



# Cathedral Dental Clinic

General, Cosmetic, Implants & Orthodontics

## **Clinic Fee's and Payments**

Ensuring the prompt collection of fees is crucial to maintaining cash flow and keeping the clinic operational. All members of the dental and administration team are responsible for ensuring that patients are fully informed about their treatment fees and when those fees are due for payment.

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

### **Information on fees**

- We commit to provide full information about costs to patients at every stage of their care.
- Information about NHS fees is displayed in reception and private fees are listed on our website, [www.cathedraldentalclinic.com](http://www.cathedraldentalclinic.com). A copy of the information is available on request.
- Information on patient charges and an indicative price list are provided to new patients via the website link which is included in the welcome email and also our patient leaflet which is included in their welcome gift bags.

### **Estimates and bills**

- Before any treatment is undertaken, the options available and the associated costs are explained in full to the patient in a way that the patient understands.
- A written treatment plan and estimate of the costs are provided for all recommended treatment.
- Patients are given an itemised bill. The patient's record will include details of any fees incurred and payments made; it should be checked at each visit and should include details of any outstanding amounts.

### **Payments**

- The clinic offers patients a range of payment options, including payment by cash, cheque, credit/debit card, BACS or pre-arranged finance. Credit/debit card payments are processed by Worldpay.
- Where payment for private or NHS treatment is made by credit/debit card the clinic does not charge an administrative fee in addition to the treatment fee.
- Our normal policy is to request a pre-paid deposit to secure treatment appointments and then the remaining balance is to be paid on the day of treatment. Patients are reminded about our payment policy when they make an appointment.
- NHS patients who are not exempt from fees can be asked to pay the Band 1 fee when they book the appointment. If they subsequently fail to attend the payment must be refunded in full.
- For longer courses of treatment, patients have the option to pay for their treatment by instalments by taking out finance through a 3rd party company, Hitachi Ltd, this is based on a successful credit check. If a patient has a complaint about a credit arrangement, the clinic 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. In such circumstances patient is asked to sign an agreement to confirm the amount and the date of payment.
- NHS patients will be charged in accordance with the NHS dental charges regulations. Exempt patients will be required to sign NHS forms and provide evidence that they are exempt.

### **Outstanding payments**

- A regular check of the treatments provided against the payments received is undertaken by and reminders sent to patients who have missed payments.
- If no payment is received within 4 weeks a reminder will be sent inviting the patient to contact the clinic 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 clinic 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; Ali Tabai the Operations Manager will consider how to progress the matter. Action may include the engagement of a reputable debt collection agency or formal legal action.
- The patient will be informed that, for the purposes of collecting the debt, their details may be passed to a third party.

*This document is reviewed annually.*