



## Fair Pricing Policy

Here at South Lane Dental fair pricing is an important part of our ethos. We want the fees that we charge you as a patient to be great value to you but to also reflect a fair price for our skills and experience - without compromising the quality of materials, our duty to the environment, or the respect we have for our staff and suppliers. Below we have set out what we will do to try to make this happen.

### **Making you aware of the fees**

We want you to be fully aware of the treatment we are proposing, the reason why we are proposing it and of the fees that you will pay before treatment starts. We also want you to be aware of when your fees will be due, in most cases this will be at the end of each appointment.

### **To do this we will:**

- Display a fee guide on the web site, and make sure it is available on reception.
- Discuss with you the treatment we think is necessary and the reasons why and provide information leaflets for further information about your treatment.
- Provide a treatment plan which includes estimated costs for each patient before treatment starts.
- Provide a new treatment plan with updated fees if the treatment needs to change for any reason.

### **How can I save money on my dental treatment?**

- Sign up to our dental plan! We think it offers great value for patients as the base cost is slightly lower than you would pay normally for your routine appointments, but you also benefit from a member's price for certain treatment costs, and worldwide accident insurance cover. You can read more about our plan on our web site, (terms and conditions apply).
- Apply for 0% finance. For treatment plans over £350 we offer you the facility to apply for 0% finance over 6, 10 or 12 months. Terms and conditions apply.
- We have a range of advice for helping you to save money on dental treatment which you could look at here, ranging from advice from our therapist and dentists on prevention, through to the different types of insurance that might be suitable to you.

- All our treatment is aimed at getting you dentally fit and making your mouth as self-cleansing as possible, to help to significantly reduce your treatment needs going forward and in the future.

## **Fee Rises**

We review our fees every year and based on our current costs and the current market conditions we will decide whether to increase some or all our fees. We will let you know the result of the fee review with an email and a link to the new prices on the website. If the payment plan fees have risen, you will also know at this point. If we raise our fees and you have a treatment plan that is less than 90 days old, the prices on it will be valid for 3 months from the date of the rise. Treatment plans that are older than 90 days will be subject to the new fees.

### ***But why do you have to raise your fees?***

The two major factors we take in into consideration when adjusting our fees are, our costs and the market conditions. Our costs are all the things that we must pay for in order to run a practice, there are all sorts of them ranging from cleaning and insurance to energy. By far the biggest of these are the wages, the materials and the laboratory costs.

We want you to have confidence in our team and the best possible service and treatment. To do this we need the best people working for us. We think it's only right to pay them a fair wage, if we didn't someone else would and we would lose them.

The cost for materials and laboratories varies hugely. We could reduce our fees by using cheaper, materials that don't have biocompatible properties, or find a cheaper laboratory, but we have found over the years that this is often a false economy. In the world of dental materials and laboratories it is almost universally true that you get what you pay for, if we used a cheaper filling material it will not look as nice or last as long and may have undesirable ingredients. Use a cheaper laboratory and the crown may not fit as well, look as natural or be as strong – ultimately meaning that you will probably end up paying more.

Dental material costs also change based on the world market. Most of the items we use are manufactured in Europe, and any changes to the relationship between Britain and its trading partners will cause costs to fluctuate.

We consider all these factors when deciding if we should raise our fees.

### **What exactly does Fair Pricing mean?**

More than just the outright value of our services we also believe there are certain principles that we try to uphold...

### **We feel it an absolutely necessity to minimise our impact on the environment.**

For example, we could pay less for our energy but having it from all renewable sources is important to us, and to our patients. (although the fees we pay Ecotricity have remained remarkably competitive with other non-renewable tariffs).

### **We want to make use of the fantastic local talent we have in our area,**

We could use a large centralised Laboratory who provide lab work to the whole country, or even a lab based abroad but we would probably be speaking to different technicians for each job, and we want to be able to pop in and see our master lab craftsman when we have a technically challenging treatment, we think that provides you with better service too.

### **We want to build a relationship with our suppliers**

We could probably switch the supplier of our materials to a large multinational, but they rarely have good ethical credentials and we believe going locally and building relationships with our suppliers where possible our main materials supplier is a family run business, rare in this market.

We think by following these principles we are giving you the best possible service at good value, our impact on the environment is as small as it can be and we are treating our staff and suppliers fairly, this is what we mean by fair pricing.

### **Why our prices say 'from...', and our treatment plans are 'estimates'**

- It's hard to be completely accurate on our fee guide, for example for a white filling on our guide it says (depending on size) "From". So why do we say 'from' and not just give a fee? A small filling at the front of the mouth is easy to get to and doesn't use much material which will be cheaper. A big filling at the back of the mouth will take longer, it will be more difficult to get to and it will use more material, therefore the cost will be more.
- Sometimes there are things that we would want to fix before we even get to a filling, a good example is gum disease. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that gum disease has a considerable effect on your overall health, and we would always want to sort that out first. We also try to look at the reasons why you are having the problems you are having, if you need a filling is that signalling a problem with what you eat? Perhaps if we can help you fix that we can stop you needing fillings in the future, but we won't know that until we see you.
- Even when we have seen you and provide you with a treatment plan, the figures are an estimate, we will try to explain in the plan why there might be variation, but the main reason we have to be unspecific is that we just can't be sure of what's going on until we have actually seen it. A good example of this is where we may need to replace a failing crown. Even an X-ray won't show if there is decay under the crown, we won't know the extent of the problem until we have taken the old one off. It may need us to use Biodentine to give the tooth the best chance of healing; this is why they are always

estimates! Sometimes it might be that you pay less than we were expecting for the same reason.

### **Why our prices may be more expensive than another practice.**

We regularly check the prices of other practices in the area to ensure that we are competitive, it is unlikely we are a great deal different but if you have seen some very low prices on the internet you should proceed with caution, the saying 'if something seems too good to be true, then it probably is' is as true in dentistry as in general life, here are some things to check:

- Make sure that you are not getting 'partial pricing'. For example, if you see a low price for an implant make sure it is for the implant, and the crown. We have seen a quote for an implant that didn't include the crown and we believe that this is unfair pricing. The common understanding is that an implant means the implant and the crown as a total price. Implants sometimes have other cost associated with them based on your own circumstances, bone grafts being the most common so always check and ask what additional cost there might be.
- As discussed above, the cost of materials varies considerably, and this will be the most difficult thing for you to assess, but this could be another reason why prices vary. If you are in any doubt check exactly what materials you will be getting and what's in them, we love it when our patients ask us this as it shows they are really thinking about their health.
- Finally, as Red Adair so eloquently put, "If you think it's expensive to hire a professional to do the job, wait until you hire an amateur."

The skill and experience of the dentist really does matter. At South Lane Dental we only select dentists, hygienists and therapists who have similar ethos, high ethical and environmental standards, and excellent dental skills, we think it is fair to pay them what they are worth. We have a lot of experience of dealing with simple through to complex and challenging cases and have been pioneering in our use of Biocompatible and Bioactive materials. There are only a handful of dentists in the world that use them in the way that we do. Our experience and skills in this area are being actively sought out to train other dentist in their use.

I hope that this fair pricing leaflet has answered any questions you may have. If you haven't found what you are looking for here, feel free to drop us a line and ask your question over pricing, or indeed anything else.

***The Team @ South Lane Dental***