

Appointment Management and Amendment Policy

It is the aim of this practice to provide quality dental care to our patients and to use clinical time effectively. To achieve this aim, we have an appointment management and amendment policy.

Management of appointments

We invest in the latest technology, including modern telephone equipment and an online booking system, to allow our patients to make or reschedule appointments easily. Our appointment system supports timely access to care and treatment, allows patients to access services at a time that suits them and minimises the length of time people have to wait. Appointments can be made by accessing our online booking form at www.sidcupdentalsurgery.co.uk or by calling reception on 020 8300 8255. If you need to re-arrange an appointment please call reception.

Reminders

E-mail and text reminders are sent to patients prior to any appointment and patients are requested to inform the practice of any changes to their contact details. Emails are sent 7 days before an appointment and also on the day of an appointment. Text reminders are sent 2 days before an appointment.

Amendment of an appointment by the practice

We will only amend a patient's appointment in unavoidable circumstances. In such cases, we will take the following steps:

- The patient will be contacted as soon as the practice is aware of the need to amend the appointment. We will explain the reason for the amendment.
- At the time of contact, the patient will be offered a new appointment at the earliest time available
- If the patient is unable to commit to a new appointment during that contact, we will ask them to get in touch at a later time, when we will offer them a priority appointment

Amendment of an appointment or missed appointment by a patient

Patients are requested to give at least 48 hours' notice to amend a dental appointment. Amendments should be made by telephone on 020 8300 8255 or by email to sidcupdentalsurgery@nhs.net. Late amendments and missed appointments may represent a cost to the practice, when other patients could have been seen in the time set aside for the patient.

We do not make a charge for NHS patients for a late amendment or missed appointment. However, we reserve the right to ask a patient to find another dental practice if they continue to miss appointments.

If more than 2 NHS dental appointments are missed or amended with less than 48 hours' notice, we do not guarantee being able to complete a patient's NHS treatment or offer them NHS treatment in the future.

There is a fee for private dental appointments that are missed or amended with less than 48 hours' notice. The fee is based on the length of the appointment and can be found in the private fees list.

It is our aim to contact patients after a missed appointment to understand the reason for non-attendance and to inform them about any fee or decision about their NHS dental care. We understand that late amendments are sometimes unavoidable due to illness or emergencies and we will take account of all valid circumstances.

Any appeals about missed or late amended appointment decisions by a patient should be made in writing to the Practice Manager, Alison Wetton.