

The Natural Smile

DATA PROTECTION POLICY

This practice complies with the 1998 Data Protection Act and this policy describes our procedures for ensuring that personal information about patients is processed fairly and lawfully.

What personal data do we hold?

In order to provide you with a high standard of dental care and attention, we need to hold personal information about you. This personal data comprises of:

- your past and current medical and dental condition; personal details such as your age, national insurance number, address, telephone number and your general medical practitioner.
- radiographs, clinical photographs and study models
- information about the treatment that we have provided or propose to provide and its cost
- notes of conversations/incidents that might occur for which a record needs to be kept
- records of consent to treatment
- any correspondence relating to you with other health care professionals, for example in the hospital or community services.
- hard copies of credit/debit card receipts. (required to be kept for six years by the HMRC)

Why do we hold information about you?

We need to keep comprehensive and accurate personal data about our patients in order to provide them with safe and appropriate dental care. We need to retain hard copies of credit/debit card receipts to comply with the inland revenues requirement that all accounting evidence is retained for 6 years.

How we process the data

We will process personal data that we hold about you in the following way:

- **Retaining information.**
We will retain your dental records while you are a practice patient and after you cease to be a patient, for at least eleven years or for children until age 25, whichever is the longer.
- **Security of information**
Personal data about you is held in the practice's computer system and/or in a manual filing system. The information is not accessible to the public and only authorised members of staff have access to it. Our computer system has secure audit trails and we back up information routinely. See our "Data Security Policy" for more information
- **Disclosure of information**
In order to provide proper and safe dental care, we may need to disclose personal information about you to:

- your general medical practitioner
- the hospital or community dental services
- other health professionals caring for you.
- the Inland Revenue
- private dental schemes/insurance companies of which you are a member.
- other dentists to which we may need to refer you to for specialist treatment

Disclosure will take place on a 'need-to-know' basis, so that only those individuals/organisations who need to know in order to provide care to you and for the proper administration of Government (whose personnel are covered by strict confidentiality rules) will be given the information. Only that information that the recipient needs to know will be disclosed.

In very limited circumstances or when required by law or a court order, personal data may have to be disclosed to a third party not connected with your health care. In all other situations, disclosure that is not covered by this Code of Practice will only occur when we have your specific consent.

Where possible you will be informed of these requests for disclosure.

Access

You have the right of access to the data that we hold about you and to receive a copy. Access may be obtained by making a request in writing and the payment of a fee for access of up to £10. We will provide a copy of the record within 40 days of receipt of the request and fee (where payable) and an explanation of your record should you require it.

If you do not agree

If you do not wish personal data that we hold about you to be disclosed or used in the way that is described in this Code of Practice, please discuss the matter with your dentist. You have the right to object, but this may affect our ability to provide you with dental care.

Document history:

This document created 3rd March 2006

- Reviewed 1 March 2007 no changes
- Reviewed 3rd April 2008 no changes
- Reviewed 18th Aug 2009 added points about Credit debit card data being stored
- Reviewed 20th Aug 2010 No change
- Reviewed 26th Sep 2011 reworded the credit debit card point to clarify why we hold hard copies