

Complaints Procedure

Effective Date: 10 July 2026

Review Date: July 2027

At The Gateway Dental Practice, we are committed to resolving concerns quickly, fairly and compassionately. We encourage patients to tell us if they are unhappy with any aspect of the care or service they have received so that we have the opportunity to listen, respond and improve.

Step 1 – Raise Your Concern

If you have a concern or wish to make a complaint, please contact our Complaints Co-ordinator:

Stephanie Owers

Complaints Co-ordinator
The Gateway Dental Practice
44 Cross Street
Abergavenny
Monmouthshire
NP7 5ER

Telephone: 01873 737737

Email: receptionteamgateway@outlook.com

Concerns can be raised verbally, in writing, by email or in any accessible format. If someone is making a complaint on behalf of a patient, we may require the patient's consent where appropriate.

Step 2 – Acknowledgement

Your complaint will be acknowledged promptly in accordance with the Welsh Government's Listening to People guidance.

Our Complaints Co-ordinator will explain the complaints process, discuss the next steps and become your main point of contact throughout your complaint.

Step 3 – Listening Discussion

Where appropriate, you will be offered the opportunity to participate in a Listening Discussion.

The purpose of the discussion is to:

- Listen to your experience.
- Understand what matters most to you.
- Clarify your concerns.
- Discuss your preferred outcome.
- Explain how your complaint will be managed.
- Identify whether the concern can be resolved quickly.

We aim to offer a Listening Discussion within 10 working days of receiving your complaint wherever possible.

Participation is entirely your choice.

Step 4 – Early Resolution

Where possible, we will try to resolve your concern without the need for a formal investigation.

This may include:

- Providing an explanation.
- Correcting misunderstandings.
- Offering an apology where appropriate.
- Agreeing actions to resolve the concern.
- Identifying improvements to prevent the issue happening again.

If the concern is resolved to your satisfaction, the complaint will be closed and recorded for learning purposes.

Step 5 – Formal Investigation

If your concern cannot be resolved through Early Resolution, or if it is more serious, a formal investigation will be carried out.

The investigation may include:

- Reviewing your dental records.
- Obtaining statements from staff involved.
- Reviewing relevant policies and procedures.
- Clinical review where appropriate.
- Obtaining independent expert advice where necessary.

You will be informed of the investigation process and advised of the expected timescales. If there are any delays, we will keep you updated.

Step 6 – Outcome

Once the investigation has been completed, you will receive a written response explaining:

- What was investigated.
- What we found.
- Any apology where appropriate.
- Actions taken as a result of your complaint.
- Any improvements we have made or plan to make.
- Your options if you remain dissatisfied.

Step 7 – If You Remain Dissatisfied

If you are not satisfied with our final response:

NHS patients may refer their complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

Private patients may contact the Dental Complaints Service for assistance in resolving complaints about private dental care. If the concern relates to a dental professional's fitness to practise, patients may also contact the General Dental Council.

Advocacy and Support

For NHS patients, independent advocacy is available through Llais, which provides free and confidential support throughout the complaints process.

Private patients will be provided with information about the appropriate support services available to them.

Patients may also choose to be supported or represented by a family member, friend or other representative at any stage.

Learning from Complaints

Every complaint is reviewed to identify learning opportunities. We use feedback to improve the quality, safety and patient experience of the services we provide.