

Complaints handling policy

Code of practice for patient complaints

In this practice we take complaints very seriously and 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. 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.

For NHS patients the complaints process may be made to either the Practice or to NHS England as the commissioner of the service. However, a complaint cannot go to both.

1. The persons responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service that we provide is the Practice Manager and Dr Nicholas Forster Complaints Lead and Practice Principal.
2. If a patient complains by telephone or in person, we will listen to their complaint and offer to refer him or her to the Practice Manager immediately. If the Practice Manager is not available at the time, then the patient will be told when they will be able to talk to the Practice Manager and arrangements will be made for this to happen. The member of staff will make a written record of your complaint and provide the patient with a copy as well as passing it on to the Practice Manager. If we cannot arrange this within a reasonable period or if the patient does not wish to wait to discuss the matter, arrangements will be made for someone else to deal with it.
3. If the patient complains in writing or by e-mail it will be passed on immediately to the Complaints Manager. NHS patients may seek assistance from the Patients Advice and Liaison Service or the NHS Complaints Advocacy Service, england.nhs.uk/tag/nhs-advocacy-service
4. If a complaint is about any aspect of clinical care or associated charges it will normally be referred to the dentist concerned, unless the patient does not want this to happen.
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 three working days. We will offer to discuss the complaint at a time agreed with the patient, asking how the patient would like to be kept informed of developments, for example, by telephone, face to face meetings, letters or e-mail. We will inform the patient about how the complaint will be handled and the likely time that the investigation will take to be completed. If the patient does not wish to discuss the complaint, we will still inform them of the expected timescale for completing the process.
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 will normally be completed within six months.
7. When we have completed our investigation, we will provide the patient with a written report.
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 / appeal may be forwarded to

For NHS 'complaints' to:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Milbank Tower, Milbank, London SW1P 4QP,
Telephone: 0345 015 4033 www.ombudsman.org.uk

Contact details if you wish your complaint to be dealt with by NHS England:

NHS England Customer Support Centre Tel: 0300 22 33 (Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm excluding English Bank Holidays) email : england.contactus@nhs.net .
By post NHS England, PO Box 16738, Reddich, B97 9PT

Contact Details if you are dissatisfied with our complaints service for Private Treatment

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, W1M 8DQ the dentists'
registration body