

COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY - NHS TREATMENTS 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. The Practice has based our complaints procedure around: Making a complaint about dental services: six principles of good complaint handling.

The following principles set out what patients can expect if they would like to provide feedback or raise a concern:

1 All of your feedback is important to us

- All feedback is welcomed, such as what we did well, what we could do better, or any other feedback
- We will use your feedback to help us improve, and we will show you how we have learned
- You can use our complaints procedure to provide feedback. If you don't want to do this, speak to a member of staff

2 We want to make it easy for you to raise a concern or complain, if you need to

- Information about our complaint's procedure is easy to find, without you having to ask
- You can write to us or tell us in person
- We will take your complaint seriously
- Our complaints information also tells you how to raise a complaint about us with another organisation

3 We follow a complaints procedure and keep you informed

- We will tell you who is dealing with your complaint and when to expect a response
- We will keep you informed of the progress of your complaint, including information on any delays
- You should feel confident we are following our complaints procedure

4 We will try to answer all your questions and any concerns you raise

- It should be clear to you what happened, and why
- Our response should be empathetic in tone and coordinated
- We will deal with your complaint in the time we said we would

5 We want you to have a positive experience of making a complaint

- You should feel we have followed a clear procedure in the time we said we would
- You should not be treated differently if you complain
- You understand how the outcome of your complaint was reached
- You feel you could raise a complaint again if needed, and could recommend our procedure to others
- You feel we have listened to you and have acted in a fair way
- You know what further help is available if you are unhappy with the way we have handled your complaint

6 Your feedback helps us to improve our service

- We are learning all the time from your feedback and complaints
- We show you how your feedback and complaints are listened to and acted upon
- All members of our dental team are committed to improving the service we provide

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.

1. The person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service that we provide is Lisa Bainham, the practice Complaints Manager.
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 Complaints Manager immediately. If the Complaints Manager is not available at the time, then the patient will be told when they will be able to talk to the Complaints 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 Complaints 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.
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 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.
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 6 months.
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 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.
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 Complaints:
For complaints about NHS treatment:
NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB Board:
Telephone : 0800 132 996
Email - enquiries@cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk

Post: Patient Advice and Complaints Team
NHS Cheshire and Merseyside
No 1 Lakeside
920 Centre Park Square
Warrington
WA1 1QY

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) for NHS patients in England. **0345 015 4033** Or use their online form:
<https://ombudsman.achieveservice.com/module/home>

