

# TEMPORARY PRACTICE CLOSURE NOTIFICATION

LANE COVE ORTHODONTICS  
HUNTERS HILL ORTHODONTICS  
PORT MACQUARIE ORTHODONTICS  
TAREE ORTHODONTICS



Effective Friday 27th March 2020

Dear Patient,

With COVID-19 cases on the rise, government and health advice is changing regularly. The latest advice from the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC), the Australian Dental Association and the Australian Society of Orthodontists is that dental practices should immediately restrict treatment to only those procedures deemed as urgent or emergency in nature. Routine orthodontic treatment is not considered either of these.

For this reason, the decision has been made to temporarily close and all scheduled future appointments are cancelled until further notice.

Please refer to the following information for guidance on how your treatment will be managed during this shut down phase. Additional information will be circulated via email and posted on our Facebook page to respond to frequently asked questions we receive and to provide updates on the services we are able to provide. We will also have phone support available to patients during this time.

The health and safety of our patients, staff and whole community is our first priority. We thank you for your support and understanding during these unprecedented times and hope that you and your family stay safe and well. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Teriko Rex & Dr Darin Ballard

---

**Dr Teriko Rex** BDS(Hons)(Syd), MDSc(Syd), MRACDS(Orth)

**Dr Darin Ballard** BDS(Syd), MDSc(Syd)

Members of the Australian Society of Orthodontists

Members of the Australian Dental Association

ABN 72102782150



## EMERGENCIES

The following definition has been provided to us as to what constitutes an emergency.

- Significant oral pain
- Infection
- Limited function
- Physically traumatic event yielding the above

During the practice shutdown, access to emergency appointments will be limited to the above. Please understand some procedures may not be possible if they have been identified as high risk.

Please call us if you think you have an emergency.

If confirmed it is an emergency and that we are able to perform the necessary procedure, when attending a clinic please be aware of the following prior to and whilst you are in our practice:

- Adhere to social distancing recommendations whilst in the waiting room and interacting with our staff.
- Maintain hand hygiene by cleaning your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub. Keep your hands clean:
  - before entering an area used by other people,
  - after using the bathroom,
  - after coughing or sneezing,
  - after eating food.
- Practice good cough/sneeze etiquette by keeping away from other people, using disposable tissues or clothing (e.g. into your elbow), disposing of the tissues and cleaning your hands afterwards.

Note:

Please notify us before coming in if have a cold, flu, runny nose, cough or believe you may be coming down with any respiratory illness.

Anyone infected with Coronavirus or persons with infected family members will not be able to be treated at our practices and will have to have their emergency treatment at special medical facilities with appropriate infection control systems for high risk patients.



## **NEW PATIENTS**

The start of orthodontic treatment is an exciting big step and we are sorry we will have to delay starting until we are back open. Thankfully, a short delay will not impact the outcome of your treatment, just postpone it a bit.

You may have a temporary retainer that you can continue to wear as directed previously while we wait to get going.

When we are allowed to reopen we are going to be ready for you. We will contact you to make an appointment.



## **BRACES TREATMENT**

Braces and other appliances require regular visits to keep them going. A period without adjusting them will not cause any major problems.

Rapid Maxillary Expanders, or RMEs, can continue being turned as directed at your last visit and then stop. The RMEs can be left in place to maintain the expansion they have created until we see you next.

If you are wearing any elastics, there is a small risk of over correcting your bite if you continue to wear them without being monitored, so it is best to stop wearing them now and we will get your bite back on track at your next appointment.

Please make sure you keep good oral hygiene by brushing at least two times a day and regular flossing.

Also remember, please take special care of your appliances, avoid hard foods and any habits that may break your braces. Unless there is significant pain, infection or trauma, we will not be allowed to fix them.

Of course if you think it is an emergency, contact us as soon as possible and we will see what advice we can offer to get you through, including some simple home remedies. Most minor orthodontic irritations from braces can be managed at home. If you are unsure what to do, please contact us for advice on what short term measures are needed to get you out of trouble.

Under the imposed conditions, we are not able to do the procedures involved in removing braces.

Once reopened, we will contact you to make an appointment to review your treatment.



## INVISALIGN TREATMENT

Thankfully your Invisalign Treatment Plan that was created at the beginning of your treatment has all the components built-in, so if you wear them as directed, you can continue your treatment at home yourself!

We are busily preparing your aligners ready for collection with everything required such as instructions and spare elastics. You can pick them up over coming weeks as you approach the last aligner already in your possession. You don't need an appointment to collect them. To give our team time to prepare your aligners and to avoid queues in our waiting rooms, we also ask not to rush in immediately to collect them.

### Note:

- *Hunters Hill patients should collect at Lane Cove Orthodontics.*
- *Taree patients can collect at Taree Orthodontics until Friday 3rd April. After this date, remaining aligners will be relocated and available for collection from Port Macquarie.*
- *Port Macquarie and Taree patients: if you sometimes have appointments at different locations, call us to confirm collection location.*

Although we have tried to plan as much as possible, if the shutdown extends way beyond our expectations and you no longer have aligners to continue to your next week, it is perfectly fine to reduce your last aligner wear to a retainer phase of 10-12 hours per day to ensure that your teeth stay in position and make your last aligner last longer.

Make sure to use your Chewies and bite and hold to seat the aligners in areas where you see visible space between your tooth and the aligner. For best use, bite into your Chewie for 10 seconds and work it around your teeth lightly biting and holding for a 10 minute session.

Keep your aligners clean and avoid all drinks other than water while wearing them.

Always remember to wash your hands before placing and removing your aligners or elastics.

Once reopened, we will contact you to make an appointment to review your treatment.



## RETAINERS

It is always important to wear your retainers after your treatment is complete. In the event that replacement retainers are required, please advise us by email and someone will be contact you to provide advice.



## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### **I'm suffering financial hardship, what can I do?**

We understand these are challenging times impacting many patients and their families. Our payment provider, Denticare, is well equipped and ready to take your call to discuss your personal circumstances.

### **How long will the practice be closed?**

We are monitoring the situation closely and will reopen as soon as we are allowed. We will provide regular updates on our Facebook page and via email as the situation evolves.

### **When is my next appointment?**

We will be monitoring each patient's treatment plan during the shut down period with our patient management system tracking all of our patients. Upon reopening, we will contact you as soon as possible to reschedule missed appointments and discuss next steps.

Rest assured, we are still here for you and we will do our best to keep your treatment on track and minimise any delay.

### **Will I be able to come into the practice at all?**

Yes if to collect aligners.

Otherwise, we ask that you please do not attend the clinic unless in the case of an emergency such as trauma, infection or extreme pain. Procedures we can do will be severely limited, however we will try our best in these difficult circumstances.

Anyone infected with Coronavirus or persons with infected family members will not be able to be treated at our practices and will have to have their emergency treatment at special medical facilities with appropriate infection control systems for high risk patients.

Our practices will reopen as soon as we are able, however our team is available by phone to respond to your concerns during the shutdown period.