



## **Complaints Procedure:**

### **1. Introduction**

At Four Oaks Dental, we strive to provide the highest quality dental care and service to all our patients. We understand that there may be instances where patients have concerns or complaints about their treatment or overall experience. We take complaints seriously and are committed to resolving them promptly, fairly, and confidentially. This policy outlines the procedure for making a complaint and the steps we take to address and resolve the issues raised.

### **2. Scope**

This complaints procedure applies to all patients of Four Oaks Dental, including those receiving NHS and private dental care.

### **3. Making a Complaint**

3.1. In person: Patients are encouraged to discuss their concerns with a member of staff at the practice, either the dentist providing the treatment or the practice manager. Appointments can be scheduled to allow for a thorough discussion.

3.2. In writing: Patients may choose to submit a written complaint addressed to the practice manager, outlining the details of their complaint. The written complaint can be submitted by post or email to the practice's official contact details.

### **4. Complaints Handling Process**

4.1. Acknowledgment: Upon receiving a complaint, we will send an acknowledgment within three working days, either in person or in writing, confirming receipt of the complaint and providing details of the person responsible for handling the complaint.

4.2. Investigation: The practice manager will initiate a thorough investigation of the complaint, seeking additional information from relevant staff members or reviewing

relevant records, if necessary. We aim to complete the investigation within ten working days from the date of receipt of the complaint

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4.3. Response: Once the investigation is complete, we will provide a detailed written response to the patient. The response will address the issues raised, outline any findings from the investigation, and propose appropriate resolutions or actions to be taken. If the investigation requires more time, we will notify the patient and provide an estimated timeframe for the response.

4.4. Review and Follow-up: If the patient is dissatisfied with the initial response, they can request a further review of the complaint. This request should be made within ten working days of receiving the initial response. The review will be conducted by a senior member of staff who was not involved in the initial investigation. A written response outlining the findings of the review will be provided to the patient within ten working days of the request.

## **5. External Bodies**

If the patient remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal complaint's procedure, they have the option to escalate their complaint to an external body. For NHS patients, they can contact the NHS England Customer Contact Centre or the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman. For private patients, they can contact the Dental Complaints Service or the General Dental Council.

## **6. Confidentiality**

All complaints will be handled sensitively and in strict confidence. The information disclosed during the complaint's procedure will only be used for the purpose of investigating and resolving the complaint.

## **7. Records**

A record of all complaints received, including details of the complaint, actions taken, and any resolutions reached, will be maintained by the practice. These records will be kept confidential and stored securely in accordance with data protection regulations.

## **8. Communication**

Patients will be kept informed throughout the complaints procedure regarding the progress of their complaint, including any delays or changes to the anticipated timeframe for response.

## 9. Continuous Improvement

We view complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve our services. All feedback received through the complaints procedure will be carefully considered, and necessary actions will be taken to prevent similar issues from recurring in the future. This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with any applicable regulatory requirements.

Complaining to NHS England: We hope that if you have a problem, you will use our practice complaints procedure. We believe this will give us the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong and an opportunity to improve our practice. This does not affect your right to approach the NHS England if you feel you cannot raise your complaint with us, or you are dissatisfied with the result of our investigation. Should you wish to make a direct complaint to NHS England please contact:

NHS England Customer Support Centre, PO Box 16738, Redditch, B97 9PT, Telephone: 03003112233 (Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm, excluding English Bank Holidays) Email: [England.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:England.contactus@nhs.net)

Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP  
Telephone: 0345 015 4033 Email: [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)

Dental Complaints Service, Stephenson House, 2 Cherry Orchard Road, Croydon, CR0 6BA,  
Telephone: 020 8253 0800

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