

## Refusing Access to Patients Policy

The practice is committed to fulfilling a duty of care to protect staff and other patients **and adheres to the NHS ZERO tolerance policy**. This policy defines the practice guidance for refusing access to patients to minimise potential risk to other patients and staff.

This policy applies to all team members, who are expected to familiarise themselves with the circumstances justifying the removal of patients from the list and appropriate procedures to follow.

In cases of:

- Unacceptable behaviour, including threatening behaviour, physical abuse, verbal abuse, race, gender or any other form of discrimination or other unreasonable behaviour
- Fraudulent or criminal behaviour, including deliberately obtaining drugs for non-medical reasons, attempting to use the dentist to conceal or aid criminal activity, stealing from practice premises

You are expected to take the following actions:

- Report any incident involving violence, fraudulent or criminal behaviour to the Practice Manager [Janice Banks] immediately, who will decide if it has to be reported to the police in accordance with the practice policy on Zero Tolerance on Violence and Aggression (M 233-VAW)
- Janice Banks will ask the patient to leave the premises immediately
- The incident will be discussed at a management meeting and if a majority agreement is reached, Janice Banks will inform the patient verbally and in writing confirming the refusal of access and including details of the reasons

### Irreconcilable differences

When the relationship between the dentist and the patient breaks down to the point where the dentist no longer feels capable of providing a quality level of patient care and feels that the patient's needs would be better served elsewhere, the following procedure is followed:

- The problem is reported to Janice Banks, **who may** consult the principal's professional indemnity organisation to confirm the actions to be taken
- Janice Banks will then arrange for a meeting with the patient to discuss the matter and find out how the patient views the situation
- Janice Banks will arrange a management meeting to discuss the problem with the aim of solving it. If it is not resolved and no other dentist at the practice is prepared to provide services to the patient, Janice Banks will write to the patient to inform about removal of access, and fully explaining the reasons
- **For NHS patients: guidance to the NHS choices website**

### Persistent missed appointments

When a patient fails to attend an appointment or cancels without giving 24 hours' notice, the patient will be sent a letter or email informing about the date of the missed appointment/s and the consequences of missing multiple appointments, including the information in the next point:

- If a patient fails to attend an appointment or cancels without 24 hours' notice two times, the patient may be informed that they will no longer have access to treatment at the practice
- The details of the missed appointment and **guidance to the NHS choices website**

Copies of all correspondence regarding the refusal of access are filed and retained with the patient records.

### Problems finding an NHS dentist

There is no need to register with a dentist in the same way as with a GP because you are not bound to a catchment area.

Simply find a dental surgery that's convenient for you, whether it's near your home or work, and phone them to see if there are any appointments available.

You can [search for an NHS dentist near you](#) on this site.

Dental surgeries will not always have the capacity to take on new NHS patients – you may have to join a waiting list, look for a different dentist who is taking on new NHS patients, or be seen privately.

Once you find a dental surgery, you may have to fill in a registration form at your first visit, which is just to add you to their patient database. However, that does not mean you have guaranteed access to an NHS dental appointment in the future.

If after contacting several dental surgeries you still cannot find a dentist accepting NHS patients, call NHS England's Customer Contact Centre on 0300 311 2233.