

Important information about our practice during the COVID 19 outbreak

As you may have seen from our website last week the Chief Dental Officer (CDO) for Scotland advised on March 18th 2020 that certain procedures in dental practices should stop. On 23rd 2020 March this guideline was extended and we have been advised that all routine dental treatment has to cease. We understand that this means an interruption in how we can care for our patients. For some of you, who may be mid treatment, this will mean a potentially considerable delay in completion and for others, a delay in starting treatment.

In this communication we aim to outline the guidance we are now operating under and set out the options we have in place to continue to help you when, and if, it is needed.

On 23rd March 2020 Tom Ferris the CDO advised:

- To aid social distancing advice, aimed at protecting the public and staff, all **routine dentistry should cease**
- Practices should operate on an **Advice; Analgesia and Anti-microbials** (antibiotics) policy
- The exception to the use of an aerosol generating procedure in an emergency (which was previously in place), for example to drain an infected tooth, has now been removed. The **only** provision for this care is now in designated NHS centres and carried out by dental professionals equipped with appropriate PPE
- Advice to patients should be by **telephone** to reduce avoidable risk to people as they travel to receive care
- In **exceptional** circumstance asymptomatic patients may be seen if they have **symptoms**, in those cases face to face encounters should be brief and distant.
- **Urgent care for all patients with symptoms of COVID 19 will be provided only at designated NHS centres and by appointment.** At those centres, dentists and support staff, will be fully equipped with appropriate PPE and will be able to offer emergency treatment only

At the moment we are waiting for further details of where the designated urgent care centres will be located and the procedures for being seen for an appointment there. Once we have that information we can pass on details. However, what we have in place in Vermilion for our patients is outlined below:

- We continue to have our **phone lines operating and manned** by staff working remotely between the hours of 9.00 – 12.30 and 14.00 – 17.00 on 0131 334 1802. Out of hours emergency cover is also in place. Please call the landline number above and you will be given the emergency number to call.
- We have put in place an **On-call Specialist rota**. Those specialists can offer advice and try to help solve any issues which arise for our patients during the restrictions on our practice. If needed they can contact your particular specialist to ask them to speak with you.
- Our main smile@vermilion.co.uk **email contact address continues to be monitored** daily and again can be used to contact us with any questions or requests for advice.
- Our reception team are **trying to contact all patients with booked appointments to defer these. If you would like to speak to the specialist or hygienist you were going to be seeing about the ways in which this deferral will affect you, please contact our reception team.** They will pass on messages and your specialist or hygienist will contact you directly. Our clinical staff have remote access to case notes and will be able to discuss your particular case, give advice and for some aspects of treatment can arrange video consultations if you would like.
- If you are awaiting a new patient consultation we are sorry we have not been able to see you personally. If you have any questions then please contact our reception team who can pass you over to the appropriate specialist. They **may be able to offer a limited video consultation and can put some initial management strategies in place, for example online help with keeping your mouth healthy at home.**

Please be assured that care of our patients remains our top priority, even when we can't see you. We are happy and keen to continue to offer advice and support, even when we are not on site. If you have any questions or suggestions for us we would be delighted to hear from you by phone on 0131 334 1802 or by email at smile@vermilion.co.uk

Until we can see you again keep safe and well.

With best wishes,

The Vermilion Team