



Address: Woodcock Street, Castle Cary  
Postcode: BA7 7BJ, Somerset  
Telephone number: 01963 350 123  
Email: [info@bramcotedentalpractice.co.uk](mailto:info@bramcotedentalpractice.co.uk)

## Complaints handling policy (NHS treatment)

### Bramcote Dental Practice

#### Code of practice for patient complaints

The Bramcote Dental Practice takes complaints very seriously and try to ensure that all our patients are pleased with their experience of our service.

The GDC Standards document states that the patients have a right to expect their concerns or complaints to be acknowledged, listened to, and dealt with promptly. Good communication skills and an open honest approach in line with duty of candor requirements are important when dealing with a compliment, and a sympathetic and understanding manner will often diffuse what could be a tense situation. All complaints should be resolved at the earliest opportunity and often all that is required by the patient is an apology.

The Bramcote Dental Practice is dealing complaints calmly and courteously. The complaint should be resolved efficiently, effectively, and politely as possible. Inform the patient if more time is required to investigate. Give the patient regular updates on progress when the timescales cannot be followed. Deal with all the points raised and offer solutions to each where possible.

The Bramcote Dental Practice advice to offer an apology and a practical solution where appropriate. The solution should be fair and correct. The complaint should be responded to the patient in writing in an accurate and legible manner.

Any complaint, can offer an opportunity to improve the management of the practice, ensuring that the same mistake, which may have caused other patients to leave the practice, does not happened again.

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.

- The persons responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service that he/she provides is the associate dentist himself. The Owner is the Complaints Manager and can intermediate the communications between patients and associate dentist.
  - The Complaints Manager will deal with employed dentists' complaints
1. The person responsible for dealing with any complaint about the service is the dentist itself. The dentist has the support of the Practice Manager and the Practice Owner.
  2. If a patient complains by telephone or in person, we will listen to their complaint and offer to refer him or her to the Complaints Manager immediately. If the Complaints Manager is not available at the time, then the patient will be told when they will be able to talk to the Complaints Manager and arrangements will be made for this to happen. The member of staff will make a written record of your complaint and provide the patient with a copy as well as passing it on to the Complaints Manager. 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 or by e-mail it will be passed on immediately to the Complaints Manager.
  4. If a complaint is about any aspect of clinical care or associated charges it will normally be referred to the dentist concerned, 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 three working days. We will offer to discuss the complaint at a time agreed with the patient, asking how the patient would like to be kept informed of developments, for example, by telephone, face to face meetings, letters or e-mail. We will inform the patient about how the complaint will be handled and the likely time that the investigation will take to be completed. If the patient does not wish to discuss the complaint, we will still inform them of the expected timescale for completing the process.
  6. We will seek to investigate the complaint speedily and efficiently and we will keep the patient regularly informed, as far as is reasonably practicable, as to the progress of the investigation. Investigations will normally be completed within six months.
  7. When we have completed our investigation, we will provide the patient with a full written report. The report will include an explanation of how the complaint has been considered, the conclusions reached in respect of each specific part of the complaint, details of any necessary remedial action and whether the practice is satisfied with any action it has already taken or will be taking as a result of the complaint.
  8. Proper and comprehensive records are kept of any complaint received as well as any actions taken to improve services as a consequence of a complaint
  9. If patients are not satisfied with the result of our procedure then a complaint may be referred to:
    - NHS England – South (South West) (4<sup>th</sup> Floor, South Plaza, Marlborough Street, Bristol BS1 3NX) or the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank London SW1P 4QP, telephone: 0345 015 4033 or [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk) for complaints about NHS treatment.

- The Dental Complaints Service, The Lansdowne Building, 2 Lansdowne Road, Croydon, Greater London CR9 2ER, 08456 120 540 or [www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk](http://www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk) for complaints about private treatment.
- The General Dental Council, 37 Wimpole Street, London, W1M 8DQ the dentists' registration body.

# Annual NHS complaints report (England)

It is important that all practices keep records of complaints and are able to provide details to their primary care trust or health board. Practices in England, however, must compile an annual report:

## Annual NHS complaints report for the financial year ending 31 March [insert year]<sup>i</sup>

Name of Contractor:

Contract number:

Practice name:

Practice address:

Number of NHS complaints received during the year

Number of NHS complaints received during the year, which I decided were well-founded

Number of NHS complaints, which I have been informed have been referred to the Health Services Commissioner or Local Commissioner (as appropriate)

Summary of NHS complaints received<sup>ii</sup>:

Signed by contractor/for and on behalf of contractor\*

Print name:

Date:

<sup>i</sup> A copy of this report is to be sent to your PCT as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of the financial year

<sup>ii</sup> Include subject matter of NHS complaint(s), any matters of general importance arising out of the NHS complaint(s) or the way in which they were handled and any matters or action which has been or is to be taken to improve services as a consequence of the NHS complaint(s).

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\* delete as appropriate