

THE BOURNE DENTAL PRACTICE

Complaints Handling Policy (NHS 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 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. In the first instance the person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service which we provide is the practice Complaints Manager.
2. If a patient complains on the telephone or in person, we will listen to their complaint and offer to refer them to the Complaints Manager immediately. If the Complaints Manager is unavailable, then the patient will be advised of this and arrangements will be made for the Complaints Manager to contact the patient at a convenient time to discuss the complaint.
3. If the patient complains in writing or by email 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 and any other member of staff who may have been involved. Information will also be shared with the dentist's Indemnity Advisor if necessary.
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 three working days. 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 six 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 complete investigation then a complaint may be referred to one of the following bodies listed below:
 - The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, 30 Millbank Tower, Westminster, London SW1P 4QP, telephone: 0345 015 4033 or www.ombudsman.org.uk for complaints about NHS treatment.

- PALS (Patient Advice & Liaison Service) 0845 602 4384

10. Alternatively if patients prefer not to use our complaints system, they can complain directly to:

- NHS England Central Midlands, Fosse House, 6 Smith Way, Grove Park, Enderby, Leics. LE19 1SX 0116 2060185
- NHS England, PO Box 16738, Redditch B97 9PT (email: england.contactus@nhs.net) 0300 3112233
- Patients cannot complain to us and then to NHS England if they are not happy with the result, it must be either, or, but not both

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W A Welch