



Complaints Policy and Procedure

Our Commitment

At The Peaks Dental & Implant Centre 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 **Majid Shahab**

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.

Complaints Handling Process

The practice follows the steps below when managing complaints:

Step 1 – Receipt of Complaint

The complaint will be received by a member of staff and passed to the Complaints Lead as soon as possible.

Step 2 – Acknowledgement

The complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days. The complainant will be informed who is handling the complaint and how they can be contacted.

Step 3 – Initial Assessment

The Complaints Lead will review the complaint, identify any immediate risks or concerns, determine whether further information is required and agree the scope of the investigation.

Step 4 – Investigation

Relevant records, documentation and staff accounts will be reviewed. Where appropriate, clinical advice may be sought. The complainant may be contacted if clarification or further information is required.

Step 5 – Progress Updates

If the investigation cannot be completed within 10 working days, the complainant will be informed of the reason for the delay and provided with regular updates until the complaint is concluded.

Step 6 – Outcome

The complainant will receive a written response outlining:

- The findings of the investigation
- Any apology where appropriate
- Any lessons learned
- Any actions taken or planned

Step 7 – Escalation

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they will be informed of the relevant external organisations available to review their concerns.

Step 8 – Learning and Improvement

The complaint will be reviewed through the practice governance process to identify trends, learning opportunities and service improvements.

Investigation and Response

- We will make every effort to resolve your complaint within 10 working days of acknowledgment.
- 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.

The Complaints Lead will keep the complainant informed throughout the process and provide progress updates at agreed intervals, particularly where investigations are ongoing or external advice is being sought.

Complaints Involving the Registered Manager or Practice Manager

Where a complaint is made about the Registered Manager, Practice Manager, or another member of the senior management team responsible for handling complaints, the practice will ensure the complaint is managed impartially and without conflict of interest.

In such circumstances:

- The complaint will be escalated to an alternative senior person within the organisation (e.g. Clinical Director, Practice Owner, or Deputy Complaints Lead not involved in the issue).
- Where no appropriate internal person is available, the complaint may be referred to an external adviser or relevant governing body for independent review.
- The complainant will be informed of who will be handling their complaint and provided with clear contact details.
- All complaints will continue to be handled in line with the practice complaints procedure, ensuring fairness, transparency, and timely response.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they will be advised of their right to escalate the complaint to the appropriate external body (e.g. NHS complaints body, Dental Complaints Service for private care, or relevant regulator).

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.

Accessible Information

We ensure that patients receive information in formats they can understand and are provided with any communication support they need throughout the complaints process. We comply with the Equality Act 2010, and The Accessible Information Standards to ensure patients don't receive any discrimination based on protected characteristics.

Cooperation with Independent Reviews

The practice will cooperate fully with any independent review, investigation or complaint assessment undertaken by an external organisation, regulator, commissioner, ombudsman, indemnity provider or complaints body.

This includes providing relevant records, documentation, statements and information where lawful and appropriate to do so. The practice will implement any recommendations arising from independent reviews where appropriate and will use findings to support service improvement.

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.

Monitoring the Complaints Process

The practice will monitor the effectiveness of its complaints system by reviewing:

- Number and type of complaints received
- Complaint response times
- Themes and trends
- Patient feedback
- Outcomes of investigations
- Learning and improvement actions
- Compliance with complaint handling timescales

Findings will be discussed during governance meetings and used to improve patient experience, safety and quality of care.

Where trends, recurring themes or significant concerns are identified, action plans will be developed, implemented and monitored to ensure improvements are made and sustain

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 CQC: The CQC don't get directly involved with complaints made to the practice. They do, however, encourage giving feedback to service providers.

To send feedback to the CQC please go to: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/give-feedback-on-care>

Telephone: 03000 616161 (Mon to Fri, 8.30am - 5.30pm Excluding Bank Holidays)

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

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

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

The GDC

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

Document Control

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Version	Status	Date	Author / Editor	Details of Change (Brief detailed summary of all updates/changes)
0.1	Final	12.07.23	DCME	New Template Created

0.2	Final	05.07.24	HD	Updated template to include more information on how to complain. 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 2025	PG	Re-write of original policy, same content, laid out differently for the patients benefit
0.5	Final	June 2026	HD	Added: • complaints handling process • info on complaints involving the RM or PM. • data protection complaints. • accessible information • cooperation with independent reviews • monitoring the complaints process

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 any doubt, please contact the document Author.

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