

***POLICY FOR HANDLING PATIENT COMPLAINTS***  
***at the Specialist Orthodontic Referral Centre, 37 East Street, Fareham, PO16 0DF***  
***01329 284 419***

In this practice we take complaints very seriously indeed and try to ensure that all patients are pleased with their experience of our service. When patients complain, they are dealt with courteously and promptly so that the matter is resolved as quickly as possible. This procedure is based on these objectives.

Our aim is to react to complaints in the way in which we would want our complaint about a service to be handled. We learn from every mistake that we make and we respond to patients' concerns in a caring and sensitive way.

1. The person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service we provide is:  
David Gale
2. If a patient complains on the telephone or at the reception desk, we will listen to his or her complaint and offer to refer him or her to Sarah Buckley, Practice Nursing Manager immediately.

If Sarah Buckley is not available at the time, then the patient will be told when he or she will be able to talk to the orthodontist and arrangements will be made for this to happen. The member of staff will take brief details of the complaint and pass them on. If we cannot arrange this within a reasonable period or if the patient does not wish to wait to discuss the matter, arrangements will be made for someone else to deal with it.

3. If the patient complains in writing the letter will be passed on immediately to: David Gale
4. If a complaint is about any aspect of clinical care or associated fees it will normally be referred to the orthodontist, unless the patient does not want this to happen.
5. 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 the complaint being received to give an explanation of the circumstances, which led to the complaint. 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.
6. We will confirm the decision about the complaint in writing to the patient immediately after completing our investigation.
7. Proper and comprehensive reports are kept of any complaint received.

If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedure then details will be provided of how to take the complaint further through the regulatory bodies.