

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR PATIENT COMPLAINTS

It is our aim to always have satisfied patients who are pleased with the service they receive, by meeting expectations of care and to resolve complaints promptly, effectively and courteously. Our aim is to resolve the matter as quickly as possible following the agreed procedure and whenever possible, to the satisfaction of the patient. We take complaints very seriously and we investigate them in a full and fair way, taking great care to protect confidentiality.

A Complaint may indicate a failing on our part, which we can learn from and make improvements to our service. We will adopt a 'no blame' approach when investigating a complaint and especially where individuals from our team are identified, with the aim of reaching a satisfactory conclusion. We will, at all times, be polite and respectful to our patients, and not discriminate against those raising a concern.

Practice Procedure

1. Please address all complaints to our Practice Complaints Manager, Racheal Lee.
2. If a person makes a complaint in person or by telephone, the member of the team receiving the complaint makes an initial record of their concerns and checks this for accuracy with the patient. (A model patient complaints log sheet is kept in the complaints folder). The patient is given a copy of the record and the original is passed to the Complaints Manager. If the Complaints Manager is available the patient is asked whether they would like to see her immediately, otherwise the patient is advised when the Complaints Manager will make contact in order to arrange a meeting in person or by telephone.
3. Where a complaint is received in writing or by e-mail the complaint will be passed immediately to the Complaints Manager.
4. Complaints about clinical care or the amount charged for treatment will be referred to the dentist concerned, unless the patient requests otherwise.
5. All complaints are acknowledged in writing within three working days. A copy of this Code of Practice will be sent with the acknowledgement. We aim to provide a full response within 10 working days. If the patient has not yet discussed the matter with the Complaints Manager they will be offered to do so, and be asked how they would like to be kept informed of developments – by letter, e-mail, telephone or face-to-face meetings. The patient will also be advised of the process we will follow in resolving the complaint and the anticipated timescale.
6. If the Complaints Manager is unavailable we will take brief details about the complaint and advise when you will be able to talk to a suitable team member. We will keep comprehensive and confidential records of your complaint, which will be stored securely. Only those persons who need to know about your complaint are informed about it and can access it.

7. We will investigate the complaint speedily and efficiently and, as far as reasonably practicable, will keep the patient informed of our progress and the proposed date it will be completed. Investigations will normally be completed within six months.

On completion of our investigation we will provide the patient with a full written report, which will include:

- An explanation of how the complaint has been resolved
 - The conclusions reached in the respect of each specific part of the complaint
 - Details of any necessary remedial action
 - Whether the practice is satisfied with any action it has already or will be taking as a result of the complaint
8. Proper and comprehensive records will be kept in the complaints folder of any complaint received as well as any actions taken to improve services as a consequence of a complaint.
 9. We regularly analyse patient complaints to learn from them and to improve our services. That's why we always welcome your feedback, comments, suggestions and complaints. If you are dissatisfied with our response to a complaint you can take it further, please see the contacts below.

- ❖ General Dental Council Private Dental Complaints
T: 0845 612 0540 or visit www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk
- ❖ Care Quality Commission
T: 03000 616161 or visit www.cqc.org.uk