OUR POLICY FOR HANDLING PATIENT COMPLAINTS

In this practice we take complaints very seriously indeed 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 customers' concerns in a caring and sensitive way.

1. The person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service which we provide is Lucy Hurley.

2. If a patient complains on the telephone or at the reception desk, we will listen to their complaint and offer to refer him or her to Lucy immediately. If Lucy is not available at the time, then the patient will be told when they will be able to talk to the dentist and arrangements will be made for this to happen. The member of staff will take brief details of the complaint and pass them on. 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 the letter will be passed on immediately to Lucy Hurley.

4. If a complaint is about any aspect of clinical care or associated charges it will normally be referred to the dentist, 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 three working days. We will seek to investigate the complaint within ten working days of receipt to give an explanation of the circumstances which led to the complaint. If the patient does not wish to meet us, then we will attempt to talk to them on the telephone. If we are unable to investigate the complaint within ten working days we will notify the patient, giving reasons for the delay and a likely period within which the investigation will be completed.

6. We will confirm the decision about the complaint in writing immediately after completing our investigation.

7. Proper and comprehensive records are kept of any complaint received.

8. If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedure then a complaint may be made to:

    - The Dental Complaints Service (08456 120 540) for complaints about private treatment
    - The General Dental Council, 37 Wimpole Street, London, W1M 8DQ (the dentists' registration body)