

How to make a Complaint
Complaints about NHS treatment
Complaints about Private treatment

Complaints Procedure and Policy

Date : December 2021

Review : December 2024

Carleton Dental Practice

We want all our patients to be pleased with the service they receive, so we take all 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 to reach a satisfactory conclusion. We will, at all times, be polite and respectful to our patients.

A complaint is “an expression of dissatisfaction that requires a response”.

You should try to complain as soon as possible, usually within six months of you becoming aware that you have a cause for complaint and normally no longer than 12 months after the event.

Note: Complaints in relation to accessing or impact on services as a direct result of the practice response to the COVID-19 pandemic, will not be investigated under this Complaints Procedure.

Practice Complaint Procedure

1. The Practice Complaints Manager is **Ms Naomi McKeown** and is responsible for dealing with all complaints about our service – **028 3833 4672** or **028 3839 1700**.
2. If a patient makes a complaint in person or by telephone, the member of staff receiving the complaint makes an initial record of their concerns and checks this for accuracy with the patient. The patient is given a copy of the record and the original is passed to the Complaints Manager. If the Complaints Manager is available, the patient is asked whether they would like to see him/her immediately. Otherwise the patient is advised when the Complaints Manager will make contact to arrange a meeting in person or by telephone.
3. If the patient complains in writing or by e-mail, the complaint will be passed immediately to the Complaints Manager – admin@carletondental.co.uk
4. Complaints about clinical care or the amount charged for treatment will be referred to the dentist concerned, unless the patient requests otherwise.
5. All complaints are acknowledged in writing as soon as possible but within **3 working days**. A copy of this code of practice will be sent with the acknowledgement. If the patient has not yet discussed the matter with the Complaints Manager, they will be offered the opportunity to do so and also be asked how they would like to be kept informed of developments – by letter, e-mail, telephone or face-to-face meetings. The patient will also be advised of the process we will follow in resolving the complaint and the anticipated timescale.
6. We will investigate the complaint speedily and efficiently and, as far as reasonably practicable, will keep the patient informed of our progress. **Investigations** will normally be completed within **10 working days**.
7. On completion of our investigation, we will provide the patient with a full written report, which will include the following:
 - 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
 - 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 will be kept of any complaint received as well as any actions taken to improve services as a consequence of the complaint.

NHS Complaints

- a) If you feel that you are unable to raise your complaint directly with us OR if you remain dissatisfied after receipt of the response to your complaint you can approach the Health & Social Care Board. The HSCB does NOT investigate complaints as this responsibility remains with the practice. However, the HSCB can act as an 'honest broker' or intermediary between the 2 parties to assist in the resolution of concerns.
- Complaints Department
Health & Social Care Board
12-22 Linenhall Street
Belfast BT2 8BS
Tel: 028 9536 3893
Email: complaints.hscb@hscni.net Monday-Friday 9.00-4.00
- b) The Ombudsman will not normally take on any complaints until local resolution has been exhausted. The complaint must be referred within 6 months of completion of our internal complaints process. The contact details are as follows:
- Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)
Freepost BEL 1478
Belfast BT1 6BR
Tel: 0800 343 424
Tel: 028 9023 3821
Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk
Or complete an online complaint form at www.nipso.org.uk
Or download and return the completed complaint form to the following address:
Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman
Progressive House, 33 Wellington Place
Belfast BT1 6HN
- c) The Patient and Client Council provide free and confidential advice, information and help at:
- Patient & Client Council (PCC)
Quaker Buildings,
High Street
LURGAN BT66 8BB
Tel: 0800 917 0222 Freephone
Email: info.pcc@hscni.net www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net
- Hours of opening are 8.00am – 6.00pm every day (7 days a week)

Complaints about Private Dental Treatment

Complaints about private treatment should be referred to:

Dental Complaints Service,

Stephenson House, 2 Cherry Orchard Road, CROYDEN CR0 6BA

Tel: 0845 222 4141

Email: info@dentalcomplaints.org.uk www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk

Complaints about Professional Misconduct

These should be referred to the General Dental Council:

General Dental Council, 37 Wimpole Street, LONDON W1m 8DQ

Tel: 0845 222 4141

Email: info@gdc-uk.org

Tel: 020 7167 6000

www.gdc-uk.org

Reporting Complaints

Carleton Dental Practice must report all complaints as follows:

- Complaints Manager, HSCB (Eastern Office), 12-22 Linenhall Street, BELFAST BT2 8BS.
Anonymised copies of each NHS complaint and its corresponding response will be sent to the HSCB within 3 working days of the written response being issued to the complainant.
- Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA), 7th Floor Victoria House, 15-27 Gloucester Street, Belfast BT1 4LS Tel: 028 9536 1111
Email: info@rqia.org.uk A statement containing a summary of all NHS and Private complaints made within the preceding 15 months is forwarded to RQIA, detailing the action taken in each response.

Record Keeping

We keep full and comprehensive records of all complaints, investigations and responses and we keep them in a securely and separately from the patient clinical records.

For further information:

- More information on the complaints procedure is available at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hsccomplaints.htm
- Copies of HSC complaints leaflets can be made available in alternative formats by contacting:
The Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety, Castle Buildings, Stormont Estate, BELFAST BT4 3SJ Tel: 028 9052 0500