used to assist in writing this guidance for the Isle of Man; and to the Guernsey Dental Association for sharing their current practices within the dental setting.

Risk assessment questions

