

## Smilemakers 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. The person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service that we provide is The Practice Manager (the complaints manager)
2. If a patient complains by telephone or in person, 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 to the Complaints Manager and arrangements will be made for this to happen. The member of staff will make a written record of your complaint and provide the patient with a copy as well as passing it on to the Complaints Manager. 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 or by e-mail 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, 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, by telephone, face to face meetings, letters or e-mail. 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 is 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 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 procedure then a complaint may be referred to:

**1. Patient Advice and Leason Service (PALS):**

Moorgreen Hospital, Botley Road, West End, Southampton, Hampshire, SO30 3JB  
Tel: 023 8120 8498

**2. Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman:**

Tel: 0345 015 4033

**3. Care Quality Commission (CQC):**

03000 616161  
Email: [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)

**4. Citizens Advice Bureau**

3 Kings Park Road, Southampton, SO15 2AT  
Tel: 02380 221406  
02380 333868

**5. General Dental Council (GDC):**

37 Wimpole Street  
London W1G 8DQ  
Tel: 020 7167 6000

## Annual NHS complaints report

It is important that all practices keep records of complaints and are able to provide details to their primary care organisation. Example of form submitted.

Annual NHS complaints report for the financial year ending 31 March [insert year]	
Name of Contractor/dentist:	
NHS contract number:	
Practice name:	
Practice address:	
Number of NHS complaints received during the year	<input type="text"/>
Number of NHS complaints received during the year, which I decided were well-founded	<input type="text"/>
Number of NHS complaints, which I have been informed have been referred to the Health Services Commissioner or Local Commissioner (as appropriate)	<input type="text"/>
Summary of NHS complaints received <sup>1</sup> :	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>	
Signed by contractor/for and on behalf of contractor*	
Print name:	Date:

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