Patient Complaints Procedure

Our commitment to you
We are committed to providing a high standard of care and service. If you are unhappy with any aspect of your experience, please let us know so we can put things right.

We take all concerns and complaints seriously. We will:

- Listen and treat you with respect
- Handle your complaint fairly and confidentially
- Keep a record of the concern and use feedback to improve our service

Raising a concern or complaint will not affect your ongoing care or treatment.

How to raise a concern or complaint
You can share your concern or make a complaint in a way that suits you:

- Speak to us in person or call: 01462 434512
- Write to us at: 35-36 Hermitage Road, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 1BY
- Email: Info@vernondental.co.uk

The person responsible for managing complaints is the Practice Manager Alina Martinelli

If your concern relates to the Practice Manager/Registered Manager, you can speak to any member of our team, who will ensure it is passed to the appropriate person. Alternative arrangements are in place to ensure your concern is handled fairly.

If you prefer, you can ask someone to raise a complaint on your behalf, such as a family member or representative.

What happens next?

We will acknowledge your concern
We aim to acknowledge your complaint as soon as possible, and not later than 3 working days after we receive it.

At this stage, an offer to discuss your complaint will be provided. This is a chance for you to understand:

- How your complaint will be handled
- The investigation period
- When a response can be expected

You may choose whether to have this discussion or decline it.

Early Resolution
Where possible, we aim to resolve your concern quickly.

Investigation
If your concern is more complex or cannot be resolved straight away, we will carry out a full investigation.

We will:

- Look into your concerns fairly and carefully
- Keep you updated on progress (usually every 10 days)

Our response
After investigating your complaint, we will write to you to explain:

- What we have looked at
- What we found
- Any action we have taken or will take

We aim to respond as soon as possible, and not later than 6 months, unless we have agreed on a different timeframe with you. If there are any delays, we will let you know and explain why.

Time limits for making a complaint
It is usually helpful to raise your complaint:

- Within 12 months of the event, or
- Within 12 months of becoming aware of the issue

If you contact us after this time, we will still consider your complaint, but we may not be able to resolve it if it cannot be investigated fairly and effectively due to the time that has passed.

If you are not satisfied
We hope to resolve your concerns, but if you remain unhappy, you can obtain further support from:

- The Parliamentary Health Ombudsman (*Complaints regarding NHS treatments*)
  Tel: 0345 015 4033
  Web: Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO)
- Dental Complaints Service (*Complaints regarding Private treatments*)
  Tel: 020 8253 0800
  Web: Dental Complaints Service
- The Care Quality Commission (*Concerns about the practice*)
  Tel: 0300 616161
  Web: Complain about a service or provider
- General Dental Council (*Concerns about a Dental Professional*)
  Tel: 020 7167 6000
  Web: Concerns about dental professionals

Support is also available for concerns relating to financial matters. Please speak to a member of staff for further details.