

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines the procedures, and details the necessary information required, should our practice suffer a crisis. All staff should familiarise themselves with this document. It will be discussed at least once a year at a practice staff meeting to ensure that everyone remains familiar with its content and knows what they are expected to do should a crisis occur. Any questions relating to the practice plans for business continuity and disaster recovery should be raised with Hassan Bhojani.

This business continuity plan aims to:

- Identify any risks that could interrupt business activities
- Provide guidance on how to deal with an emergency and relevant contact details
- Remove the need for critical decisions to be made during an incident when stress levels may be high
- Manage the risks that could result in business interruption
- Minimise the likelihood of a disaster occurring
- Reduce the time taken to recover when an incident occurs
- Enable patients to continue to receive dental care should an incident occur
- Provide emergency planning to allow for the fast and efficient resumption of essential business operations.

Risks that could interrupt business activities

We hope that none of the events listed below happen, but should they occur, it is imperative that all staff are aware of their individual roles so that we can work together and keep the business operating as normally as possible. Hassan Bhojani will be the designated Project Manager in a crisis, and all staff and dentists should report to them in the first instance. We have taken steps to reduce the risk of business interruptions caused by:

- Civil disruption such as riot
- Electricity failure
- Equipment failure
- Fire
- Flooding
- Heating failure
- IT failure
- Pandemic
- Staff illness/deaths
- Strong wind/hurricane

- Telephone line failure
- Terrorist attack
- Theft
- Vandalism

Business Impact

We are aware that if an incident affects the business, we may experience one or more of the following, depending on the cause:

- Damage to property
- Danger to dentists, staff and patients including injury or death
- Dentists, staff and patients may not have access to the dental practice
- A complete halt to business delivery
- Damage to property or equipment, closing the business for a period of time
- Patients may not want to visit the area for some time after an event and may change dental practices
- Looting or theft of equipment and drugs
- Inability to leave due to danger
- Complete loss of premises
- Loss of equipment and stock, computer and paper records
- Loss of income
- Loss of staff

Risk Assessments

We have undertaken a business continuity risk assessment (*Compliance Suite > Risk Assessments > Additional Risk Assessments*) to identify the threats to the continuity of our business delivery and to consider how we can minimize disruption to our business. These risk assessments have allowed us to develop a business continuity plan.

Dealing with a Disaster

In the event of a disaster or event, we will use one or more of the following four phases to deal with the situation.

1.Crisis phase

This is when the initial problem occurs. During this time Hassan Bhojani will be responsible for undertaking an initial assessment and deciding on the appropriate response. An extreme example of this phase could be a fire or explosion causing a threat to life and the premises. Evacuation procedures will be implemented immediately and emergency services summoned. A less threatening situation could be where the computer systems crash. An IT person will be contacted for advice and immediate action.

2.Emergency response phase

Hassan Bhojani will assess the situation towards the end of the crisis or immediately after. During this phase, they will decide if we will need to implement our business continuity plan fully.

3.Recovery phase

Essential operations will take place using alternative means where necessary to contain business disruption, for example:

- If the property is affected, we will continue to provide our services if possible but will also consider the need for alternative premises
- If the computer system fails, patient records will be accessed via the backup system.

4.Restoration phase

This phase starts with an immediate initial assessment of the damage assessment to identify the need for repairs, refurbishment or replacement of the affected premises and/or facilities and allow business to continue.

Precautions

We have identified several precautionary measures to help minimise the impact of any interruptions to the business;

- We hold copies of patient records and contact details on a separate backup device. This allows us to contact patients immediately to cancel or rearrange appointments. Our backup allows us to access patients' histories and medical data which means we could provide dental services from another location.
- Our building has been secured to protect it from outside threats. We have alarms in place, shutters and adequate locks to protect the windows and doors.
- We have remote access to our business telephone to allow us to change the voice message and give an alternative contact number. We also divert our practice telephone to an emergency mobile number at night, which will allow us to continue to take calls if we are unable to access the practice the following day.
- All patient records, drugs and sharps equipment are stored securely.
- Dentists and staff are shown how to use equipment correctly and in a safe manner.
- We have access to mobile heaters if the heating fails.
- We have access to sandbags in the event of flooding.
- A laptop computer is networked to our desktop computers. In the event of electrical failure, the laptop computer can operate on battery power
- We have a secondary energy supply in the form of a compressor and suction unit
- We take good care of our staff members and monitor stress levels

In relation to the risk of fire, we ensure that:

- Patient records are stored in lockable rooms.
- Fire alarm systems are in place
- Smoke detectors are placed in every room and are checked every week.
- Evacuation procedures are displayed clearly and are rehearsed with staff.
- We have implemented the recommendation of the local fire service following its risk assessment of our premises.

- A backup of our computer system is taken daily and stored away from the practice.

Continuity of Service

We have access to other practices within the area which can provide emergency services for our patients in the unlikely event that we are unable to provide dental services at our business premises. Our contingency practice is .

NHS Practices need to be able to estimate the time it would take to restore and maintain the full delivery of services to NHS patients to the level at which they have been funded.

Based upon the plans we have in place to deal with minor disruptions to the practice we would be able to restore services within >>please insert timeframe<<.

For major disruptions where the building is unsafe or unusable to any period of time, we would aim to restore services within >>please insert timeframe<< by using one of our other branches or our contingency practice temporarily.

