Patient Complaints and Concerns Procedure

We want everyone who uses our practice to be treated with dignity, fairness, compassion and respect. If you are unhappy or worried about any aspect of your care or the service you have received from a dentist or another member of our team, please tell us. Your experience matters. We will listen, look into what happened, explain our findings, apologise where appropriate and use feedback to improve our service.

How to raise a concern

You can raise a concern verbally or in writing, with any member of the practice team. You do not need to use the word “complaint” or put your concern in writing. If you feel comfortable doing so, speak to the person involved or ask to speak with the Practice Manager. We will try to resolve straightforward concerns promptly and locally where appropriate.

If you would prefer not to speak to the person involved, or the concern cannot be resolved informally, contact the Practice Manager. Please tell us what happened, when it happened, what impact it had on you, and what you would like us to do. We can help you explain your concern and will consider communication needs, disability-related reasonable adjustments, language needs and any difficulty accessing digital services.

Please raise your concern as soon as you can so that the details can be explored. Where a time limit applies, concerns should normally be raised within 12 months of the event, or within 12 months of becoming aware of the issue where the applicable rules allow this. If you are outside these times, please contact us anyway; we will consider the circumstances and explain the available options.

What happens next for NHS care

For NHS care, we follow the NHS Wales “Listening to People” approach, in force from 1 April 2026. The process is intended to make it easier to raise concerns and to ensure people are listened to, supported and kept informed.

- Acknowledgement: we will acknowledge your concern within five working days.
- Listening discussion: after acknowledging your concern, we will offer you a conversation in person, by telephone or by video, so we can understand what matters to you and what outcome you are seeking. You may tell us if you have a preferred format or need support to take part.
- Early resolution: where appropriate, we will try to resolve the concern promptly through an early resolution process, normally within 10 working days. If it cannot be resolved at this stage, we will explain the next steps and whether further investigation is needed.
- Investigation and updates: where further enquiries are needed, we will look into the issues fairly, keep you informed about progress and tell you if the expected timescale changes.
- Outcome: we will provide a clear response in plain language, explain what we found and what action will be taken, and apologise where appropriate. We will aim to provide an outcome within 30 working days where possible; if the matter takes longer, we will keep you updated and explain why.
- Learning: we will consider what the practice can learn and what changes may help prevent the same problem happening again.

Raising a concern will not affect your right to receive care from the practice. We will treat you respectfully throughout and handle information confidentially, sharing it only as needed to consider and respond to the concern.

If you would prefer to contact someone outside the practice

NHS patients may contact Swansea Bay University Health Board’s Listening to People team directly if they do not wish to raise the concern with us, or if they need advice about the process:

Telephone: 01639 684440

Email: SBU.Listening2You@wales.nhs.uk

Website: https://sbuhb.nhs.wales/about-us/complaints-compliments-and-feedback/listening-to-people/

You can ask for support to raise a concern, including advocacy support through Llais, the independent citizen voice body for health and social care in Wales. Please tell us if you need help with communication, interpretation, accessibility or taking part in a discussion.

Private patients

If your concern relates to private dental treatment, you may contact the Dental Complaints Service:

Dental Complaints Service

37 Wimpole Street, London, W1G 8DQ

Telephone: 020 8253 0800

Online form: https://contactus.gdc-uk.org/dcs/Complaint/PrivatePatients

The NHS Wales Listening to People process applies to concerns about NHS care. If you are unsure which route applies to your concern, please ask the Practice Manager or contact the relevant external service for guidance.

If you are unhappy with the response from the Health Board/ Dental Complaints Service, then you can contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales:

1, Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed, CF35 5LJ

Teleophone: 0300 790 0203

Online form: www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Complaining on behalf of someone else

We respect confidentiality. If you raise a concern on behalf of another person, we will usually need their permission before discussing their personal information with you. We may ask for written consent, unless the person is unable to provide it or another lawful basis applies. We will discuss with you what information or evidence is needed and consider any support requirements.