

Code of Practice for Patient Complaints

We want all our patients to be pleased with the service they receive, and therefore take any complaints seriously. If a patient makes a complaint, we will deal with it promptly and courteously. Our aim is to resolve the matter as quickly as possible following the agreed procedure and wherever possible to the satisfaction of the patient. A complaint may indicate a failing on our part from which we can learn and make improvements to our service. We will adopt a 'no blame' approach when investigating a complaint and, especially where individuals are identified, aim to reach a satisfactory conclusion. At all times we will be polite and respectful to our patients.

Practice Procedure

1. The Practice Manager (Dr Rizwan Khawaja) is responsible for dealing with all complaints about our service.
2. If a patient makes a complaint in person or by telephone, the member of staff receiving the complaint will make an initial record of the patient's concerns and check this with the patient for accuracy. The patient will be given a copy of the record and the original passed to the Practice Manager. If the Practice Manager is available, the patient will be asked if he/she would like to see him immediately. If not, the patient will be advised when the Practice Manager will be able to arrange a meeting in person or make contact by telephone.
3. If the patient complains in writing or by email, the complaint will be passed immediately to the Practice Manager.
4. Complaints about clinical care or the amount charged for treatment will be referred to the dentist unless the patient requests otherwise.
5. All complaints will be acknowledged in writing as soon as possible but within three working days. A copy of this code of practice will be sent with the acknowledgement. If the patient has not yet discussed the matter with the Practice Manager, he/she will be offered the opportunity to do so and will be asked if he/she would prefer to be kept informed of developments by letter, email, telephone or face-to-face meetings. The patient will also be advised of the process to be followed in resolving the complaint and the anticipated time scale.
6. We will investigate the complaint quickly and efficiently and, as far as reasonably practical, the patient will be kept informed of progress. Investigations will normally be completed within six months.
7. On completion of our investigation, we will provide the patient with a full written report which 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 remedial action deemed necessary.
 - Whether the practice is satisfied with any action it has already undertaken or will be taking as a result of the complaint.
8. Proper and comprehensive records will be kept of any complaint received as well as any actions taken to improve services as a consequence of a complaint.

9. If a patient is not satisfied with the result, then the complaint may be referred to:

- Local NHS Commissioning Board, Jubilee House, 5510 John Smith Drive, Oxford Business Park South, OXFORD, OX4 2LH or the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, LONDON, SW1P 4QP, tel. : 0345 015 4033 or www.ombudsman.org.uk for complaints about NHS treatment.
- The Dental Complaints Service, The Lansdowne Building, 2 Lansdowne Road, CROYDON, CR9 2ER, tel. : 08456 120540 or www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk for complaints about private treatment.
- The General Dental Council, 37 Wimpole Street, LONDON, W1M 8DQ (the dentists' registration body).

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