Individual Responsibilities

Hassan Bhojani is responsible for implementing the arrangements for providing a service from an alternative address. Hassan Bhojani will contact all staff to inform them of the event and when access might be possible.

The practice will contact all patients with appointments to inform them of the new location. The practice will ensure the practice telephone message provides the relevant information about the emergency arrangements.

Procedures

IT/computer interruptions:

Our IT or telephone support companies would be contacted. The practice laptop would be used to obtain patient notes and calls could be diverted to the practice mobile.

Electricity interruptions:

Hassan Bhojani would first check the fuse box to see if the problems were from the building or due to power cuts (*see utilities section for the location of the fuse box*).

If the problem is localised, an electrician will be called and an estimate received until services can resume.

The following equipment will not be available when the electricity is off:

- Computers
- Telephones (unless mobiles are used)

- Fridges
- Autoclaves and other decontamination equipment
- Dental units
- Compressors (unless backup compressors are available)
- Lighting

If the power failure is due to a power cut, Hassan Bhojani will check with the National Grid for an estimated time for repair. Patients will then need to be contacted to rearrange appointments.

Heating failure:

Hassan Bhojani will first check the boiler. The heating engineer will be contacted if the problem cannot be easily fixed and an estimate received until a repair can take place. Portable heaters will be sourced if necessary.

If Hassan Bhojani suspects a gas leak, the gas stop cock will be shut off (see *utilities section for the location of gas stop cock*) and the practice would be evacuated. This will then be reported to 0800 111 999.

Water interruptions:

Hassan Bhojani will check the water stop cock (see *utilities section for the location of the water stop cock*). The plumber will be contacted.

Patients may need to be rescheduled if there is a loss of water to the practice which impacts patient, staff or clinical safety.

Fire:

We would follow our emergency procedures for dealing with a fire. The nearest call point would be activated and the fire brigade would be contacted on 999. Everyone would be evacuated to the assembly point.

Further plans would depend on the level of damage sustained to the building.

Pandemics:

We will liaise with local hospitals during pandemics and follow any advice provided by the Chief Dental officer as we did during the COVID pandemic.

Theft or vandalism:

We will liaise with police over loss of equipment, stock etc due to theft or vandalism.

Other equipment failures:

We will liaise with equipment suppliers and our local engineer should the equipment fail to work.

Terrorist attacks:

In the event of a terrorist attack or civil disruption, we will follow instructions from emergency services about evacuating the premises.

General Procedures:

Hassan Bhojani will contact the Practice and they will contact all staff to inform them of events and cancel or rearrange patient appointments. The designated person is the practice manager on site who will continue to take patient calls via call forwarding to an alternative mobile number.

We will continue to see emergency cases or provide them with the services of a dentist from an alternative surgery.

We will contact suppliers and the laboratory to ensure deliveries are halted or postponed. We will inform our regulator (CQC/HIW etc) that the practice is out of action and update them with new location details.

We will contact our insurance company for advice. Where our service provision changes, we will advise our patients of the new arrangements, using the local press if appropriate.

Recovery strategy

We will allow for insurance assessors to visit or discuss matters over the telephone.

We will use locum agencies or recruitment agencies to cover staff in the event of absences or death.

During the recovery stage, we aim to offer a normal service as soon as there is no danger to dentists, staff, and patients. Where access is not permitted, we will deliver services from an alternative site or work closely with another dental practice to ensure patients continue to be seen.

We will work with our insurance company to recover any losses. All patient notes taken when treatment is provided away from the practice will be transferred to the practice notes as soon as possible to ensure the currency of patient records is maintained.

Once the practice is operating normally again, we will inform all patients, using the local press if appropriate. We will assess the event, analyse the cause and how it was dealt with and explore how re-occurrence might be prevented.

Utilities

[Please complete this section with the location of the utilities]

Gas stop cock:

Water stop cock:

Fire extinguishers:

Electricity Isolator switch:

External Contact Details

[It is important to add as much detail to this section as possible to ensure that any external contacts can be reached in the event of any emergency]

Contingency practice:

Plumber:

Electricity Supplier: – Account number:

Electrician:

Heating Supplier:

Gas Supplier: - Account number:

Gas Safe Engineer:

Water Supplier: - Account number:

Equipment Supplier/Engineer: - Account numbers:

Insurance Provider: – Policy number:

IT Support:

Security:

Fire alarms:

Telephones:

Local Emergency Services

Police Department:

Fire Department:

Hospital/Ambulance Department:

Staff Emergency Contact Numbers

Document Control

Title:	Business Continuity Policy
Author/s:	DCME Team

Owner:	DCME Team
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Change History				
Version	Status	Date	Author / Editor	Details of Change (Brief detailed summary of all updates/changes)
0.1				Original Policy
0.2	Final	14/09/23	HD	General review and update of the policy. Included space to record account numbers for the external contacts. Added a staff contact table to record emergency contact details.
0.3	Final	06/11/23	HD	More detail given for specific business interruptions. Section added to be able to record location of utilities.

The latest approved version of this document supersedes all other versions, upon receipt of the latest approved version all other versions should be destroyed, unless specifically stated that previous version(s) are to remain extant. If in any doubt, please contact the document Author.

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