



IMPROVE YOUR SMILE

Complaints Policy and Procedures

and

Code of Practice for patients who wish to raise concerns

Complaints Policy

At Improve Your Smile we want to ensure that all our patients are pleased with their experience of our service. We take complaints very seriously indeed. If a patient makes a complaint, we will deal with the matter courteously and promptly so that it is resolved as quickly as possible. Our complaints policy and procedures are based on these objectives.

At Improve Your Smile we have an effective complaints system in place to ensure that identifying, receiving, recording, handling and responding to any comments, observations, concerns or complaints occurs within a strict timetable that is clearly documented. Our Complaints Policy and Procedures and Code of Practice for patients who wish to raise concerns, are available upon request and reference is made to this within documents displayed in our reception area. All patients and visitors should feel confident that they will be listened to and responded to without fear of discrimination or recrimination.

We aim to ensure that any complainant is treated sensitively and in a manner that respects their human rights and diversity.

We recognise that a complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with our service, treatment or advice and that a complaint can be made by a variety of methods, including verbally, by sign language or in writing.

In situations where a patient may lack confidence to express their views, or require help to do so, they will be supported by helpful team members. All patients' complaints are fully documented and investigated and are dealt with fairly.

At Improve Your Smile we view complaints as an opportunity to improve our service delivery and to learn lessons that will help us make changes with the intention of avoiding a repetition of any similar complaint.

To help us learn lessons from complaints, we track and analyse all our complaints to identify trends that will help us improve our service.

This policy and relevant procedures will be reviewed annually or sooner if there is new guidance or legislative changes or as a result of learnings following a complaint. The named contact who is accountable for doing this is our Practice Manager, Moona Malik.

Complaints Procedures

Verbal complaints

If a patient complains on the telephone, at the reception desk or anywhere else in the practice, we will listen sympathetically to their complaint and make notes about his/her issues or problems.

Having first listened to the patient's complaint, we will offer to refer him/her to Moona Malik immediately. If Moona Malik is not available at the time, the patient will be advised of when they will be able to speak to her and arrangements will be made for this to happen. The team member will take brief details of the complaint and pass them on.

Our aim in handling verbal complaints is always to try to resolve the issue to the patient's satisfaction so that it does not escalate and become a written complaint.

Written complaints

- If the patient complains in writing the letter will be passed on immediately to Moona Malik.
- Complaints about clinical care or associated charges will be referred to the clinician concerned.
- If a claim has begun, or if a complaint to one of the regulatory bodies has been made or intimated, advice and assistance should be sought from the relevant registrant's indemnity provider.
- A written response to a complaint with an accompanying copy of our Complaints Policy and Procedures and our Code of Practice will be sent as soon as possible, normally within three working days.
- We will investigate the complaint to enable us to give an explanation of the circumstances that led to the complaint within ten working days of receipt. 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.
- We will confirm the decision about the complaint in writing immediately after completing our investigation.
- We make and keep proper and comprehensive records of any complaint received.

The local integrated care board (ICB) is responsible for NHS dental services in that area. If an NHS patient does not wish to make a complaint directly to the practice they can contact the local integrated care board (ICB) instead. If the patient continues to feel unhappy about the way their complaint has been handled, either by the dental practice or the ICB they can contact the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO). NHS patients cannot complain to the ICB and the practice, they must choose one or the other.

If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedures, then a complaint may be made to:

For complaints about NHS treatment:

Local Integrated Care Board (ICB): NHS North East London

4th Floor – Unex Tower, 5 Station Street, London E15 1DA

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) for NHS patients in England

Phone: 0345 015 4033

For complaints about private treatment:

The Dental Complaints Service

37 Wimpole Street, London W1G 8DQ

Phone: 020 8253 0800

Email: info@dentalcomplaints.org.uk

The General Dental Council

37 Wimpole Street, London, W1G 8DQ

Phone: 020 7167 6000

Email: standards@gdc-uk.org

The Care Quality Commission

Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne NE14PA

Phone: 03000 616161

Email: enquires@cqc.org.uk

IMPROVE YOUR SMILE

Code of Practice for patients who wish to raise concerns

At Improve Your Smile we place great emphasis on meeting and whenever possible, exceeding our patients' expectations. We try to ensure that all patients are pleased with their experience of our service and we take any concerns a patient may have very seriously.

If you have a concern regarding any aspect of your care, please let us know. We will do all that we can to resolve your concern to your satisfaction promptly and professionally.

Our aim is to respond to your concerns in a caring and sensitive way.

The person responsible for dealing with any concerns about the service we provide in this practice is our Practice Manager, Moona Malik.

If you raise an issue you are concerned or unhappy about on the telephone or at the reception desk, after listening to a description of the problem the person with whom you raise your concern will try to resolve the issue to your satisfaction immediately.

If the person with whom you raise your concern is unable to resolve the issue for any reason, we will contact Moona Malik immediately. Should Moona be unavailable at the time, we will advise you when she will be available, and arrangements will be made for you to meet or speak with her.

The team member with whom you first raised your concern will take brief details from you and pass these to Moona Malik so that she can familiarise herself with your concern prior to meeting you or speaking with you.

If you choose to write to us to express your concern rather than raising it verbally, your letter or email will be passed on to Moona Malik immediately.

We will acknowledge any concerns you raise in writing within three days and we will also include a copy of this Code of Practice and our Complaints Policy and Procedures with our response. We will investigate your concern and report back within ten working days of it being received. If we are unable to complete our investigations within ten working days for any reason, we will notify you, giving reasons for the delay and the likely period within which the investigation will be completed.

We will confirm the outcome of the investigation and any decisions made in writing.

We will keep proper and comprehensive records of any concerns or complaints received.

We will do all we can to resolve your issue, concern or complaint to your satisfaction. If, for any reason, you are not satisfied with the outcome or the procedure, we will advise you of other avenues open to you for raising concerns. These are:

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