

Cemaes Bay Dental Practice

PATIENT COMPLAINTS POLICY

We take complaints very seriously indeed and try to ensure that all our patients are pleased with their experience of our service. When patients complain, they should be dealt with courteously and promptly so that the matter is resolved as quickly as possible.

Our aim is to react to complaints in the way in which we, ourselves, would want a complaint to be dealt with. We learn from every mistake that we make and we respond to customers' concerns in a caring and sensitive way.

1. The practice owner, Mr David Meacher will have an overview of all complaints arrangements.
2. The person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service which we provide is the Complaints Officer, Mrs. Lisa Ward. She will also oversee the day to day management of the complaints arrangements.
3. If a patient complains on the telephone or personally at the practice, we will listen to their complaint and offer to refer him or her to the Complaints Officer. If the Complaints Officer is not available at the time, arrangements will be made for the patient to discuss the complaint with the complaints officer at a mutually convenient and agreed time. The member of staff will take brief details of the complaint and pass them on. If we cannot arrange this within a reasonable period (normally 48 hours), or if the patient does not wish to wait to discuss the matter, arrangements will be made for an appropriate member of the team to deal with the issue.
4. If the patient complains in writing, the letter will be passed on immediately to the Complaints Officer, or if unavailable, Mr David Meacher.
5. In any case, if the person complaining is not the patient, we must have the personal consent of the patient before any aspect of the case can be discussed. In the case of a minor, the consent of a person with parental responsibility is required.
6. If a complaint is about any aspect of clinical care or associated charges it will normally be referred to the Practice Owner, unless the practice owner is involved when the matter will be investigated by another dentist at the practice.

7. We will acknowledge the patient's complaint in writing and enclose a copy of this code of practice as soon as possible, normally within two working days. We will seek to investigate the complaint within ten working days of receipt to give an explanation of the circumstances which led to the complaint. 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.
8. We will confirm the decision about the complaint in writing immediately after completing our investigation.
9. Proper and comprehensive records of any complaint received are maintained and stored securely in a separate location to general patient files
10. If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedure then the complaint can be referred to the following organisations:
 - The Ombudsman Wales, 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed, CF35 5LJ (08456 010987)
 - Health Inspectorate Wales, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, Welsh Government, Rhydycar Business Park, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1UZ (0300 062 8163) (For complaints about private treatment)
 - The Healthcare Commission, Finsbury Tower, 103-105 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8TG (www.healthcarecommission.org.uk)
 - The Dental Complaints Service (08456 120 540) for complaints about private treatment
 - The General Dental Council, 37 Wimpole Street, London, W1M 8DQ (the dentists' registration body)

Advice about NHS complaints can also be obtained from:

- The Concerns Team, Ysbyty Gwynedd Hospital, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2PW 01248 384194 for complaints about NHS treatment.
- Community Health Council, Unit 11, Chestnut Court, Parc Menai, Bangor, Gwynedd. LL57 4FH (01248 679284)