



# Making a complaint about private dental care



Funded by the General Dental Council

**General  
Dental  
Council**

protecting patients,  
regulating the dental team

[www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk](http://www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk)

‘Everybody  
was very helpful.  
They explained  
everything clearly.  
It was very fair.’

**Cecilia Andrews, patient**

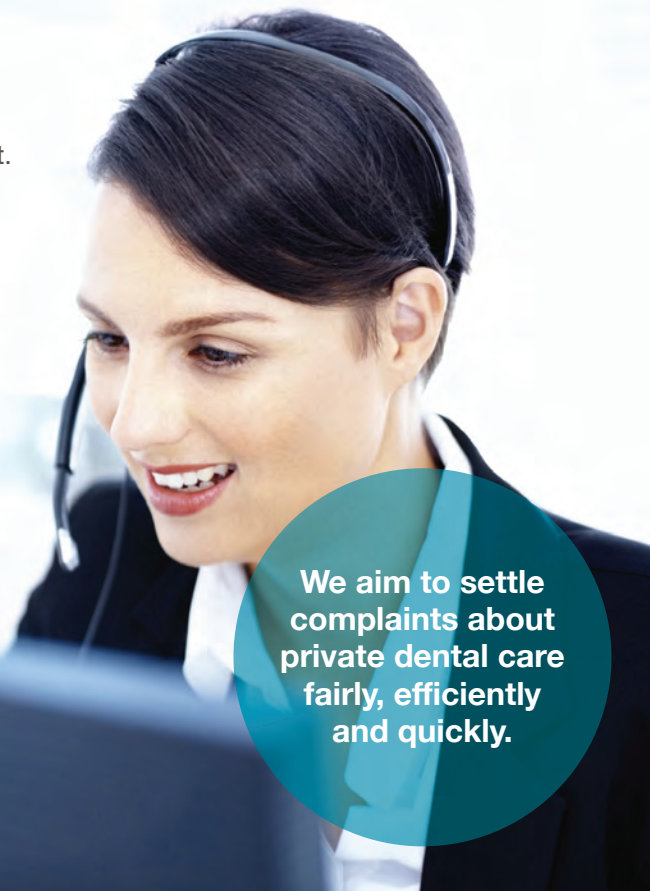
## Who we are

We are a team of trained advisors who aim to help private dental patients and dental professionals settle complaints about private dental care. We provide a free, impartial service and are funded by the General Dental Council, the organisation that regulates dental professionals in the UK.

We aim to settle complaints about private dental care fairly, efficiently and quickly. We work with patients and dental professionals to reach a solution that both sides are happy with, whether that's remedial treatment (treatment to put right previous dental work), a refund, or referral to another professional. We cannot award or recommend compensation.

## Our principles

- Our service is free.
- We are independent of the NHS and the Government.
- We will treat you fairly, whatever your background or circumstances.
- We do not take sides.



**We aim to settle complaints about private dental care fairly, efficiently and quickly.**

# ‘We try to be imaginative and flexible in helping to resolve a complaint.’

**Emran Miah, complaints officer**

## **What we can help with**

If you have a complaint about private dental care received in the UK, but have been unable to sort it out with the dental professional, we may be able to help.

We can look into private complaints that are raised with us within 12 months of the treatment taking place or within 12 months of becoming aware that you have something to complain about.


We may be able to assist you in seeking:

- An explanation and/or apology for what has happened;
- A full or partial refund of fees in relation to the failed treatment;
- Remedial treatment from your dental professional, if you are both in agreement;
- A contribution towards remedial treatment so that the work can be completed by another dental professional at the same practice or at an alternative practice.

## What we cannot help with

Before sending us your complaint, you should know that there are things we are unable to assist with such as:

- Your private complaint if you have been aware of it for over 12 months and have not raised it with us during that time.
- Complaints about NHS dental care. You should contact NHS England or your local health board if you are in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland. If you have any difficulties in locating the correct number, call us on 020 8253 0800 and we will assist you in finding it.
- Concerns about the ability or behaviour of a dental professional. We recommend that you contact the General Dental Council ([information@gdc-uk.org](mailto:information@gdc-uk.org) or on 020 7167 6000).
- Compensation. We would advise you to seek independent legal advice.

A photograph of a middle-aged man with glasses, wearing a grey suit and a blue tie, gesturing with his hands as if in conversation. He is looking towards a woman whose profile is visible on the right side of the frame. The background is a blurred office setting.

Visit our website  
to find out more  
about organisations  
that can help where  
we can't.

# ‘Working with the Dental Complaints Service meant that issues were resolved quickly and fairly for all.’

**Robert De Villiers, dentist**

## How to make a complaint

We will always suggest that you contact your dental professional and give them the opportunity to resolve matters first. In our experience, they often welcome the opportunity to deal with any concerns that you may have.

They should give you the full details of their complaints procedure and try to sort out your complaint. You should try to raise any concerns as soon as possible.

For further advice, phone our **helpline** on **020 8253 0800** or visit our website at **[www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk](http://www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk)**.

## How we deal with your complaint

If you are unable to resolve the matter directly with the dental professional, our complaints officers will work with you both to try and reach a resolution.

We will contact you within two working days of receiving your complaint. We will discuss the matter, ask how you would like the complaint to be resolved and explain how we can assist.

We may be able to help by using only the information provided, or by phoning the dental professional involved. Our service is impartial therefore we do not take sides.

If a resolution can't be reached and both you and the dental professional are in agreement, we would arrange a panel meeting; this is the final stage of our complaints process.



## The panel meeting

The panel consists of two lay members and a dental professional. They will hear both sides of the complaint and work towards facilitating an amicable resolution between you and the dental professional. If an agreement can't be reached, the panel will make a recommendation in order to resolve the complaint.

The panel may recommend one or more of the following:

- A refund of some or all of the fees which you have paid;
- A contribution towards remedial treatment up to the cost of the original treatment;
- That you are provided with an apology;
- That no further action be taken in relation to the complaint;
- That the dental professional reviews their current practices.

We have no formal power to enforce our recommendations, but we expect that they will almost always be followed.

Once the panel meeting has been completed, there is also no appeals process. Therefore any agreement reached or recommendation made is final.



For advice on  
how to complain  
to us phone our  
helpline on  
020 8253 0800

## Helping you resolve private complaints

If you have a complaint about the private dental care you've received in the UK, get in touch.

Telephone: 020 8253 0800 (Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm)

Email: [info@dentalcomplaints.org.uk](mailto:info@dentalcomplaints.org.uk)

Website: [www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk](http://www.dentalcomplaints.org.uk)

Write to:

Dental Complaints Service

37 Wimpole Street

London

W1G 8DQ

We are committed to promoting equal opportunities in all our work. We want to make sure that everyone can access our products and services.

If you would like a copy of this leaflet in a different format (for example, in large print or audio), please contact us.

