



Complaints Handling Policy

It is the aim of this practice to 'Have a Clear and Effective Complaints Procedure' by meeting the GDC 'Standards for the Dental Team', [to meet the NHS complaints requirements] and deliver good practice in complaint handling. We have appointed Hatem Shahin as our 'Responsible Person'.

The practice has appointed a Complaints Manager, Hatem Shahin, and our complaints procedure (G 110 C/CW) is on display in all waiting rooms. A summary of our procedure is also available to patients in our patient leaflet.

Feedback and complaints handling framework

This practice has developed a framework for managing complaints and feedback based on these principles:

1. All patient feedback is important to us
2. We want to make it easy for patients to raise a concern or complain, if you need to
3. We follow a complaints procedure and keep patients informed
4. We will try to answer all patient questions and any concerns you raise
5. We want patients to have a positive experience of making a complaint
6. Patient feedback helps us to improve our service

Recognising complaints

Our team are aware that complaints are any expression of dissatisfaction by a patient (or their representative) about a dental service or treatment. Complaints can be verbal or written and can be about any part of the service we provide. All complaints must be logged internally, even if the complaint was verbal and resolved within 24 hours.

Recording complaints

All complaints are recorded on an Event Record (G 110A) and also logged in our Event Register (G 110B). All correspondence or investigation records are stored with the Record and Register. Complaint Records are treated as confidential at all times and kept separate from clinical records. Only authorised persons have access to the Complaints Records. We submit our annual complaints report to [NHS England/CQC/HIW/RQIA/HIS] and will make it available to any person that requests it.

Handling complaints

The practice team is trained to resolve all complaints promptly, efficiently and politely by following our Patient Complaints Procedure (G 110C/CW). The team responds to complaints in the time limits set by the Patient Complaints Procedure and always provides constructive responses to complaints. The practice never discriminates against a patient who has made a complaint.

Team members cannot react defensively to a complaint but must listen carefully to a patient who makes one whilst involving them fully in the process of managing it. The team members will, to the best of their abilities, endeavour to meet any outcomes the patient expects and offer sincere apologies when appropriate.

If a patient is not satisfied despite our best efforts to resolve the complaint, they will be informed about other avenues that are open to them such as the GDC Dental Complaints Service and the NHS Ombudsman.

The team are regularly trained in complaint handling and are involved in the regular review of complaints, complaints procedures and management [through iComply] so that services, policies and procedures can be continually improved.



Response timescales

All complaints will be acknowledged and responded to by the practice within the timescales detailed in the Patient Complaints Procedure (G 110C/CW).

We keep patients informed of the status of the complaint during the investigation stage and always aim to resolve the complaint within the timeframe specified in our policies and procedures or as agreed with the complainant.

Online reviews

The practice appoints a team member to regularly check for online reviews. All feedback, both positive and negative is acknowledged and we follow the recommendations for dealing with poor reviews outlined in the Complaints, Problems and Events Overview (G 110).

Related documents

This policy should be read with the Patient Complaints Procedure (G 110C) and the Complaints, Problems and Events Overview (G 110).





Patient Complaints Procedure

It is our aim to always have satisfied patients, to meet your expectations of care and service and to resolve any complaints as efficiently, effectively and politely as possible. We take complaints very seriously, investigating them in a full and fair way and take great care to protect your confidentiality. We learn from complaints to improve our care and service. We will never discriminate against patients who have made a complaint and we will be happy to answer any questions you may have about this procedure.

If you are not entirely satisfied with any aspect of our care or service, please let us know as soon as possible to allow us to address your concerns promptly. We accept complaints made verbally as well as written complaints. If you do not feel you can raise a complaint about your NHS service directly with us, you can address your complaint directly to NHS England at england.contactus@nhs.net with 'For the attention of the complaints team' in the subject line.

Santh Sri Kondreddy is the Complaints Manager and will be your personal contact to assist you with any complaints. We aim to resolve verbal complaints within 24 hours where possible, but if you complain in writing the Complaints Manager will send an acknowledgement letter within 3 working days and will aim to provide a full response in writing as soon as practical.

You can send your complaints to 5 Market way, Pinchbeck - PE11 3PE, call us on 01775513126 or email the Complaints Manager on enquiries@pinchbeckdh.co.uk

If the Complaints Manager is unavailable, we will take brief details about the complaint and will arrange for a meeting when it is suitable for you and the practice. We will keep comprehensive and confidential records of your complaint, which will be stored securely and only be accessible by those who need to know about your complaint. If the complaint investigation takes longer than anticipated, the Complaints Manager will contact you at least every ten working day to keep you informed of the reason for any delays, the progress of the investigation and the proposed date it will be completed.

When the investigation has been completed, you will be informed of its outcome in writing. We will make our response clear, addressing each of your concerns as best as we can. You will also be invited to a meeting to discuss the results and any practical solutions that we can offer to you. These solutions could include replacing treatment, refunding fees paid, referring you for specialist treatments or other solutions that meet your needs and resolve the complaint.

We regularly analyse patient complaints to learn from them and to improve our services. That's why we always welcome your feedback, comments, suggestions and complaints. If you are dissatisfied with our response to a complaint you can take the matter further, please see the contacts below.

If you are dissatisfied with our response to a complaint you can contact the GDC private dental complaints service within 12 months of the treatment or within 12 months of becoming aware of the issue. Please see the contact details below.

Contacts

GDC private dental complaints service can be contacted by calling 020 8253 0800 or visiting www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk.

If you are still unhappy about your NHS complaint, you can contact the Parliamentary Health Ombudsman (England): by calling 0345 015 4033 or visiting www.ombudsman.org.uk

You can also contact The [Care Quality Commission](http://www.cqc.gov.uk) (CQC) who regulates private and NHS dental care services in England by calling 03000 616161. They can take action against a service provider that is not meeting their standards who may be able to help.

The General Dental Council is responsible for regulating all dental professionals. You can complain using their online form at www.gdc-uk.org contact them on information@gdc-uk.org or by calling 020 7167 6000.