



## Direct Access Policy

Our practice allows direct access by patients to the dental hygiene-therapist. This policy describes how these arrangements work within our practice.

### Direct access appointments

All discussions with patients about the direct access arrangements at the practice must be recorded in the patient's clinical records together with a note of any information provided.

Direct access treatments are available to existing and new patients. New patients who do not wish to see a practice dentist should, at their appointment with the hygiene-therapist, be given information on the limitations of the treatment that the hygiene-therapist can provide and be advised of the need for a full oral health assessment by a dentist.

### Scope of practice

Direct access is available for the full scope of practice of our hygiene-therapist.

This means that our hygienist can:

- Provide dental hygiene care to a wide range of patients
- Obtain a detailed dental history from patients and evaluate their medical history
- Carry out a clinical examination within their competence
- Complete periodontal examination and charting and use indices to screen and monitor periodontal disease
- Diagnose and treatment plan within their competence
- Plan the delivery of care for patients
- Give appropriate patient advice
- Provide preventive oral care to patients and liaise with dentists over the treatment of caries, periodontal disease and tooth wear
- Undertake supragingival and subgingival scaling and root surface debridement using manual and powered instruments
- Use appropriate anti-microbial therapy to manage plaque related diseases
- Adjust restored surfaces in relation to periodontal treatment
- Apply topical treatments and fissure sealants
- Give patients advice on how to stop smoking
- Take intra and extra-oral photographs
- Give infiltration and inferior dental block analgesia
- Place temporary dressings and re-cement crowns with temporary cement
- Place rubber dam
- Take impressions
- Care of implants and treatment of peri-implant tissues
- Identify anatomical features, recognise abnormalities and interpret common pathology
- Carry out oral cancer screening
- If necessary, refer patients to other healthcare professionals
- Keep full, accurate and contemporaneous patient records
- If working on prescription, vary the detail but not the direction of the prescription according to patient needs

In addition to the above, our therapist can also:

- Carry out direct restorations on primary and secondary teeth

### Referrals to a dentist

If a referral to a dentist is necessary, the hygiene-therapist will explain the reasons for the referral and seek the patient's consent to be referred. The reasons for the referral and the patient's consent or refusal are noted in the patient's clinical records.

If the patient declines to be seen by a dentist, the hygiene-therapist will, at every subsequent treatment session, reinforce the need for the patient to be seen by a dentist and require the patient to confirm in writing that they do not wish to see the dentist. The hygiene-therapist will discuss the situation and the patient's future care with the dentist

### Fees

30 Minute Session	£60
45 Minute Session	£75
Child Session	£40

### Patient goodwill

All patients attending the practice, including those attending for treatment under direct access arrangements are patients of the practice and not of the individual hygiene-therapist providing the treatment.

### Patients from DCP-led practices

Dental hygienists or therapists who run their own practice and do not have a dentist working at their practice may refer patients to a dentist at this practice for a full examination and diagnosis and/or treatment. Our practice accepts referrals from DCP-led practices if

- The hygienist or therapist has provided a comprehensive referral, including notes of the reasons for referral and, where available, radiographs
- The patient understands that, on accepting the referral, a dentist from this practice will undertake a full clinical examination and provide the opinion or treatment requested. These will be charged for in accordance with the practice scale of fees
- The patient is free to decide where to obtain their future care.

The accepting dentist will provide the referring DCP with a report of their findings and/or the treatment provided. Should a further referral (for example, to a specialist) be necessary, the accepting dentist will, with the patient's consent, refer the patient appropriately.