

COMPLAINTS POLICY

At Lewisham Dental Practice we take complaints very seriously indeed and try to ensure that all patients are pleased with their experience of our service. When patients complain, they are dealt with courteously and promptly so that the matter is resolved as quickly as possible. This procedure is based on these objectives.

Our aim is to react to complaints in the way in which we would want our complaint about a service to be handled. We learn from every mistake that we make and we respond to patients' concerns in a caring and sensitive way.

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 are identified, with the aim of reaching a satisfactory conclusion. We will, at all times, be polite and respectful to our patients.

- The person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service which we provide is the Practice Manager, Sarah Fries
- If a patient complains on the telephone or at the reception desk, the member of staff will make an initial record of their concerns and check this for accuracy with the patient. The patient is given a copy of the complaints procedure
- When a written complaint is received, the letter will be passed on immediately to the Practice Manager, Sarah Burton who will make every effort to provide an initial response within 48 hours of receiving the letter. Sometimes there may be a short delay in the event of annual leave. It is open for the patient to discuss with Sarah Fries how the matter will be investigated and when it is likely to be concluded
- If a complaint is about any aspect of clinical care or associated charges it will normally be referred to the treating dentist, unless the patient does not want this to happen.
- The Practice Manager will acknowledge the patient's complaint in writing and enclose a copy of this code of practice as soon as possible and in any event within two working days. We will seek to provide a fuller response to the patient within fifteen working days of the complaint being received to give an explanation of the circumstances that led to the complaint. We will

try to resolve the complaint at practice level

- If patients are not satisfied with the response it is open to the patient to discuss the matter with:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower,
Millbank London SW1P 4QP. If (nhs complaints)

The Dental Complaints Service, The Lansdowne Building, 2 Lansdowne
Road, Croydon, Greater London CR9 2ER 08456 120 540 or
www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk (for complaints about private treatment)

The General Dental Council, 37 Wimpole Street, London W1M8DQ – the
dentists registration body