

Complaints Handling Policy

Our practice takes complaints very seriously and we try to ensure that all our 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.

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 mistakes and we respond to patients' concerns in a caring and sensitive way.

1. The person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service that we provide is **Sarah Smith**, the practice Complaints Manager.
2. If a patient complains by telephone or in person, we will listen to their complaint and offer to refer them back to their treating dentist if the complaint is clinical and to the Complaints Manager if the complaint is non-clinical. If the Complaints Manager is not available at the time, then arrangements will be made and the patient informed as to when they will be able to talk to the Complaints Manager.
3. If the patient complains in writing or by e-mail it will be passed on immediately to the Complaints Manager.
4. If a complaint is about any aspect of clinical care or associated charges it will normally be referred to the dentist concerned.
5. We will acknowledge the patient's complaint in writing and enclose **a copy of this code of practice** as soon as possible, normally within 3 working days. We will inform the patient about how the complaint will be handled and the likely time that the investigation will take to be completed.
6. We will seek to investigate the complaint speedily and efficiently and we will keep the patient regularly informed, as far as is reasonably practicable, as to the progress of the investigation. Investigations into clinical matters will normally be completed within six months however for simpler non clinical complaints we aim to deal with the complaint within 10 working days. If we are unable to investigate the matter and offer a response within these time scales we will notify the patient giving reasons for the delay and the likely period within which the investigation will be completed.
7. When we have completed our investigation, we will provide the patient with a full written report. The report will include an explanation of how the complaint has been considered, the conclusions reached and details of any necessary remedial action the practice has already taken or will be taking as a result of the complaint.
8. Proper and comprehensive records are kept of any complaint received as well as any actions taken to improve services as a consequence of a complaint.
9. If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedure then a complaint may be referred to:

NHS England PO Box 16738, Redditch B97 9PT England.contactus@nhs.net 0300 311 22 33

Healthwatch Lewisham call 020 8690 5012 or email: Info@healthwatchlewisham.co.uk

NHS Complaints Advocacy- Voice Ability t 0300 330 5454 www.nhscomplaintsadvocacy.org

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank London SW1P 4QP,
www.ombudsman.org.uk or call 0345 015 4033 for complaints about NHS treatment

For complaints about private treatment contact Dental Complaints Service, Stephenson House, 2 Cherry Orchard Road Croydon CR0 or t 020 8253 0800 or visit www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk

Or contact the General Dental Council 37 Wimpole Street, London W1M 8DQ the dentists' registration body
www.gdc-uk.org