

North Street Dental Care

Code of Practice for NHS Patient Complaints

We want all of 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 always be polite and respectful to our patients.

Practice Procedure

1. This practice operates a complaints procedure which complies with the HSC complaints procedure and in compliance with The Independent Healthcare Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 requirements.
2. A copy of the complaints process is held in the waiting room.
3. The rules of medical confidentiality will be adhered to if the complaint is received on behalf of someone else. A note signed by the person concerned will be required, unless they are incapable (e.g. because of illness) of providing this to allow the complaint to be investigated.
4. The Practice Complaints Manager, Heidi Geddis, is responsible for dealing with all complaints about our service.
5. 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.
6. If the patient complains in writing or by e-mail, the complaint will be passed immediately to the Complaints Manager.
7. Complaints about clinical care or the amount charged for treatment will be referred to the dentist concerned, unless the patient requests otherwise.
8. All complaints are acknowledged in writing as soon as possible but within 3 working days. A copy of this code of practice can be sent with the acknowledgement. The patient will be advised of the process we will follow in resolving the complaint and the anticipated timescale.
9. 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.
10. On completion of our investigation, 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.
11. Proper and comprehensive records will be kept of any complaint received as well as any actions taken to improve services as a consequence of a complaint.
12. The complaint may be referred to the **HSCB Complaints Officer** at:
Health and Social Care Board
Complaints Office
12-22 Linenhall Street

HSC Board Headquarters
Belfast
BT2 8BS
Telephone: 028 9536 3893
Email: complaints.hscb@hscni.net
Website: Health and Social Care Board

13. If the patient remains unhappy they can refer their complaint to the **Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman**. They will look at the complaint and decide whether they should investigate it:

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman,
Progressive House
33 Wellington Place,
Belfast,
BT1 6HN
Telephone: 02890 233821
Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk
Website: <https://nipso.org.uk>

14. Agencies that can be utilised are:

- **Patient and Client Council**
FREEPOST
PATIENT AND CLIENT COUNCIL
Telephone: 08009170222
Email: info.pcc@hscni.net
Website: www.patientandclientcouncil.hscni.net
- **The General Dental Council** - the dentists' registration body:
General Dental Council
37 Wimpole Street,
London,
W1G 8DQ

15. **RQIA** have an over-arching role in relation to monitoring complaint's policies and procedures RQIA, Riverside Tower, 5 Lanyon Place, Belfast, BT1 3BT. Tel 028 9051 7500.

16. The practice has a Freedom of Information Policy which is available on request.

North Street Dental Care

Code of Practice for Private Patient Complaints

We want all of 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 always be polite and respectful to our patients.

Practice Procedure

1. This practice operates a complaints procedure which complies with the HSC complaints procedure and in compliance with The Independent Healthcare Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 requirements.
2. A copy of the complaints process is held in the waiting room.
3. The rules of medical confidentiality will be adhered to if the complaint is received on behalf of someone else. A note signed by the person concerned will be required, unless they are incapable (e.g. because of illness) of providing this to allow the complaint to be investigated.
4. The Practice Complaints Manager, Heidi Geddis, is responsible for dealing with all complaints about our service.
5. 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.
6. If the patient complains in writing or by e-mail, the complaint will be passed immediately to the Complaints Manager.
7. Complaints about clinical care or the amount charged for treatment will be referred to the dentist concerned, unless the patient requests otherwise.
8. 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.
9. We will investigate the complaint speedily and efficiently and, as far as reasonably practicable. Investigations will normally be completed within 10 working days to explain the circumstances which led to the complaint. If we are unable to investigate the complaint we will notify the patient, giving reason for the delay and a likely period within which the investigation will be completed.
10. We will confirm the decision about the complaint in writing immediately after completing our investigation.
11. Proper and comprehensive records will be kept of any complaint received.
12. If a patient is not satisfied with the result, then the complaint may be referred to the **Dental Complaints Service** for complaints about private treatment:

Dental Complaints Service
37 Wimpole Street
London
W1G 8DQ
T: 020 8253 0800

13. Agencies that can be utilised are:

- **The Health and Social Care Board:**
Health and Social Care Board Headquarters
12-22 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BS
Telephone: 028 9536 3893
Email: complaints.hscb@hscni.net
Website: Health and Social Care Board
- **Patient and Client Council**
FREEPOST
PATIENT AND CLIENT COUNCIL
Telephone: 08009170222
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Website: www.patientandclientcouncil.hscni.net
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