Fees and payments policy

The prompt collection of fees is crucial to maintaining cash flow and keeping the practice operational. All members of the dental team are responsible for ensuring that patients are fully informed about the fees that they are likely to pay and when those payments will be due.

This policy describes the practice procedure for advising patients of the fees payable for their dental care and for collecting payments.

Information on fees

We are committed to ensuring that patients are given sufficient information about the costs associated with their care to allow them to make informed decisions. Where changes to treatment are agreed with a patient, we ensure that any cost implications are explained.
An indicative NHS price list of treatments available at the practice is displayed in each surgery, the waiting area and NHS leaflets provided. We have a private fee guide list behind reception area and in each surgery.

All new patients and patients who are returning to the practice are given information on patient charges and an indicative price list with either their treatment plan of their treatment or prices are on our website.

Estimates and bills

Before any treatment is undertaken, the treatment options and associated costs are explained in full to the patient in a way that the patient understands. The patient is allowed time to consider the information provided and to ask questions.

A written treatment plan and estimate of the costs are provided for all dental treatments discussed. Details of any fees incurred and payments made are recorded in the patient's clinical records and checked at each visit. Payments that remain outstanding are also recorded on the patients file as unpaid. Where appropriate, patients are given an itemised bill.

Payments

The practice offers patients a range of payment options, including payment by [cash, cheque and credit/debit card or dental finance if required. Credit/debit card payments are processed by Clover.

Patients are informed of the charge before any payment by credit/debit card is taken.

Our normal policy is NHS band 1 are paid on the day of the assessment appointment, Band 2 is taken up front on booking the appointment and Band 3 a deposit of at least £150 is taking on booking.
Private appointments are taken upfront and a deposit for treatments, the amount will be depending on the cost of treatment.
Patients are reminded about our payment policy when they make an appointment.

For longer courses of treatment and costing £500 or more, patients may be offered the option to pay for their treatment by instalments with Dental Finance, Chryallis. This must be agreed to comply with consumer credit law Chryallis holds Consumer Credit Authorisation from the Financial Conduct Authority. If a patient has a complaint about a credit arrangement, the practice complaints procedure should be followed. If the complaint cannot be resolved in this way, the patient should be advised of their right to take the matter to the Financial Ombudsman Service.

Whenever a payment is taken, the patient must be given a full itemised and dated receipt.
If a patient offers to pay part of the full cost, the part-payment should be accepted but the patient must be advised that the amount paid is not accepted as full-and-final settlement. The patient should be given a statement showing the original invoice amount and date, the date and amount of the part-payment, and the amount still outstanding.

NHS patients will be charged in accordance with the NHS dental charges regulations. Exempt patients must sign NHS forms and provide evidence that they are exempt.

Outstanding payments

If no payment is received within 7 days of the appointment, a reminder will be sent inviting the patient to contact the practice regarding payment options.

If, following the second reminder, no payment is received, a final reminder letter will be sent and the patient advised that further failure to make a payment may result in the practice instructing a debt collection agency or taking legal proceedings. Details of the agency will be provided to ensure that the patient knows who may contact them at a later date.

If, following the final reminder, no payment is received, the practice managers will consider how to progress the matter. Action may include the engagement of a reputable debt collection agency or formal legal action. In extreme circumstances and at the sole discretion of the treating dentist, the debt may be written off.

The patient will be informed that, for the purposes of collecting the debt, their details may be passed to a third party.