

Patient information leaflet

Practice complaints procedure

If you have a complaint or a concern about the service you have received from the dentist or any of the staff working in the practice, please let us know. We operate a practice complaint procedure as part of a NHS system for dealing with complaints.

How to complain

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If your problem cannot be sorted out in this way and you wish to make a complaint, we would like you to let us know as soon as possible – ideally, within a matter of days or at most a few weeks – because this will enable us to establish what happened more easily. If it is not possible to do that, please let us have details of your complaint:

- Within 6 months of the incident that caused the problem; or
- Within 6 months of discovering that you have a problem, providing this is within 12 months of the incident.

Complaints should be addressed to Miss Mathieson or, alternatively, you may ask for an appointment with Miss Mathieson to discuss your concerns. The complaints procedure will be explained to you and we will ensure that concerns are dealt with promptly. It will be a great help if you are as specific as possible about your complaint.

What shall we do?

We shall acknowledge your complaint within two working days and aim to have looked into your complaint within ten working days of the date when you raised it with us. We shall then be in a position to offer you an explanation, or a meeting with those involved. In investigating your complaint we shall aim to:

- Find out what happened and what went wrong;
- Make it possible to discuss the problem with those concerned, if you would like this;
- Make sure you receive an apology, where this is appropriate
- Identify what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't happen again.

Complaining on behalf of someone else

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

Complaining to the health authority

We hope that, if you have a problem, you will use our practice complaints procedure. We believe this will provide the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong and an opportunity to improve our practice. But this does not affect your right to approach the local health authority if you feel the issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction. You may contact Hartlepool Health Authority, 36 Victoria Road, TS26 8DD. Tel:01429 262641.

If you do not wish to raise your concern with the practice you can contact NHS England, PO Box 16738, Redditch, B97 9PT. Tel:0300 3112233.