**Code of Practice for Patient Complaints**

 We want all our patients to be pleased with the service that they receive, so we take complaints seriously. If a patient makes a complaint, we will deal with it promptly and courteously. Our aim is to resolve the matter as quickly as possible following the agreed procedure and, wherever possible, to the satisfaction of the patient. A complaint might indicate a failing on our part, which we can learn from and improve our service. We will adopt a ‘no blame’ approach when investigating a complaint and especially where individuals are identified, with the aim of reaching a satisfactory conclusion. We will be polite and respectful to our patients.

**Practice procedure**

1. The practice owner, Sarah Gatley, is responsible for dealing with all complaints about our service.

2. If a patient makes a complaint in person or by telephone, the member of staff receiving the complaint makes an initial record of their concerns. The patient is given a copy of the record and the original is passed to Sarah Gatley. If Sarah Gatley is available, the patient is asked whether they would like to see her immediately. Otherwise the patient is advised when the owner will make contact to arrange a meeting in person or by telephone.

3. If the patient complains in writing or by email, the complaint will be passed immediately to Sarah Gatley.

 4. Complaints about clinical care or the amount charged for treatment will be referred to the dentist concerned, unless the patient requests otherwise.

 5. All complaints are acknowledged in writing as soon as possible but within two working days. A copy of this code of practice will be sent with the acknowledgement. If the patient has not yet discussed the matter with the owner, they will be offered the opportunity to do so and also be asked how they would like to be kept informed of developments – by letter, email, telephone or face-to-face meetings. The patient will also be advised of the process we will follow in resolving the complaint and the anticipated timescale.

 6. We will investigate the complaint speedily and efficiently and, as far as reasonably practicable, will keep the patient informed of our progress. Investigations will normally be completed within six months.

7. On completion of our investigation, we will provide the patient with a full written report, which 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 will be kept of any complaint received as well as any action taken to improve services as a consequence of a complaint.

 9. If a patient is not satisfied with the result, the complaint may be referred to:

**NHS**:

Chief Executive,

Cardiff & Vale University Health Board Headquarters,

University Hospital of Wales,

Heath Park,

Cardiff

CF14 4XY

Tel: 02920 748913

Email: concerns@wales.nhs.uk

**Private**:

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales,

Rhydycar Business Park,

Merthyr Tydfil,

CF48 1UZ

Tel: 0300 062 8163

**GDC (dental regulator):**

General Dental Council,

37 Wimpole Street,

London,

W1G 8DQ

Tel: 020 7167 6000