# Dispatch to Laboratories and Equipment Suppliers Policy

Any item or piece of equipment used in the mouth has the potential to transmit infection. Where external providers such as dental laboratories or manufacturers of dental equipment might come into contact with such items or equipment (either within the practice or on receipt of items at their premises), this dental practice ensures that the items have undergone the relevant decontamination process.

## Impressions and appliances

All dental impressions, appliances (restorative, prosthetic or orthodontic) and any other items being sent to a dental laboratory are cleaned and disinfected prior to dispatch. The method of disinfection does not compromise the quality of the item being dispatched and the manufacturer’s instructions are followed at all times.

This dental practice follows procedures agreed with each laboratory to advise on the cleaning and disinfection process that the practice carries out before dispatch [e.g. individual items labelled, standard laboratory form, blanket statement]. A copy of [name of laboratory(ies)] infection control policy detailing how the laboratory deals with items on arrival and dispatch has been obtained by the practice to ensure that dispatch/receipt processes to and from the laboratory are compatible, efficient and effective in maintaining high standards in infection control.

### Procedure

* Rinse the impression or appliance under running water to remove any obvious blood, saliva or debris.
* Soak in solution compatible with the material. Follow manufacturers’ instruction regarding use of solution, contact time and further rinsing.
* Place the impression in a bag. Seal the bag.
* Label the item showing decontamination status.
* Enclose a certificate of decontamination along with any other instructions for the laboratory.
* Pack securely before uplift.

## Equipment and Instruments

Instruments and equipment (including handpieces) which need repair, inspection or maintenance by the manufacturer’s employees [or others e.g. hospital engineering staff] and which may have come into contact with blood, saliva or other body fluids are decontaminated before examination by, or dispatch to, service providers.

Items which cannot be steam sterilized are cleaned and disinfected by chemical means following the manufacturer’s instructions.

A decontamination certificate is completed to confirm how decontamination has been carried out, or that the instrument or equipment did not require decontamination.

For equipment which is leaving the premises, the decontamination certificate is included [in an envelope attached to the outside of the package and labelled Decontamination Certificate].

**Version history**

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| **Date** | **Version No.** | **Summary of change(s)** | **Updated by** | **Next review date** |
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The following staff have read and understood this policy [include all team members].

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| **Dental Team Member** | **Position** | **Signature** | **Date** |
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