

Managing Appointments

To manage our appointment system effectively and provide high quality service, it is important that patients attend for their appointments as planned.

Our appointment system allows patients to access our service at a time that suits them and minimises waiting times. Appointments can be made or rescheduled by calling 01299 271747.

If you have any queries or concerns about an appointment, please call the Practice to speak to our team. With enough notice this means that if you need a shorter appointment time or do not want to go ahead with treatment, we are able to offer an appointment to someone else.

Reminders

Text and Telephone reminders are sent 2 working days before an appointment and patients are requested to inform the practice of any changes to their contact details. Patients can log into our patient portal <https://pearlportal.net/login/cleoburydental> to update their details and check when their next appointment is booked. Please note that text reminders are sent as a courtesy and texts may not be sent/received for reasons out of our control (IT failure, change in mobile number etc). **Therefore failure to attend, by not receiving a text message, will not be considered a valid exception of our policy.** We will offer a paper appointment card to all patients.

If you are unable to keep your dental appointment, then please call the Practice giving us as much notice as possible-at least 1 full working day- so that we can offer your time slot to another patient. If less notice is given without a valid reason, the appointment will be considered to have been broken and may incur a charge. Please note, Saturdays are **not** considered a working day and therefore Monday appointments should be cancelled before we close on Fridays.

Rescheduling or delay of appointments by the Practice

We will only reschedule or delay a patient's appointment in unavoidable circumstances, in such cases we will:

- Contact the patient as soon as we are aware of the need to reschedule or delay and explain the reason why
- At the time of contact we will offer the earliest next available appointment
- If the patient is unable to commit to an appointment at that contact, then we will ask the patient to contact us and will book a new appointment at the earliest time available

Cancellation of an appointment or a missed appointment by the patient

Failure to attend is defined as:

- Arriving late for an appointment (5 minutes late or more)
- Not arriving for an appointment
- Not giving enough notice of not being able to attend (Short Notice Cancellation)- we generally require 1 full working days' notice
- Not arriving for an appointment due to not receiving a text or phone reminder

NHS Appointments

Although missed NHS appointments cannot be charged for, we have a very firm policy regarding non-attendance.

Patients who fail to attend **two** NHS dental appointments are unlikely to be offered any further appointments in line with NHS regulations (missed appointments do not have to be consecutive).

Your dentist can terminate your treatment if you miss your appointment without letting the dental surgery know. You may then need to pay again for a new course of treatment.

While surgeries cannot charge you for not turning up, NHS England has the right to ask you to find another dental surgery if you continue to miss appointments (What happens when you visit an NHS dentist, 2021) <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/dentists/what-happens-when-you-visit-the-dentist/>

If you miss an NHS appointment and do not attend again within 24 months, we may not be able to see you again.

As per NICE guidelines the dentist will invite you to book an examination appointment at the end of your course of treatment to ensure you receive ongoing dental care. If you choose not to book an examination at this point, the practice may later send you a recall letter. **However, it is a patient's responsibility to attend regularly and keep track of dental appointments. If you have not been seen at the practice for more than 24 months, we may be able to place your name on our NHS waiting list to contact you when a place becomes available.**

Private and Plan Appointments

Patients who attend a Hygienist appointment pay a reservation fee which is half of the hygienist fee. If a Hygienist appointment is cancelled by the patient at short notice (less than one full working days' notice) or missed, then this payment will be lost, and a new fee will need to be paid before a new appointment can be booked.

Plan patients who miss one Hygienist appointment will not be charged; any subsequent Hygienist appointments missed will incur a charge of half of the hygienist fee.

If a patient fails to attend a Private or Plan dental appointment with the dentist, they will be charged for some or all of the cost of that appointment, in proportion to the length of the appointment and any laboratory fees incurred. The final decision is at the discretion of the Practice owner. We reserve the right to ask for a deposit for private and plan appointments with our dentist, which will be forfeited in the event of failure to attend as outlined above. If more than 2 appointments are missed, future appointments may not be offered.

Private and Plan Treatment Costs

You will be issued with a printed copy of your treatment plan outlining proposed treatment and costs by your dentist. The costs outlined in the treatment plan reflect those on the date this plan is issued and ONLY with the practitioner(s) who planned that treatment.

The costs outlined for each item in the treatment plan will be honoured for 6 months, from the date issued, in the event that there is a change to our charges during this period.

This applies only to the treatment outlined in this treatment plan and NOT any additional/different dental treatment that you may require during/after this 6 month window, which would be charged the applicable fee at the time it has been planned.

It is in the interests of your oral health that dental treatment is carried out in a timely manner and in accordance with your dental professional's advice. If more than 6 months has elapsed, between the date your plan is issued and the start of treatment, your treatment will be re-priced to our current treatment charges.

The cost of your treatment may change if your treatment is provided by a different practitioner and/or the clinical needs for your treatment changes.

You will be informed of any changes to the costs before proceeding with treatment.

Your Medical Information

It is important that we hold up-to-date medical information on your records. If there are any changes to your health between appointments, please inform us when you attend. It is useful to bring a copy of your prescription sheets if you take any medications.

You can also update your medical information at any time by accessing your Patient Portal online: <https://pearlportal.net/login/cleoburydental>

Please call us if you are having difficulty accessing your Patient Portal.

Please note if you are unable to provide us with up-to-date medical information prior to your dental treatment, your appointments may be postponed until this information is received by the practice.