

## **Information for patients on dental care in Greater Manchester during the COVID-19 outbreak – April 2020**

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### **Why routine dental treatments are not available**

All routine care in primary care dental services has been stopped until otherwise advised. Dental check-ups and treatments involve close contact between the dentist and patient and so should not take place.

Dentists and their teams need to avoid as far as possible using instruments, such as drills and those used for scales and polishes. This is to prevent them from catching the virus from an infected patient and passing it on to other patients. Drills and other high-speed instruments create a lot of 'spray' from patients' mouths. COVID-19 has a seven-day incubation period before any symptoms show, so an individual can pass it on to others without realising. For example, if a patient with COVID-19 had a filling, the spray from doing that procedure would likely infect the dentist and the nurse.

The personal protective equipment (PPE) usually worn by dentists when using high-speed tools is currently needed for hospital staff treating coronavirus patients. Without this equipment dentists, hygienists, therapists and nurses are not safe to treat patients as normal.

### **What if I have a dental emergency?**

If you are in pain and feel you need urgent dental care, you can contact your dental practice between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Please do not visit without calling first.

Your dentist will talk to you over the phone and will be able to offer advice and discuss your options. If your dentist thinks you need urgent treatment, you will be referred to one of the urgent care treatment hubs in Greater Manchester, which have the appropriate PPE, procedures and equipment to provide a limited range of dental treatment in a safe environment. You may need to travel to access face to face treatment. Please note that the hubs do not offer a drop-in service are there for dental emergencies only.

For urgent dental care when your dental practice is closed (e.g. overnight, weekends and bank holidays) call the Greater Manchester Urgent Dental Care Service on 0333 332 3800 (freephone).

### **What if I'm not registered with a dentist?**

Call the Greater Manchester Urgent Dental Care Service on 0333 332 3800 (freephone).

To find dental practices in your area, go to [www.gmhsc.org.uk/gm-service-finder](http://www.gmhsc.org.uk/gm-service-finder).