



## **Practice Complaint Policy**

### **Who Can Complain?**

Anyone who is receiving or has received dental treatment in this practice. If they are unable to complain, a close friend, relative or carer can do this for them.

### **Is there a time limit?**

- Usually the complaint should be made within six months of the event.
- Or within six months of realising a complaint, but no longer than twelve months after the event.

### **Who should they complain to?**

Initially they may talk to anyone in the practice. In an effort to achieve 'local resolution', an attempt should be made to solve the problem straight away by referral to the practice manager.

They should find suitable quiet area away from reception where they can listen carefully to the patients' concerns and hopefully find an immediate solution to the problem.

At this time, it is important that the correct attitude be adopted and maintained throughout the conversation. The patient may well be agitated and a friendly, calm manner coupled with a sympathetic ear could go a long way in diffusing the matter.

It is a good idea to ask questions and even take notes depending on the complexity of the situation.

If it is apparent that further investigation is required or that a solution that satisfies the patient could not be found, the matter should be referred for further attention and the patient should be informed of the process which will take place.

### **Should the matter require further attention....**

Advise the patient to submit the complaint in writing to Louise Cody. Advise the patient that he/she will receive an acknowledgment of receipt of the letter within 3 working days of receiving it and allowing for a full investigation to follow, will receive a full acknowledgment within thirty days.

At this stage, it is preferable for everyone to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. It

may be necessary to involve other staff to establish exactly what happened and decide what action to take.

### Not Satisfied?

If after this the complainer has not been satisfied, NHS patients may contact the complaints manager at the local health authority. Private patients may be advised to contact their solicitor.

### The NHS

The health authority will have their own complaints procedure. Make sure the patient has been supplied with a copy of the complaint's information leaflet.

### **NHS Kent and Medway Patient Experience**

Email: [kmicb.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:kmicb.patientexperience@nhs.net)

Phone: 01634 335095 option 7

Post: Patient experience team, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Gail House, Lower Stone Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6NB

### What can't be dealt with by the Health Authority?

- a) Complaints about Private treatment
- b) Events requiring investigation by a professional disciplinary body.
- c) Events about which you are already taking legal action.

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