



## Patient Information Letter

17<sup>th</sup> July 2020 2020

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE** **THIS CONCERNS THE FUTURE OF NHS DENTAL SERVICES IN SCOTLAND**

Dear Patient of Bute Dental Care

I hope you and your are well during these testing times. I wish to update you on the current situation facing all dental practices that provide NHS services:

- The Scottish Government (SG) announced it will allow dental practices with registered NHS patients to provide 'routine' dental care from 13<sup>th</sup> of July 2020. **However, SG have forbidden the use of Aerosol Generating Procedures on NHS patients within the practice.** This is any treatment involving air and/or water – about 95% of what we do involves aerosols. The SG have failed to acknowledge that a check-up requires use of aerosols to enable adequate inspection of your teeth and to plan your treatment properly. **As an NHS patient, if you require an aerosol procedure such as a simple filling, we will have to refer you to an NHS Dental Hub which is a significant inconvenience to you and us.**
- The team and I have been fit tested for advanced PPE and have undergone further cross infection training to comply with updated protocols and procedures. This ensures your visit to our practice is safe and reduces the risk for COVID-19 transmission, even when carrying out AGPs. There is worldwide evidence supporting the safety of routine dental treatment with these measures and the SG department **Health Improvement Scotland (HIS) also supports these measures** therefore allowing us to offer private aerosol treatments in a safe manner.
- Subsequently, the only effective non-aerosol treatments as practice we can provide on the NHS are extractions and patch ups for teeth. **There is no such restriction on providing aerosol treatments privately in our practice.** We were given specific instruction by the SG to offer private treatment as part of your options when consenting to your treatment plan.
- To give context, NHS dentistry has been underfunded for several years now and is only feasible through Government subsidies and contractor practices such as ours running very efficiently and with a high number of patients per day. **This is no longer sustainable as the COVID-19 pandemic means we cannot see enough patients to make our businesses viable without significant new SG support.**

- The future of NHS dentistry in Scotland is now questionable due to the lack of adequate support from SG. The financial support provided during the enforced closures has been welcome but it has not been enhanced enough to support sustainable NHS treatments on reopening.
- **As a member of the Scottish Dental Practice Owners' Group (SDPO) I have co-signed numerous letters to the SG to express concerns - yet they have imposed the closures and restrictions without proper consultation. I have personally taken part in several stories in the media, including the Daily Record and The Sun newspapers, to highlight the situation.**
- **I am founding director of a new association (Scottish Dental Association) which will continue to campaign for safe and fair NHS dental services.**

As long as I am the principal dentist I can assure you there will be some sort of NHS option at Bute Dental Care. **However I want to be completely honest and inform you I do think NHS dentistry will become significantly more limited in future.**

In order to offer you the full range of family dentistry I think it is likely our practice will need to do so outwith the NHS in future. To help make this as affordable and achievable as possible we will be introducing a practice membership plan; full details will be available over the next few weeks.

If you would be interested in considering a dental plan may I ask you to please email [info@butedentalcare.co.uk](mailto:info@butedentalcare.co.uk) to express interest. We shall then contact you directly with full details and invite you to join as part of the first group of patients.

Going forward, I would encourage you to contact the practice at any time for all your dental needs but regret that the NHS treatments we provide will be restricted for the reasons stated. If you feel in any way concerned about the situation affecting you as an NHS patient I would encourage you to write to your MSP to express your dissatisfaction.

Thank you and kindest regards

Cameron McLarty  
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Bute Dental Care