

Complaints procedure

Here at Smile Essential we welcome any feedback, both good and bad. If you have any concerns about the service you have received from your dentist or any other member of our team, please do not hesitate to let us know. We operate a practice complaints procedure as detailed below and this adheres to national criteria.

How to complain:

We aim to resolve all complaints quickly and with a minimum amount of stress for yourself, that is why, in the first instance, we ask that at the time of your visit you ask to speak to the Practice Manager. If for any reason she is unavailable another Patient Relations Manager will speak to you at that time. If your complaint or concern cannot be resolved immediately, there is a process we ask you to follow:

- Please let us have the details of your complaint as soon as possible, ideally within a few days. Please note all complaints have to be received no later than 12 months after the incident that caused the problem or within 12 months of discovering that you have a problem.
- Please address all written complaints to our Practice Manager or to your Dentist at the address detailed at the bottom of this page. You can of course email the practice any concerns you have on info@smileessential.co.uk again please address your email to either to the Practice Manager or your Dentist.

What will happen once you have complained?

- Where appropriate we will try to contact you via telephone to discuss the matter further, but we will also acknowledge your complaint in writing within 3 working days and at this time we will let you know how long we think the investigation will take and when you expect to receive a response.
- We will then investigate your complaint fully to establish what happened and what went wrong, including giving you the opportunity to come in and discuss the problem with those concerned.
- We will ensure you get a full explanation including an apology where appropriate.
- Once we have identified the problem we will put in place the relevant steps to ensure the problem does not happen again.
- We will aim to have resolved your complaint speedily and efficiently and will keep you regularly informed, as far as reasonably practical, as to the process of the investigation.
- We will provide a full written report on completion of our investigation. If this is going to take longer than we initially indicated, we will keep you updated.

Can I complain on someone else's behalf?

The answer is yes, but we will need written permission from the patient (unless incapable of doing so due to mental or physical illness) before we can discuss the matter with you. This is to ensure the highest level confidentiality is maintained at all times.

What if I am still unhappy once the practice has responded?

If we cannot resolve your complaint within the practice, further help can be obtained from:-

For private patients:-

Dental Complaints Service, Stephenson House, 2 Cherry Orchard Road, Croydon CR0 6BA, contact number 020 8253 0800, email info@dentalcomplaints.org.uk or visit www.dcs.gdc-uk.org

For NHS Patients:-

- **The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman**, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP, contact number 0345 015 4033, or visit www.ombudsman.org.uk