



**LAWSON ROAD
SURGERY**

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PRACTICE POLICY- LOW DOSE SEDATIVE FOR PATIENTS 27.2.2025

We do not recommend prescribing low dose sedatives, such as the benzodiazepine Diazepam, for patients attending for imaging investigations or for dental work. There are a number of reasons for this that are set out below:

- Small doses of benzodiazepines such as 2mg diazepam are probably sub-therapeutic for most adults for any effective sedation. Conversely anxiolytics can have an idiosyncratic response in patients, and even very small doses can cause increased agitation in some subsets of patients.
- A patient may take a sedative 'an hour' before their assumed procedure, to then attend the hospital to find their procedure has been delayed, therefore the timing of the anxiolytic being sub optimal.
- GPs are not regularly involved, skilled, trained or appraised in sedation skills.
- All hospital consultants and dentists have access to the same prescribing abilities as GPs. If a patient needs a certain medication to enable an investigation to go ahead, they are just as well positioned to provide a prescription, either through the hospital pharmacy or a hospital FP10 or dental FP14D or private prescription.
- Sedated patients should be regularly monitored, and I have been made aware of a case where a GP provided sedative was given, the patient not monitored, and subsequently had a respiratory arrest in an MRI machine.
- The Royal College of Radiologists' own guidelines on sedation for imaging makes no mention of GP involvement or provision of low dose anxiolytics and stresses the importance of experienced well trained staff involved and the monitoring of sedated patients: <https://www.rcr.ac.uk/media/vfaluja/sedation-analgesia-anaesthesia-radiology-2024.pdf>
- The Dental Faculties of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons and the Royal College of Anaesthetists also makes no mention of GP involvement or provision of low dose anxiolytics: <https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/-/media/Files/RCS/FDS/Publications/Standards-for-conscious-sedation-and-accreditation/Dental-sedation-report-v11-2020.pdf>

We maintain that we are not being 'obstructive' but adhering to our duty of care to provide safe, consistent, and appropriate care for our patients. Radiologists/ Dentists may contact a GP direct for information or advice, if, for example the patient has a complex medical history.

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