

THE DENTAL HEALTH AND IMPLANT CENTRE COMPLAINTS POLICY AND CODE OF PRACTICE FOR PATIENTS WHO WISH TO RAISE CONCERNS

Complaints Policy

At DHC Dental Care Ltd we want to ensure that all our patients are pleased with their experience of our service. We take complaints very seriously indeed. If a patient makes a complaint, we will deal with the matter courteously and promptly so that it is resolved as quickly as possible. Our complaints policy and procedures are based on these objectives.

We display the General Dental Council's 6 core principles for ensuring that we get the most from patient feedback and complaints for the benefit of all this is displayed in the reception area of the practice.

At DHC Dental Care Ltd, we have an effective complaints system in place to ensure that identifying, receiving, recording, handling, and responding to any comments, observations, concerns or complaints occurs within a strict timetable that is clearly documented. Our Code of Practice for patients who wish to raise concerns is displayed in reception and all patients and visitors should feel confident that they will be listened to and responded to without fear of discrimination or recrimination. Our Complaints Policy and Procedures are displayed in reception and a copy is available from the reception team.

We aim to ensure that any complaint is treated sensitively and in a manner that respects their human rights and diversity.

We recognise that a complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with our service, treatment or advice and that a complaint can be made by a variety of methods, including verbally, by sign language, or in writing.

In situations where a patient may lack the confidence to express their views, or require help to do so, they will be supported by helpful team members. All patients' complaints are fully documented and investigated and are dealt with fairly.

At DHC Dental Care Ltd we view complaints as an opportunity to improve our service delivery and to learn lessons that will help us make changes with the intention of avoiding a repetition of any similar complaint.

To help us learn lessons from complaints, we track and analyse all our complaints to identify trends that will help us improve our service.

Our complaints procedures are monitored and reviewed regularly and the named contact who is accountable for doing this is Charlotte Usher, Practice Manager.

This Policy was implemented on 29/5/2019 and last reviewed 03/01/2024.

This policy and relevant procedures will be reviewed annually and are due for review on 03/01/2025 or prior to this date in accordance with new guidance or legislative changes or as a result of learnings following a complaint.

Complaints Procedures

Verbal complaints

If a patient complains on the telephone, at the reception desk or anywhere else in the practice, we will listen sympathetically to their complaint and make notes about his/her issues or problems, provided that the patient consents to us doing this.

Having first listened to the patient's complaint, we will offer to refer him/her to The Practice Manager immediately. If they are not available at the time, the patient will be advised of when they will be able to speak to them and arrangements will be made for this to happen. If the patient has consented to their concerns or issues being written down, the team member will take brief details of the complaint and pass them on. If we cannot arrange this within a reasonable time period or if the patient does not wish to wait to discuss the matter, arrangements will be made for Charlotte Usher to deal with it.

Our aim in handling verbal complaints is always to try to resolve the issue to the patient's satisfaction so that it does not escalate and become a written complaint.

Written complaints

- If the patient complains in writing the letter will be passed on immediately to Charlotte Usher.
- Complaints about clinical care or associated charges will be referred to the clinician concerned unless the patient does not want this to happen.
- If a claim has begun, or if a complaint to one of the regulatory bodies has been made or intimated, advice and assistance should be sought from the relevant registrant's indemnity provider.
- A written response to a complaint with an accompanying copy of our Complaints Policy and Procedures will be sent as soon as possible, normally within two working days.
- We will investigate the complaint to enable us to give an explanation of the circumstances that led to the complaint within ten working days of receipt. 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 ten working days, we will notify the patient, giving reasons for the delay and a likely period within which the investigation will be completed.
- We will confirm the decision about the complaint in writing immediately after completing our investigation.

- We make and keep proper and comprehensive records of any complaint received.

If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedure, then a complaint may be made to:

The Dental Complaints Service for complaints about private treatment

Address: Stephenson House, 2 Cherry Orchard, Croydon, CR0 6BA

Phone: **0208 253 0800**

Email: **INFO@DENTALCOMPLAINTS.ORG.UK**

The General Dental Council

Address: 37 Wimpole Street, London, W1M 8DQ

Phone: **0207 167 6000**

Email: **STANDARDS@GDC-UK.ORG**

NHS England for complaints about NHS treatment

Address: NHS England, PO Box 6738, Redditch, B97 9PT

Phone: **0300 311 2233**

Email: **ENGLAND.CONTACTUS@NHS.NET** with: 'For the attention of the complaints team' in the subject line.

The Care Quality Commission

Address: Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne NE14PA

Phone: **03000 616161**

Email: **ENQUIRES@CQC.ORG.UK**