

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 customer's concerns in a caring and sensitive way.

1. The person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service which we provide is Raquel Sousa.
2. If a patient complains on the telephone or at the reception desk, we will listen to their complaint and offer to refer him or her to their dentist immediately. If he or she is not available at the time, then the patient will be told when they will be able to talk 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.
3. If the patient complains in writing the letter will be passed on immediately to Raquel Sousa, who will forward it appropriately.
4. If the patient complaint is about any aspect of clinical care or associated charges it will normally be referred to the dentist or hygienist/ therapist, 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 seek to investigate the complaint to give an explanation of the circumstances which led to the complaint. If the complaint is clinical related, the clinician will reply directly.

6. Proper and comprehensive records are kept of any complaint received.
7. If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedure then a complaint may be made to:
 - The Dental Complaints Service for complaints **Telephone (0300 3112233) or at England.contactus@nhs.net** Telephone 0300 3112233, NHS England, PO Box 16738, Redditch, B97 9PT **- complaints only**
 - The General dental Council, 37 Wimpole street, London, W1M 8DQ (the dentist's registration body)
 - Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)
North West Sussex GP Commissioning Association
3rd Floor, Crawley Hospital, West Green Drive, Crawley, RH11 7DH
Telephone: **01293 600300**
 - CQC National Customer Service Centre, Citygate, Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA
Telephone: **03000 616161**
 - NHS Complaints Advocacy
Telephone: **0300 330 5454**