

Data Protection Policy

Thornhill Dental Surgery 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:

1. Your past and present medical and dental condition.
2. Personal details such as your age, National Insurance/NHS number, address, telephone number and the name and address of your medical practitioner.
3. Your bank details, if you are a member of our payment plan.
4. Radiographs, clinical photographs and study models.
5. Information about the treatment that we have provided or propose to provide and it's cost.
6. Notes of conversations/incidents that might occur for which a record needs to be kept.
7. Records of consent to treatment.
8. Any correspondence relating to you with other healthcare professionals, i.e. hospital or community services.

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 also need to process personal data about patients in order to provide care under NHS arrangements and to ensure the proper management and administration of the NHS.

HOW DO WE PROCESS THE DATA?

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

1. Retaining information

We will retain your detail records whilst you are a practice patient, and after you cease to be a patient, for at least 11 years or, for children, until age 25, whichever is the longer.

2. Security of information

Personal data about you is held on the practice computer system and/or in our manual filing system. The information is not accessible to the public and only authorised members of staff have access to it. Our computer system is password protected, has secure audit trails and we take back ups regularly. Our processes are audited regularly to ensure compliance with this policy.

3. 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 services
- Other health professionals caring for you

- NHS payment authorities
- Inland Revenue
- The Benefits Agency, if you are claiming exemption or remission from NHS charges
- Private dental schemes of which you are a member

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 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 to your health care. In all other situations, disclosure will only occur when we have your specific consent. Where possible, you will be informed of these requests for disclosure.

4. 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. You will be required to pay a fee of £25.00 for access to computer records or £25.00 for access to manual records (including radiographs). We may require evidence of your identity before being able to comply with the request. We will provide a copy of the record, and an explanation of the record if required, within 40 days of the request and payment of the fee.

YOUR WISHES

If you do not wish personal data that we hold about you to be disclosed or used in the way described in this policy, 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.