

June 2020



Howlett & Dickinson
PODIATRISTS

RETURN TO WORK

Carol & Judith are delighted to be back at work, & we are so pleased to be getting back to the “NEW NORMAL” and now in a position to see all our patients, who we have missed over the last two & a half months!

However, there are some radical changes that we are all going to have to follow from now on, until the virus has completely gone, or we are all vaccinated, in order to protect our patients and ourselves.

Below we have explained the changes we are having to make to our business, in order to continue our enhanced and superior service to you, in our practice that is Accredited with the College of Podiatry.



Due to this unprecedented global Covid-19 virus, it is resulting in huge changes to many businesses, including podiatry.

Firstly, Podiatrists (chiropodists) are frontline key workers & registered allied health care professionals with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) and the College of Podiatry (COP). These titles are legally protected and anyone using these titles without being registered may be committing an offence. We are not offering domiciliary appointments at the moment, so before seeking domiciliary podiatry treatment elsewhere, make sure that you are seeing a “podiatrist” and that they will be wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) whilst treating you at home.



All podiatrists have been instructed by the government that they cannot enter care homes to give treatment, at this time.



During the lockdown we have only been treating a handful of patients, once a week during an emergency session, who have a high risk of having infection, ulceration, pain or ingrowing toenails, and those frontline key workers who are having foot problems that are affecting their work.

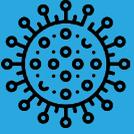


Now that we are returning to work on a regular basis, we are mindful that Covid-19 is still with us. It will be with us until we have a vaccination against it, and this may be another 12 months or longer.

We are required during this time to wear PPE in order to not only protect our patients from Covid-19, but ourselves too, as per the guidelines of our professional body and the government.



In addition, our treatment regime from arriving at the practice to leaving has altered. These are our new rules below for podiatry treatment provision, which we would be grateful if you could read and digest.



OUR STEPS TO STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

1

When booking an appointment, you will be asked if you have had a high temperature, cough or loss of taste or smell in the last 7 days, and if anyone in your household has had these symptoms. If the answer is **YES** to either of these questions, you will **NOT** be able to attend for treatment.

2

If you or anyone in your household develop these symptoms after you have made your appointment, then you will **NOT** be able to attend for treatment and will need to cancel your appointment ASAP.

3

Only 1 person at a time can enter the practice. If you are brought by a family member, they will have to wait outside or in the car. You will need to ring the doorbell for entry, there is a chair at the front door.

4

If you can only attend for an appointment with a carer, please let us know and we will make sure that the carer can accompany you.

5

On arrival, if there is a patient still being treated you will have to wait outside or in the car until they leave.

6

On entering the practice, your temperature will be taken with a non-contact forehead thermometer. If you present with a temperature you will **NOT** be able to receive treatment.

7

You will be asked to clean your hands with an anti-viral wipe or hand sanitiser and will be asked to wear a simple face mask, that we will provide, or you can wear your own. This is compulsory. Wearing a face mask does not protect **you** from Covid-19 but reduces the spread of it. Our patients will **NOT be within the 2m safe distance, but closer** and sitting above us whilst receiving treatment, for this reason a face mask will help you to reduce droplet spread during speaking or should you cough or sneeze. We, the podiatrists will wear FFP2 & 3 face masks ourselves, which filter 94% and 99% of particles respectively, these are used by health professionals, are in short supply & expensive.

8

As well as the face masks we will also be wearing visors, gloves, gowns and plastic aprons during your treatment.



The appointment time is going to be longer, in fact double the normal appointment time, to enable us to fully decontaminate the treatment room, waiting room & ourselves, after your treatment and before the next patient arrives.

We ask where possible that payment be made by contactless card.

Initially priority will be given to patients who are vulnerable and in pain, and we hope that patients with more simple or routine problems, won't mind waiting a little longer for an appointment, as our daily capacity to treat patients will be reduced by half, due to the Covid-19 treatment restrictions and our waiting time for appointments will therefore increase?

As a result of being closed for 2 & a half months, we are very sorry, but we will be unable to offer our reduced fees for senior citizens. Senior citizens will have to pay the normal fee for treatment, until such times we are back in a financial position to reinstate this concession. We hope you understand that during lockdown like many businesses, we still had to pay our overheads whilst not receiving any income.

In addition, our annual fee increase, which is usually an increase of £1 is now going to be an increase of £2 per patient, due to our increased costs on PPE and decontamination products. To give you an idea, the face masks we must wear cost between £5 and £7.80 each. Routine podiatry appointments are now £40.

We look forward to welcoming all our patients and indeed new patients to our practice for treatment and hope you can bear with us during this difficult time, and be assured that the measures we have undertaken to protect everyone entering our practice are gold standard.

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