

Complaints Procedure – Information for Patients

If you have a complaint or concern about the service you have received from the dentists or any of the staff working in this practice, please let us know. We operate a practice complaints procedure. Our complaint system adheres to national criteria.

How to Complain

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If your problem cannot be sorted 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 most 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, provided this is within 12 months of the incident.

Complaints about the treatment you received should be made to the dentist who normally sees you. Alternatively, you may ask for an appointment to discuss your concerns. He/she will explain the complaints procedure to you and will ensure that your concerns are dealt with promptly. It will help if you are as clear as possible about your complaint.

Complaints about non-clinical matters or if you are unsure about who to complain to please send a letter or email to our Practice Manager, Tom Waterfall, using the Practice address or her email which is tom@bridgedentaltowcester.co.uk. Tom will help direct your complaint to the correct area.

What We Shall Do

We shall acknowledge your complaint within 2 working days and aim to have looked into your complaint within 10 working days of the date when you raised it with us. We shall then be in a position to give you an explanation, or offer a meeting with those involved.

In investigating your complaint, we shall aim to:

- find out what happened and what went wrong
- enable you to discuss the problem with those concerned, if you would like this;
- ensure you receive an apology, where this is appropriate;
- identify what we can do to make sure the problem does not 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 must know that you have the permission to do so. A note signed by the person concerned will be needed, unless that are incapable of providing this because of physical or mental illness or are a child under 16 years.

Complaining to Dental Complaints Service

We hope that, if you have a problem, you will make use of 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. However, this does not affect your right to complain to the Dental Complaints Service, if you feel you cannot raise your complaint with us.

The contact details of the Dental Complaint Service are as follows:

Tel: 0300 311 22 33

Email: england.contactus@nhs.net

Post: NHS England, PO Box 16738, Redditch, B97 9PT

Please note that it is important that you decide from the outset if you want the Practice OR the Complaints Service to deal with your complaint. It is not possible to complain to one and then the other in turn.

Should you be dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigations above you can take your complaint to the Health Service Ombudsman:

Tel: 0345 015 4033

Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

Post: Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP

Other avenues for escalating a complaint are:

- The General Dental Council, 37 Wimpole Street, London, W1M 8DQ the dentists' registration body.
- Care Quality Commission email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk, contact 03000 616161 or write CQC national Customer Service Centre, Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 4PA