

Patient Experience Policy

14th May 2018

It is the aim of this dental practice to put patients at the heart of everything we do, working together to achieve a high level of patient satisfaction. All staff, volunteers and contractors, are responsible for ensuring that their behaviour and communications with each other, patients and the public contribute to the enhancement of the patient experience. To achieve these goals we:

- Make patients and visitors feel welcomed and informed
- Treat people with dignity and respect throughout the patient journey
- Work to improve health and tackle health inequalities
- Work towards improving access and waiting times
- Provide information for patients and carers in appropriate formats
- Maintain clear communications and foster involvement in decision-making about care
- Offer choice where appropriate
- Build closer relationships
- Provide safe, high quality dental care through teamwork
- Provide information about infection control measures so that patients feel safe
- Deliver dental care in a clean, comfortable, safe and friendly environment

Measurement of the patient experience

Patients and the public are included in the planning and evaluation of service provision and feedback that they provide via patient satisfaction surveys, compliments and complaints

Review

Ensure the patient experience is reviewed annually in our clinical governance cycle to ensure that standards are maintained and improved.

Patient Satisfaction

Patient retention has a fundamental influence on practice performance. A pleased patient may recommend you to family and friends. Unfortunately, an unhappy patient is many times more likely to express concerns to a wider group of people. Evidence suggests that the majority of clients don't make a complaint if dissatisfied, but they will talk about it. That is why it's always the best policy to try to elicit

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complaints from patients, to discover those areas of practice management that are falling short. When monitoring patient satisfaction pay special attention to those who were unhappy with your services and carry out a thorough investigation into what could have caused the problem. Patient satisfaction requires regular measuring and feedback. We carry out the survey using a questionnaire. When a significant number of forms have been completed (e.g. 100) they are then collected and the results transferred and created into a report using bar graphs or pie charts to enable you to see the overall trends.

Based on the results, we draw up a list of three or four changes that would have the most effect on patient satisfaction. The results of the changes and any further actions are discussed at regular practice meetings.

Arriving patients

Patients are acknowledged as soon as they approach the reception desk. If dealing with another patient or on the telephone, the receptionist will smile to acknowledge the patient who has just arrived. If the dentist is running on time, the patient is welcomed and asked to take a seat. If the dentist is running late the patient is informed and provided with the reason for delay e.g. [Mrs Smith has treated a patient who had a dental emergency. Unfortunately she is now running 15 minutes late, I hope that this won't be of too much inconvenience to you]. NOTE: when giving reasons for delay to a waiting patient, maintain absolute confidentiality concerning any other patient and their treatment. After the patient has taken a seat, should s/he be kept waiting after the appointed time the following actions are taken: After [15] minutes' delay; The receptionist will go over to the patient and quietly apologise, explain the reason for the delay and give the estimated time that the patient will be seen. After [20-30] minutes' delay the receptionist will again apologise and inform the patient, and will give an estimated time that the patient will be seen. The patient will be given the opportunity to remake the appointment. If the delay is expected to be more than [30] minutes, the patient will again be given the opportunity to make another appointment, and again our apologies are given.

Next review date: May 2019 or as necessary