

Complaints Guidance

At Doncaster Road Dental Practice, we always strive to give you the best possible care and treatment. We value all comments, good or bad, to help us improve our service. If you are not happy about anything, please let us know.

➤ **How can I make a comment?**

We like to know what our patients think of our service and facilities. There are a variety of ways that you can let us know such as comment cards, patient satisfaction surveys, email, writing a letter or simply by telling us during your visit. All comments are reviewed and acted upon where practicable. They are also discussed during practice meetings so that the whole dental team can learn from them.

➤ **What can I complain about?**

Things you can complain about include:

- Care or treatment you have had or are having at the practice
- Anything to do with the practice environment
- Any member of staff involved in your care

If your complaint also involves another organisation, we will not be able to deal with it.

➤ **Who can complain?**

You can complain if you have:

- Had or are having care or treatment at the practice
- Visited or used our services or facilities

You can complain for someone else if you:

- Have their written agreement
- Are a child's parent, guardian or main carer and your child is not mature enough to understand how to make a complaint
- Have a welfare power of attorney or a welfare guardianship order for someone who cannot make decisions for themselves, and the order specifies that you have the power to make a complaint about health care

- Are a relative of, or had a relationship with, a patient who has died and you were concerned about how they were treated before they died
- Are acting as an advocate for the patient

➤ **How long do I have to make a complaint?**

We have a time limit for complaints. Normally, you must make your complaint within 12 months of the event you want to complain about, or within 12 months of you finding out that you have a reason to complain - but no longer than 12 months after the event.

However, if you feel the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please speak to the person dealing with the complaint. Sometimes we can accept a complaint after the time limit.

➤ **What should I do if I want to complain?**

If you can, first talk to a member of staff involved in your care. If you do this, we can try to sort out your complaint on the spot. If you are not able to do this you can ask to speak to a senior member of staff or the complaints manager.

You can complain in person, by phone, or in writing. When complaining, you should give:

- Your full name and address (and the patient's name and address if you are complaining for them)
- As much helpful information as possible about what happened, where it happened and when

➤ **Who should I complain to?**

You should always first contact us. We have a dedicated complaints manager who will deal with all complaints in a confidential and professional manner.

➤ **What happens after I have complained?**

We will write to you within three working days of receiving your complaint. This letter will:

- Tell you what action we will take to look into your complaint
- Offer you the chance to talk to a member of staff about the complaint

We will keep information about you confidential. To investigate your complaint, we may have to talk to staff about you or show them your health records. If you do not want us to share information from your health records, you should tell us when you make your complaint, but bear in mind that this may make it more difficult to look into your complaint. We will make a record of your details and complaint, and use it to help us make services better.

➤ **When will I get a final response?**

We will write to you with a full response within 10 working days of receiving your complaint. In some cases, we may need more time to give you a full response and won't be able to keep to these timescales. If this happens, we will let you know and tell you why.

In our response we will let you know the result of our investigation. We will:

- Show that we have looked into your complaint and reply to all the points raised in it
- Offer you an apology where things have gone wrong
- Explain what we will do to stop what you complained about happening again
- If necessary, explain why nothing more can be done about some parts of your complaint
- Offer you the chance to talk to a member of staff if there is anything in the letter you don't understand
- Include information about who else you can contact in case you are unhappy with our response and want to take things further

➤ **Who can help me with my complaint?**

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Every NHS trust has a Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). It is not part of the NHS complaints procedure but they offer confidential advice and support, provide information about the complaints procedure, listen to your concerns and help sort out your queries. Please see the patient information leaflet for your local PALS contact details.

The Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)

The Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) provides support to people who want to complain about their NHS treatment. ICAS is totally independent of the NHS and the service is free and confidential to all NHS



patients. ICAS can help them deal with the complaints process; provide a self help pack to enable them to deal with their own complaint and generally support them through the process. Services are provided by government region.

NHS England dedicated complaints service

Address: NHS England, PO Box 16738, Redditch, B97 9PT
Tel: 0300 31122 33
Email: nhscommissioninaboard@hscic.gov.uk

➤ **What if I change my mind after I have complained?**

You can change your mind about making a complaint at any time. Please let us know as soon as possible. It would be helpful if you could write and tell us, but otherwise a phone call will do.

➤ **What if I am not happy about the way the practice has handled my complaint?**

NHS Patients

If the practice has fully investigated your complaint and you are still not happy, you can ask the Ombudsman to consider your complaint further.

Address: The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP
Tel: 0345 015 4033 (Mon - Fri 8.30am to 5.30pm)
Fax: 0300 0614000
Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk
Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

Private Patients

Address: The Dental Complaints Service, The Lansdowne Building, 2 Lansdowne Road, Croydon, CR9 2ER
Tel: 0845 120 540
Website: www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk
Email: info@dentalcomplaints.org.uk