

## *Policy for handling patient complaints*

In this practice we take complaints very seriously indeed 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 customers' concerns in a caring and sensitive way.

1. The person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service which we provide is Deborah Cail, Practice Owner
2. If a patient complains on the telephone or at the reception desk, we will listen to their complaint and offer to provide him or her with a complaint form. If the patient wishes, a member of staff will complete the complaint form for them and pass it on.
3. If the patient complains in writing the letter or e-mail will be forwarded immediately to Deborah Cail.
4. 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.
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 ten working days. We will seek to investigate the complaint within twenty working days of receipt to give a written explanation of the circumstances which led to the complaint. If we are unable to investigate the complaint within twenty working days we will notify the patient, giving reasons for the delay and a likely period within which the investigation will be completed.
6. We will confirm the decision about the complaint in writing immediately after completing our investigation.
7. Proper and comprehensive records are kept of any complaint received.
8. If a patient is not satisfied with the result of our procedure then a complaint may be made to:
  - The Dental Complaints Service (08456 120 540) for complaints about private treatment ([www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk](http://www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk))
  - NHS England (0300 311 2233), PO Box 16738, Redditch B97 9PT; email [england.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:england.contactus@nhs.net), writing 'For the attention of the Complaints Manager' in the subject line  
or
  - Ombudsman (Health Service Commissioner) (0345 015 4033), The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW19 4QP ([www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk))  
for complaints about NHS treatment