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Complaints handling policy (private treatment)

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. This procedure is based on these objectives.

Our aim is to react to complaints in the way in which we 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 Karina Fogarty, our Complaints Manager/Practice Manageress.
- 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 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 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 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 or email 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 be normally 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 3 working days.

- 6) We will seek to investigate the complaint within 10 working days of receipt to give an explanation of the circumstances which led to the complaint. If the patient does not wish to meet us, then we will attempt to talk to them on the telephone. If we are unable to investigate the complaint within 10 working days we will notify the patient, giving reasons for the delay and a likely period within which the investigation will be completed.
- 7) We will confirm the decision about the complaint in writing immediately after completing our investigation.
- 8) Proper and comprehensive records are kept of any complaint received.
- 9) If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedure then a complaint may be made to:
 - a. The Dental Complaints Service, Stephenson House, 2 Cherry Orchard Road, Croydon, CR0 6BA. (Telephone 08456 120540) for complaints about private treatment

Complaints handling policy (NHS treatment)

Code of practice for patient complaints

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- 3) If the patient complains in writing the letter or email 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 be normally 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 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, be telephone, face to face meetings, letters or e-mail. We aim to reply within 21 days, following acknowledgement. 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 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 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 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:
 - a. Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).
PALS Office, Colchester Cornerstone, 5-7 Sir Isaacs Walk,
Colchester, CO1 1JJ
Telephone 01206 363000 or 01206 363001
 - b. General Dental Council
37 Wimpole Street
London
W1G 8DQ
Telephone 0845 222 4141 or 0207 887 3800