



## **Complaints Policy and Procedure**

We try to ensure that all our patients are pleased with their experience of our services. We welcome feedback from patients and take any complaints seriously. We aim to deal with any complaints courteously and efficiently so that they can be resolved as quickly as possible.

Our complaints procedure outlines how we deal with any complaints.

The person responsible for dealing with any complaints in the practice is Jonathan Westall.

### **How to Complain**

We hope that most issues can be resolved easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If your issues cannot be sorted out this way and you wish to make a complaint, you can do so verbally by speaking to one of our team members, who will direct you to our complaints lead, or you can write to us by letter or email.

### **Complaints Made Verbally**

If you wish to make a complaint over the phone or in person, we will listen to your complaint and offer to refer you to our complaints lead. If they are unavailable, the staff member will take your details and a brief explanation of the complaint to pass on. Your complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days.

### **Complaints Made via Email or Letter**

Any letters or emails regarding a complaint will be immediately passed to our complaints lead. Your complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days.

### **Investigations**

We will contact you to discuss your complaint unless it can be resolved easily. Any complaints involving clinical care will be referred to the treating dentist unless you request this not to happen.

We will then investigate your complaint and will aim to have a response for you within 10 working days. If it is not possible to resolve this within that timeframe, we will inform you and let you know when it is likely to be resolved.

Once we have made a decision regarding your complaint we will inform you by your preferred contact method.

It is possible that if a complaint regards clinical care or is complex, we may need to seek advice from our insurers, indemnifiers or legal advisors and, therefore, may need to share some of your information for this purpose.

### **Complaining on behalf of someone else**

Please note that we strictly adhere to the rules of clinical confidentiality. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we must know that you have their permission to do so. A note signed by the person concerned will be needed unless they are incapable (because of physical and mental illness) of providing this.

### **Time Limits for Opening Complaints**

Complaints should be made within 12 months of the incident or when the complainant first discovered the problem.

### **Complaints to External Bodies**

We hope that if you have a concern, you will use our practice complaints procedure. We believe this will give us the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong and an opportunity to improve our practice. This does not affect your right to approach the ICB if you feel you cannot raise your complaint with us. However, this does not affect your right to complain to an external body, if you feel you cannot raise your complaint with us, or you are dissatisfied with the result of our investigation.

**The CQC:** The CQC don't get involved with complaints made to the practice. They do, however, encourage giving feedback on service providers.

To send feedback to the CQC please go to: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/give-feedback-on-care>

Telephone: 03000 616161 (Mon to Fri, 8.30am - 5.30pm Excluding Bank Holidays)

The NHS: If you would rather not go directly to your practice and your treatment is provided by the NHS, you can contact your local ICB, which is

responsible for NHS dental services.

**NHS Cheshire and Merseyside**  
**0800 132 996**  
**enquiries@cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk**

**Patient Experience Team, NHS Cheshire and Merseyside, No 1  
Lakeside, 920 Centre Park Square, Warrington, WA1 1QY**

**If you feel unable to raise your concerns with the practice, you can contact the ICB. However, the ICB cannot re-investigate complaints already made to the practice, so if you feel unhappy with how the practice or the ICB has handled a complaint, you should contact the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.**

**The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman**

Telephone: 0345 015 4033

Website: <https://www.ombudsman.org.uk>

**Private Patients: The Dental Complaints Service handles complaints made by private patients.**

Telephone: 0208 253 0800 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

Website: <https://dcs.gdc-uk.org/>

**The GDC**

Telephone: 0854 222 4141 or 0207 887 3800

Website: <https://contactus.gdc-uk.org/Complaint/Process/13>

## Document Control

<b>Title:</b>	Complaints Policy and Procedure
<b>Author/s:</b>	DCME Team

<b>Owner:</b>	DCME Team
<b>Approver:</b>	DCME Team
<b>Date Original Policy Created:</b>	12.07.2023
<b>Latest Review Date:</b>	05.08.2024
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	August 2025

<b>Change History</b>				
<b>Version</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author / Editor</b>	<b>Details of Change</b> (Brief detailed summary of all updates/changes)
0.1	Final	12.07.23	DCME	New Template Created
0.2	Final	05.08.24	HD	Updated template. Separated complaints that are made verbally and in writing. Clarified the role of the ICB for NHS complaints.
0.3	Final	09.09.24	HD	Re-added time limits for opening complaints

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