

The Spire Halifax Limited

Complaints handling policy Code of practice for patient complaints

In this practice we take complaints very seriously 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 that we provide is Jessica Ryder, our Complaints Manager.
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 the Complaints Manager immediately. If the Complaints Manager is not available at the time, then the patient will be told when they will be able to talk 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 the Complaints Manager.
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.
6. We will seek to investigate and respond to the complaint within ten working days of receipt to give an explanation of the circumstances which led to the complaint. 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.
7. We will confirm the decision about the complaint in writing immediately after completing our investigation.
8. Proper and comprehensive records are kept of any complaint received.
9. If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedure then a complaint may be made to:
 - Dental Complaints Service (DCS). The DCS provides a free and impartial service to help private dental patients and dental professionals to settle complaints about private dental care fairly and efficiently. The DCS can deal with the complaint if the patient would like an apology, a refund or a contribution to the cost of further treatment. They cannot deal with claims for compensation, or with complaints about dental plans. Dental Complaints Service, Stephenson House, 2 Cherry Orchard Road, Croydon CR0 6BA (Telephone: 08456 120 540)
 - If private treatment was through a dental plan contact your plan provider as they will have a complaints process.

If you have safety concerns about a dentist or practice

- If the problem is so serious that a patient thinks the dental professional could be a risk to other patients, they should contact the General Dental Council (GDC), which regulates dental professionals in the UK. If the issue is serious enough, the GDC can stop individual dentists from practising. The GDC does not get involved in complaints that are being managed locally. It does not resolve complaints or award compensation. The General Dental Council, 37 Wimpole Street, London, W1M 8DQ (Telephone: 0845 222 4141), the dentists' regulatory body for complaints about professional misconduct
- If the problem is so serious that the patient thinks the care provided at the practice could be a risk to other patients, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) would like to know about it. CQC cannot investigate individual complaints, but its inspectors use information when they inspect services to make sure that they are meeting quality and safety standards. Care Quality Commission: CQC Corporate Complaints Team, Finsbury Tower, 103–105 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8TG, Phone: 03000 616161

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