



## 4. Policy

### 4.1 Obtaining Consent

Obtaining valid informed consent means ensuring that:

- Treatment is voluntary
- Clients must not be coerced into having dental treatment. Dental practitioners must always obtain permission before dental treatment as well as during the course of treatment. Clients can withdraw their consent at any time
- All necessary information is disclosed
- Clients are given enough information and time to consider any proposed dental treatment. Include the risks and benefits of treatment, any alternatives and costs

### 4.2 Obtaining valid informed consent for dental treatment is:

- A legal requirement to allow a practitioner to touch a client
- Respecting the client's right to self determination
- Making it easier to treat clients, with better client outcomes

### 4.3 Stages of Gaining Consent

- Staff must be able to identify when a client is unable to provide valid consent
- Clients will be provided with information regarding their dental care in a manner in which they can understand, in order for them to make an informed decision about their dental care
- Clients will be provided with information on material risks and reasonable alternatives, in a manner that reflects that reasonable measures have been implemented to ensure that full understanding can be seen
- Communication techniques will be clear, unambiguous and adaptable to an individual's needs
- Assumptions about a client's ability to provide consent will not be made
- Clients who have communication difficulties will be encouraged to have a carer, friend or relative present to support them to ask questions or understand the answers provided
- In Clients who lack capacity, an individual with Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) or one who has full authority to make decisions about the client's health as a court-appointed deputy must consider the client's best interest at all times
- Clients can withdraw their consent at any time, refuse treatment or ask for it to be stopped after it has started. The Dental Hygenius Ltd will acknowledge their right to do this and follow their wishes. A clear explanation of the consequences or risks of not continuing with treatment and the operator's assurance that the client knows that they are responsible for any future problems which arise as a result of not completing the treatment, will be provided. A record of this will be placed in the client's notes
- Clients who refuse treatment or withdraw consent will not be judged or disadvantaged in any way, and will have the same opportunities to access dental health care as other clients

**4.4** Where a client lacks mental capacity to make an informed decision, or give consent, staff will act in accordance with the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and associated code of practice. The Dental Hygenius Ltd will respect when Clients, or a person acting lawfully on their behalf, refuse to give consent or withdraw it.

**4.5** Discussions about consent will be held in a way that meets the client's communication needs. This may include the use of different formats or languages and may involve others such as a translator or independent advocate. The Accessible Information Standard (AIS) Policy and Procedure at The Dental Hygenius Ltd can be referred to for more information.

**4.6** The Dental Hygenius Ltd will ensure that consent procedures do not pressure clients into giving consent and, where possible, plans will be made well in advance to allow time to respond to Clients' questions and provide adequate information.

**4.7** The Dental Hygenius Ltd will uphold the client's right to be involved in all decisions about their care and treatment.

**4.8** The Dental Hygenius Ltd will ensure that policies and procedures for obtaining consent to care and treatment will reflect current legislation and guidance and that staff follow them at all times.



**4.9** The Dental Hygenius Ltd will ensure that it treats consent as a process that continues throughout the duration of care and treatment, recognising that it may be withheld and/or withdrawn at any time. Staff at The Dental Hygenius Ltd will be trained to understand that capacity can fluctuate and this needs to be considered in the context of giving or refusing consent.

**4.10 Quality Assurance**

- Clear evaluation systems will be implemented regarding the methods of gaining consent, which will be regularly reviewed and evaluated
- Clear internal audit systems are in place to regulate and evaluate current systems implemented by The Dental Hygenius Ltd
- Following review of systems, policies will be updated to incorporate new and improved methods of record keeping

**4.11 Records**

- A clear workplace process for record keeping will be implemented and maintained, reflecting clarity of discussions, information, and factual and contemporaneous records
- Records will be stored in accordance with legislative and regulatory policies, and The Dental Hygenius Ltd policies

**4.12 Training**

- Regular training on consent will be provided to all staff
- Staff appraisals will occur on a regular basis and either incorporate the employee personal development plan or run alongside it simultaneously
- Records of consent training, support and development will be maintained
- Where a development need such as communication improvements or techniques have been identified, The Dental Hygenius Ltd will identify, implement and support the employee
- In the event of concerns, the correct protocols and systems will be followed and implemented. Records of actions taken will be recorded clearly and made available for external regulatory and quality assurance audits (ensuring that the principles of general data protection are maintained at all times)