

Code of Practice for Handling Complaints

In this 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.

COMPLAINTS MADE TO THE PRACTICE

The person responsible for dealing with any complaints about the service is the Practice Manager, Glenda Eaton – supported by Mr Patrick J Power.

If a patient complains on the telephone or at the reception desk, we will listen to his or her complaint and offer to refer him or her to Glenda Eaton. If Glenda Eaton is not available at the time, then the patient will be given the option of talking to the dentist and arrangements will be made for this to happen. The member of staff will take brief details of the complaint and pass them on. 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.

If the patient complains in writing the letter will be passed on immediately to the Practice Manager Glenda Eaton or in her absence, Susan Abbott.

If a complaint comes via NHS England, Ombudsman, GDC or a solicitor the Practice Manager an investigation will take place immediately and any deadlines given will be met.

If a complaint is about any aspect of clinical care or associated charges it will normally be referred to the dentist, unless the patient does not want this to happen.

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 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.

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 14 Days.

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, 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.

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. This information will be presented on the yearly return on a KO4 1B the information is given in a number form only and names and complaint are kept confidential and away from the clinical records.

When a patient makes a complaint, they can do this in one of two ways

Go direct to the provider and practice via the practice address
Commissioner of the service

The Dental Practice welcomes all complaints; any patient that makes a complaint will not be adversely treated due to having complained. If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedure then a complaint may be referred to:

NHS England or the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank London SW1P 4QP, telephone: 0345 015 4033 or www.ombudsman.org.uk for complaints about NHS treatment. (Their aim and vision is to provide an independent, high quality complaint handling service that rights individual wrongs, drives improvements in public services and informs public policy.)

Dental Complaints Service, Stephenson House, 2 Cherry Orchard Road, Croydon CR0 6BA (Telephone: 08456 120 540) for complaints about private treatment

The General Dental Council, 37 Wimpole Street, London, W1M 8DQ the dentists' registration body.

The patient can also get help from ICAS (Independent Complaints Advocacy Service), they provide support to people wishing to complain about the treatment or care they receive under the NHS. Trained advocates (also known as case workers) with the knowledge of the NHS complaints procedure help people to understand whether they wish to pursue a complaint, and where required advocates provide support to people in making and progressing a complaint.

ICAS Provider ICAS Region Contact Details

The carers federation North East 0845 120 3732 www.carersfederation.co.uk

The cares federation Yorkshire and Humberside 0845 120 3734 www.carersfederation.co.uk

The carers federation North West 0845 120 3735 www.carersfederation.co.uk
POhWER West Midlands 0845 120 3748
SEAP South West 0845 120 3782
POhWER London 0845 120 3784
POhWER Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire 0845 120 1082
POhWER Cambridge, Norfolk and Suffolk 0845 456 1084
POhWER Essex 0845 456 1083
SEAP South East 0845 600 8616
The carers federation East Midlands 0845 650 0088 www.carersfederation.co.uk