



PATIENTS' COMPLAINT POLICY

1. The Southfield Dental Practice patients' complaints procedure is to be implemented when a patient makes a complaint about the level of service either verbally or in writing to any member of staff. If a patient complains on the telephone or at the reception desk, we will listen to his or her complaint and offer to refer him or her to a senior member of staff immediately. Written complaints should ideally be addressed and passed to the Complaints lead without being opened. The complaints lead is **Mr Christian Gollings**.

2. If the responsible person is not available at the time, then the patient will be told when she/he will be able to talk to someone 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 complaint cannot be addressed and rectified immediately, a record of the dispute is to be made and the complainant informed by the practice Complaints lead within 2 working days in writing, that the matter is being investigated. The complainant is to be told how the complaint will be dealt with and is to be given an anticipated timetable for addressing the complaint. All complaints are to be logged in the Register and should be a standing Agenda item for Practice Meetings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – WITHIN 3 WORKING DAYS

4. An acknowledgement of the complaint is to be made in writing within 3 working days by the Complaints lead. The response should be brief. At this stage no acceptance of blame or details of the case should be acknowledged.

INVESTIGATION – WITHIN 10 WORKING DAYS

5. The Complaints lead is to obtain the views of all parties involved in the complaint. At this stage an individual complained against may wish to seek advice from his/her Defence organisation.
6. Whenever possible the investigation should be completed within 10 working days and the complainant is to be contacted by letter and if appropriate, in person or by telephone with the result of the investigation. If the investigation cannot be completed within 10 working days the complainant is to be contacted, given reasons for the delay and an indication of when the investigation will be completed.
7. Whether or not the complaint is resolved by local action, the dentist is to be informed of the nature of the complaint and of the action already taken.

MEETING – WITHIN 15 WORKING DAYS

8. If there has been no resolution, the complainant is to be invited to meet Practice Complaints lead (who is also the practice owner). This meeting is to take place within 15 working days of the receipt of the complaint.
9. The complainant may also be invited to meet any health professional directly concerned with the complaint. Resolution may involve a change of Dentist/Hygienist etc, a referral for second opinion or replacement of dental work that may be the subject of the complaint.
10. If the complaint still cannot be resolved it is to be addressed at a more formal level. The complainant is to be advised of any professional bodies to which a formal complaint may be made.

TRAINING

11. As part of Continuing Professional Development of all Dental Professionals are to receive appropriate and adequate training on Complaints. This is a mandatory requirement of the GDC and is to be carried out at least annually and recorded in the individual's Portfolio.

MEDICO-LEGAL ACTION

12. If legal action is contemplated or threatened at any stage then the matter should be referred to the appropriate Defence Organisation. The internal patient's complaint procedure is to be suspended.

RECORD KEEPING

13. Accurate records are made in the clinical records for the patient.

Patient complaints to be recorded on the day and stored in records in their records

A log will also be made in the file *complaints > complaints*.

The compliance file is only to be used as a log of the complaint and a signpost to the patient record

Checked By: Chris Gollings

Date: 12 Jan 2018

Previous Policy Updates: 24 May 2017; 08 June 16

Signed: CAG, CLG, LD, LS, LW, JW,

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