

## Your Simple Guide to Choosing a Dentist

Thinking about arranging a visit to a dentist? Not quite sure where to start?

To help begin your journey we have listed some important considerations that can help you take the first steps to restoring your smile.

### How qualified are the dentist and his team?

Don't be afraid to ask this question when making enquiries. You are entrusting your care to professionals and have the right to know what level of training they have received, any special interests and experience or any awards and distinctions.

### What additional continuing education has the dentist and his team undergone?

All dental care professionals have a personal development plan of further education. In addition to core subjects of study, you can enquire into any specialised areas of training they have received.

### Do they make you feel comfortable and at ease?

If you are telephoning to make enquiries, never feel like you have to book in your visit immediately. Speak to a few practices and ask any questions you may have, until you feel comfortable with your choice.

### Will they be able to help me if I am really nervous?

Dental phobia is extremely common. In most cases this may be due to things that our friends or family may have said that influenced our thoughts in the past, memories we recall, or physical reasons such as a gag reflex.

Often if we are nervous we wait until we are already in pain before visiting the dentist. This will add to the negative feelings we will have about treatment. Depending on the situation we would usually advise a patient where possible to visit the practice socially first and to relax in our lounge with a coffee.

This helps to alleviate some of the anxiety of the unknown and gives the patient a chance to meet the team and get to know the practice. This can certainly reduce feelings of anxiety for a further appointment.

If this is not possible and you are attending for a scheduled appointment, your first visit would be an examination appointment. This allows the dentist to assess your needs and talk through options for treatment. If a patient requires the option of sedation, then this would normally be accompanied by a sedation assessment with one of our clinical team.

### Can I speak directly to the dentist?

Yes, we are very open to this and if you would like to speak to the dentist directly then we would always arrange a call back for you at a mutually convenient time.

### Do they offer same day appointments? What happens if I have an emergency?

Our practice provides same day appointments for our patients who have a dental emergency such as acute pain or trauma. When making your enquiry, do ask what wait times they may have for emergency treatments.

### What range of treatments do they offer?

Don't forget to find out what treatments a practice can offer to you. Our practice provides all treatments from routine general dentistry to implants. We do refer to a neighbouring orthodontic specialist in Billericay for both adult and child orthodontic services.

### Is the practice smart with technology?

Technology evolves quickly. At our practice we aim to use the most up to date materials and equipment for your care. We make our own Reverse Osmosis and deionised water, maintain state of the art vacuum autoclaves as well as employing an Aerte Klean air system to take care of treatment room air.

### What is the dentist's philosophy on performing dentistry? What does the practice stand for?

A progressive, highly trained team of dental professionals committed to providing excellent care to the highest standards. Working with a kaizen approach to consistent improvement with a strong core environmental ethos we welcome both continuing care and referral patients for specialist treatments. (Our mission statement). Other practices should have an identifiable philosophy.

### Are treatment plans discussed and cost estimates given?

Following a discussion on your treatment option(s) you should be given a fee quotation, including the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed treatment. It is impossible to give an accurate quotation for treatment without a physical examination of a patient. Self-diagnosis can be misleading as that option may not be suitable once the patient has been assessed. "The question how much is?" is rarely useful as the treatment(s) involved may not be suitable options. Having said this we do have a list of fees on our website that can be a useful guide.

Mr Reginald O'Neill  
B.D.S.(Belf.), M.Sc (Lond.), D.G.D.P.(UK), Dip. Imp. Dent. R.C.S.Ed

Reginald O'Neill Dental Care  
105 Chapel Street  
Billericay  
Essex CM12 9LR

01277 658895  
www.bite4life.co.uk

