

Complaints Handling Policy/ Code of practice for Patients

We take any complaint very seriously and try to ensure that all of our patients are pleased with their experience of our service.

Our aim is to treat any complaint in a caring and sensitive way and to ensure that we respond to our patients concerns in a prompt manner to reach a resolution as quickly as possible.

Any complaint received is fed back to staff so they are fully aware and we are continually looking to improve our customer service through training and patient satisfaction questionnaires.

Our complaints procedure is based on the following: -

1. The person responsible for dealing with any patient complaint is the **Practice Manager**. Whether a complaint is received via telephone, in writing or in person, it would be referred to the Practice Manager immediately. If the Practice Manager is not available at the time, then arrangements will be made for the Practice Manager to make contact with the patient at a mutually convenient time. The member of staff will make a written record of the complaint and the patient can be provided with a copy as well as the Practice Manager. If the patient is unable to speak with the Practice Manager within a reasonable period of time, or if the patient does not wish to wait to discuss the matter, arrangements will be made for someone else to deal with the complaint.
2. If the complaint received is regarding any aspect of clinical care or associated charges, the complaint will normally be referred to the Dentist, unless specified otherwise by the patient concerned.
3. The complaint will be acknowledged in writing, enclosing a copy of this code of practice as soon as possible (normally within 3 working days). We will offer to discuss the complaint at a time agreed with the patient and discuss how the patient would like to be kept informed of developments i.e. 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.
4. We will seek to investigate the complaint efficiently and in a speedy manner, whilst keeping the patient regularly informed, as far as possible with regards to the progress of the investigation. Investigations will normally be completed within an agreed timeframe.
5. When we have completed our investigation, the patient will be provided with a full written report. The report will include an explanation of how the complaint has been considered, the conclusions reached in respect of each specific part of the complaint, details of any necessary remedial action and whether the practice is satisfied with any action it has already taken or will be taking as a result of the complaint.
6. Full and comprehensive records are kept of any complaint received as well as any actions taken to improve services as a consequence of a complaint

7. If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedure then a complaint may be referred to:

- NHS England, NHS Commissioning Board, PO Box 16738, Redditch, B97 9PT, Tel:0300 311 2233 or nhscommissioningboard@hscic.gov.uk
- Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank London SW1P 4QP, Tel: 0845 015 4033 or www.ombudsman.org.uk for complaints about NHS 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.
- Independent Complaints Advocacy Services (ICAS), 1st Floor, Clarendon House, 9-11 Church Street, Basingstoke, Hants, RG21 7QG Tel: 0845 600 8616 or 01256 463758 or www.seap.org.uk/icas/localmap.html email: Basingstoke. icas@seap.org.uk

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