

## **Appendix 2. Key Points from the New ARHAI Guidance**

The key points from the new ARHAI Guidance most relevant to dental settings are outlined below for reference. Practitioners should, however, familiarise themselves with the full Guidance and ensure they follow it in full.

Previously, following triage to identify risk factors for or symptoms of coronavirus infection, patients were required to be assigned to a Red, Amber or Green pathway. A new classification has now been introduced to modify this process which assigns patients to either a Respiratory Pathway or a Non-respiratory Pathway based upon a revised triage questionnaire which takes account of a wider range of respiratory illnesses.

All patients and accompanying parents/guardians/carers should be triaged prior to dental appointments using the screening questions as in the new published guidance:

<https://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/winter-2122-respiratory-infections-in-health-and-care-settings-infection-prevention-and-control-ipc-addendum/#a3059>

Where possible, screening questions should be completed before the patient attends for their appointment.

Where a patient, or any person required to accompany the patient, answers 'Yes' to one or more of the screening questions they should be assigned to the respiratory pathway. All other patients should be assigned to the non-respiratory pathway.

All patients requiring an AGP, regardless of whether they are on the respiratory or non-respiratory pathway will require application of airborne precautions and resulting post AGP fallow times.

All appointments that do not require an AGP for non-respiratory pathway patients should be undertaken with simple PPE.

Patients on the respiratory pathway requiring non-urgent care should have their appointment deferred until they are able to be assigned to the non-respiratory pathway following subsequent screening.

Patients on the respiratory pathway requiring urgent care may be seen for a face to face appointment where they should be separated from all other patients by distance and time. This includes all communal areas in the dental practice. A flow chart has been attached to assist in your risk assessment (Respiratory Pathway Final).

It is recommended that respiratory pathway patients should ideally be seen at the end of a clinical session if this can be achieved. Registered patients on this pathway requiring urgent care must not now routinely be referred to the PDS.

Practitioners are advised that this guidance may be subject to change over the winter period and should therefore continue to review published guidance.

We are cognisant of the challenges faced by all services including GDS and the further impact on service capacity where appointment slots for urgent care for respiratory patients are reserved and are potentially unused. It should be noted the need to allocate urgent care slots will be considered when reviewing GDS activity levels. Under the current circumstances activity levels will not be deemed a priority.

**Unless there are specific mitigating circumstances, i.e. your practice is at 'red status', it would be expected respiratory patients would be managed in your own practice.**

**Where care for respiratory patients in your practice cannot be deferred, and it is not practicable for these patients to be seen within your practice, please contact the helpline number 0141 291 3553 for assistance.**

**A flowchart (Respiratory Patient Pathway Flow Chart GDP Referrals to PDS) has been attached to inform this process.**