

## **Complaints Policy and Procedure**

### **Our Commitment**

At Rossmore Dental Care we are committed to providing high-quality dental care to all our patients. We take feedback and complaints seriously and view them as an opportunity to learn, improve our services, and maintain trust and transparency with our patients.

We aim to handle all complaints courteously, efficiently, and promptly so that concerns can be resolved as quickly as possible.

The person responsible for handling all complaints in the practice is **Alyson Graham**

### **How to Make a Complaint**

We hope that most issues can be resolved quickly and informally, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned.

If your concern cannot be resolved this way, or you would prefer to make a formal complaint, you may do so verbally, in writing, or by email.

### **Complaints Made Verbally**

If you make a complaint in person or by telephone:

- We will listen to your concerns and, where possible, attempt to resolve them immediately.
- If the Complaints Lead is not available, a team member will record your details and a brief description of your complaint.
- Your complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days, and arrangements will be made for the Complaints Lead to contact you directly.

### **Complaints Made in Writing or by Email**

Written and emailed complaints will be passed immediately to the Complaints Lead, who will acknowledge receipt within 3 working days of receiving your correspondence.

### **Investigation and Response**

- We will acknowledge your complaint within two working days
- We aim investigate your complaint within 10 working days that you raised your complaint with us, we will then be able to give you an explanation or offer a meeting with those involved.
- If the investigation is likely to take longer (for example, where clinical advice is required), we will inform you of the reason for the delay and agree on an updated timescale with you.
- If your complaint involves clinical care or treatment, the matter will usually be referred to the treating dentist, unless you specifically request otherwise.
- Once our investigation is complete, we will contact you via your preferred method (letter, email, or telephone) to share our findings and any actions taken.

Where necessary, we may seek advice from our indemnity provider, insurer, or legal adviser to ensure a fair and compliant response. In such cases, only relevant information will be shared, and confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

## **Confidentiality**

All complaints are treated in the strictest confidence. Patient records will remain confidential, and only those involved in investigating or resolving your complaint will have access to the necessary information.

## **Learning from Complaints**

We record all complaints centrally and regularly review them as part of our governance and quality improvement processes. This ensures we identify any trends, improve our services, and share learning across the team.

## **Time Limits for Making a Complaint**

Complaints should normally be made **within 12 months** of the incident or the date the issue came to your attention.

However, we will always consider reasonable exceptions if there are valid reasons for the delay.

## **If You Are Not Satisfied**

We hope that, if you have a problem, you will use our practice complaints procedure first. We believe this gives us the best chance to put things right and improve our services.

However, if you remain dissatisfied, you may contact one of the following independent bodies:

**The NHS:** If you would rather not go directly to your practice, and your treatment is provided by the NHS, you can contact your local ICB, which is responsible for NHS dental services.

## **Strategic plan and performance**

DOH Complaints office

12-22 Linenhall Street

Belfast

BT28BS

**TEL:02895363893**

**SPPGcommunications@hscni.net**

## **The Parliamentary and Northern Ireland Health Service Ombudsman**

Northern Ireland ombudsman

Freepost nipso

Progressive house

22 Wellington Place

Belfast

BT16HN

Telephone: 0800343424

Website: [www.nipso.org.uk/nipso](http://www.nipso.org.uk/nipso)

**Private Patients: The Dental Complaints Service handles complaints made by private patients.**

The Dental Complaints Service

37 Wimpole Street

London

W1G8DQ

Telephone: 0208 253 0800 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

Website: <https://dcs.gdc-uk.org/>

### **The GDC**

Telephone: 020 7167 6000

Website: <https://contactus.gdc-uk.org/Complaint/Process/13>

### **Oversight Regulator- RQIA**

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority

James House

2-4 Cormac Avenue

Gasworks

Belfast

BT73JA

### **Document Control**

|                  |                                 |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Title:</b>    | Complaints Policy and Procedure |
| <b>Author/s:</b> | DCME Team                       |
| <b>Owner:</b>    | DCME Team                       |

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| Change History |        |          |                 |                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------|--------|----------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Version        | Status | Date     | Author / Editor | Details of Change<br>(Brief detailed summary of all updates/changes)                                                            |
| 0.1            | Final  | 12.07.23 | DCME            | New Template Created                                                                                                            |
| 0.2            | Final  | 05.08.24 | HD              | Updated template. Separated complaints that are made verbally and in writing. Clarified the role of the ICB for NHS complaints. |
| 0.3            | Final  | 09.09.24 | HD              | Added timeframe for raising complaints                                                                                          |
| 0.4            | Final  | Oct 25   | PG              | Re-write of original policy, same content, laid out differently for the patients benefit                                        |
|                |        |          |                 |                                                                                                                                 |

The latest approved version of this document supersedes all other versions, upon receipt of the latest approved version all other versions should be destroyed, unless specifically stated that previous version(s) are to remain extant. If in any doubt, please contact the document Author.

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