

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HANDLING PATIENT COMPLAINTS

- **All of your feedback is important to us, and we want to know what went well and what could be done better to help us improve and learn**
- **We want to make it easy for you to raise a concern or complain, if you need to and take feedback and complaints seriously**
- **We follow a complaints procedure and will keep you informed**
- **We will try to answer all your questions sympathetically and deal with any concerns**
- **We want you to have a positive experience if you make a complaint**
- **Your feedback helps us to learn from the incident and improve our service**

We want our service to meet your expectations. If you have a concern or complaint about any aspect of our service, we want to know what mistakes we made and identify how we can improve to ensure that we meet your expectations in future. Our aim is to learn from any feedback we receive and improve the service we provide to our patients.

We will deal with complaints courteously and promptly and aim to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. Our Complaints Manager deals with all complaints and is the person responsible for ensuring compliance with our complaint's procedure.

Note: Complaints in relation to accessing or impact on services as a direct result of the practice response to the COVID-19 pandemic, will not be investigated under this Complaints Procedure.

Making a complaint

If you wish to make a complaint or simply let us know how we could have done better, please contact our Complaints Manager: Jayne Magee (also responsible for compliance with our complaints procedure)

- By telephone on 028 38 322441
- By email at info@mageedentalcare.co.uk
- By letter to Jayne Magee, mageedentalcare, 18 – 24 William Street, Lurgan, County Armagh, BT66 6JA
- In person.

The NHS recommend that a complaint should be made within 6 months of the cause or when the cause was first noticed (but within 12 months of the date of the cause).

The Complaints Manager usually works at the practice from Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm and will endeavour to be available during these times. You may find it more convenient to make an appointment with her to ensure that she can dedicate sufficient time to meet with you.

If you contact the practice to make a complaint and the Complaints Manager is not available, we will arrange a convenient time for her to contact you.

We will ask you for brief details of your complaint so that the Complaints Manager can gather any useful information before contacting you. You will be given a copy of the notes made for the Complaints Manager.

If the matter requires a more immediate response, we will arrange for a senior member of the dental team to deal with it.

If your complaint is about your dental treatment or the fee charged, we will usually ask the dentist concerned to contact you, unless you do not want this.

Complaint about dental treatment or associated charges: If a complaint is about any aspect of clinical care or associated charges it will normally be referred to the dentist concerned to discuss with you as soon as possible, unless you do not want this.

What happens next

- a) **Acknowledgment:** We will acknowledge your complaint in writing within 3 working days from when the complaint was received and will send you a copy of this Code of Practice.

We will offer to discuss the complaint with you and will ask how you would like to be kept informed of developments eg. by telephone, face-to-face meetings, email or letter.

We will let you know how we will deal with your complaint and the likely time that the investigation will take to complete. If you do not wish to discuss the complaint further, we will still let you know the expected timescale for completing the investigation.

Independent bodies that provide advice include:

- the Patient and Client Council (PCC), Telephone 0800 917 0222, Email info.pcc@hscni.net or www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net
- the HSC Board, Southern Trust, Central Reporting Point for Complaints, The Maples, Craigavon Area Hospital, 68 Lurgan Road, Portadown BT63 5QQ on Tel: 028 3861 4150 or email: complaints@southerntrust.hscni.net
- the HSC Board, 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BS on Tel: 028 9536 3893 or email: complaints.hscb@hscni.net

- b) **Investigation:** We will investigate your complaint within 10 working days from receipt of the complaint and as far as is reasonably practicable, will let you know how our investigation is progressing. We will let you know you if longer time is needed and the reason. If further details are needed from you a meeting may be useful and the outcome of the meeting will be confirmed in writing to you.

If the investigation requires your records to be disclosed to a person other than a member of our practice team or our legal representative(s), we will inform you of this and ask for your written consent to disclose.

Before providing our written response, we will invite you to a meeting to discuss the findings of our investigation.

- c) **Responding:** On completion of our investigation we will provide you with a full written response (signed by the complaints manager), unless you have told us that you do not wish for further communication. The report will explain how we considered each complaint, the conclusions we reached for each part of your complaint, details of any necessary remedial action we have taken and whether further action is needed to prevent the issue reoccurring. The complaints manager also will contact you to ensure you have received the response.

If you are not satisfied

If you are not satisfied, you can contact us again and we will do our best to resolve your concerns.

If your complaint was about your dental treatment and you are not satisfied with the result of our investigation, you can take the matter up with the relevant organisation:

For complaints about NHS treatment - The Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO), Progressive House, 33 Wellington Place, Belfast BT1 6HN Tel: 0800 343 424 Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk website: www.nipso.org.uk

We will write to you within 2 weeks of the date on which our internal complaints process is exhausted, stating that it has been exhausted and that you may wish to refer the matter to NIPSO when you must bring the complaint within 6 months of completion of our internal complaints process.

For complaints about private treatment: these should be referred to The Dental Complaints Service, 37 Wimpole Street, London W1G 8DQ Telephone: 020 8253 0800 (Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm)



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(Telephone) 028 38 322441
Email info@mageedentalcare.co.uk
Website <http://mageedentalcare.co.uk>
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/mageedentalcare>

Complaints about professional misconduct should be referred to The General Dental Council, 37 Wimpole Street, London, W1M 8DQ Telephone: 020 8253 0800 (Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm)

Records: We keep securely full and comprehensive records of all complaints, investigations and responses, and keep them separate to the patient's clinical records. Communications will be marked "private and confidential" or "personal" and sent first class. We will only respond by email if you have first emailed us and confirmed that you are happy to receive email responses.

Other matters

External Reporting:

- Anonymised copies of each NHS complaint and its corresponding response will be sent to the Complaints Manager, Health and Social Care Board (Eastern Office) (HSCB), 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS within 3 working days of the written response being issued to the complainant
- A statement containing a summary of NHS and private complaints made during the preceding 15 months and the action taken in response must be sent to the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA), 9th floor, Riverside Tower, 5 Lanyon Place, Belfast, BT1 3BT Tel: 028 90 517500

Legal action

Even if your initial communication is through a solicitor's letter, we will not infer that you have decided to take legal action, but we still reserve the right to seek independent legal and/or professional indemnity advice. If you threaten legal action or issue a court claim against us, the complaint process will cease and you will be advised of this in writing. We will also seek independent legal and/or professional indemnity advice.