

West House Dental Practice Code of Practice for Patient Complaints

We want our patients to be pleased with the service they receive, so we take complaints seriously. If a patient makes a complaint, we will deal with it promptly and courteously. Our aim is to resolve the matter as quickly as possible following the agreed procedure and, wherever possible, to the satisfaction of the patient.

A complaint may indicate a failing on our part, which we can learn from and make improvements to our service. We will adopt a “no blame” approach when investigating a complaint and especially where individuals are identified, with the aim of reaching a satisfactory conclusion. We will, at all times, be polite and respectful to our patients.

Practice procedure

1. The person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service we provide is **Sean Masterson**, our Complaints Manager.
2. If a patient makes a complaint in person or by telephone, the member of staff receiving the complaint will make an initial record of their concerns and check this for accuracy with the patient. The patient is given a copy of the record and the original is passed on to the Complaints Manager. If the Complaints Manager is not available at the time, the patient will be told when they will be able to talk to the dentist and arrangements will be made for this to happen. If we cannot arrange this within a reasonable period or if the patient does not wish to discuss the matter, arrangements will be made for someone else to deal with it, eg: Practice Manager.
3. If the patient complains in writing the letter 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, unless the patient requests otherwise.
5. We will acknowledge the patients complaint in writing and enclose a copy of this code of practice as soon as possible, normally within three working days.
6. We will seek to investigate the complaint and respond within a reasonable time period of receipt to give an explanation of the circumstances leading 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 the time scale we will notify the patient, giving reasons for the delay and a likely period within which the investigation will be completed.

7. We will keep the patient informed of our progress. Investigations will normally be completed within six months.
8. On completion of our investigations, we will provide the patient with a full written report, which 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.
9. Proper and comprehensive records are kept of any complaint received.
10. If patients are not satisfied with the result or our procedure, then the complaint may be referred to:
 - The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP, (Telephone: 0345 015 4033) or: www.ombudsman.org.uk for complaints about NHS treatment.
 - The Dental Complaints Service, Stephenson House, 2 Cherry Orchard Road, Croydon, CR0 6BA. (Telephone: 020 8253 0800) info@dentalcomplaints.org.uk for complaints about private treatment.
 - The General Dental Council, 37 Wimpole Street, London, W1M 8DQ, (Telephone: 0207 167 6000) the dentist's regulatory body for complaints about professional misconduct.
 - NHS England Customer Contact Centre, (telephone 0300 311 22 33)
 - **NHS England**
PO Box 16738
Redditch
B97 9PT
 - By email to england.contactus@nhs.net

If you are making a complaint please state: '**For the attention of the complaints team**' in the subject line.

Reviewed: 21/04/2018

Next review date... April 2019 or as necessary