

# APPEALS

## INTRODUCTION

There are times when the practice has followed its policies and procedures but a patient feels that there are mitigating circumstances which should be taken into consideration. This is when the patient should make an appeal. The appeals manager is responsible for the appeals process.

## WHAT CAN BE APPEALED?

A patient can appeal the result of any practice decision which has been made in line with its policies and procedures. This includes failed appointment charges and decisions to decline further NHS services.

## HOW TO APPEAL

Appeals can be made in writing (by letter or email), via telephone or in person.

All appeals in writing should be addressed to "the appeals manager". Failure to address to "the appeals manager" could delay the acknowledgement of the appeal. Written appeals by letter should be sent to the practice at Thornhill Dental, 4 Edge Lane, Thornhill, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, WF12 0QR. Written appeals by email should be sent to [hello@terrificsmiles.co.uk](mailto:hello@terrificsmiles.co.uk).

If the appellant would like to make an appeal in person or via telephone, they should advise a member of the practice team. The appeals manager will be informed of the request to make an appeal and contact the appellant to arrange a mutually convenient time to listen to the appeal.

During the meeting or telephone conversation to hear the appeal, the appeals manager will make notes on the details of the appeal and may ask questions in order to fully understand the appeal. The appeals manager will not provide an outcome, resolution or explanation at this meeting or during the telephone conversation. They will use the information gathered to investigate the appeal and provide a full response.

A deputy appeals manager will usually accompany the appeals manager to any meetings or telephone conversations. The appellant is welcome to be accompanied by someone for support.

Appeals should be made within 6 months of the event. Appeals made after this time will be rejected by the appeals manager.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RESOLUTION

The appeals manager or deputy will acknowledge the appeal no later than the 3rd working day after it is received. The appeal will usually be acknowledged via the same method to which it was received, unless the appellant requests it to be acknowledged by a different method.

The timescale for investigating and providing a response to appeal will depend on the complexity of the appeal. An expected timescale will have been given in the acknowledgement of the appeal. The practice aims to provide a full response within 14 working days of acknowledging the appeal. When the appeals manager has completed their investigation, they will provide the appellant with a full response. The response will include a summary of the appeal and advise if the appeal has been successful and, if not, why it has been unsuccessful.

## ADVOCACY SERVICES

There are free and independent advocacy services who offer support to help them with matters such as appeals and complaints

For appeals and complaints regarding services provided on an NHS basis, patients should call 0300 330 5454 or visit [nhscomplaintsadvocacy.org](http://nhscomplaintsadvocacy.org) for NHS advocacy services.

For appeals and complaints regarding services provided on a private basis, patients should call 020 8253 0800 or visit [dcs.gdc-uk.org](http://dcs.gdc-uk.org) for private advocacy services.

## REPORTING AND AUDITING

An audit will be undertaken every 12 months by the practice manager of all complaints and appeals received by the practice. This audit will be used to identify any aspects of our dental service which may require improvement or further investigation. Details and outcomes of the audit will be discussed at staff meetings and plans for improvement or training may be outlined.

An anonymised audit of NHS complaints is sent to governing body for NHS services for local and national statistics each year.



**THORNHILL**  
DENTAL



## FEEDBACK, COMPLAINTS & APPEALS

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*Quality Care,  
Terrific Smiles*



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DENTAL

Thornhill Dental is a trading name of Thornhill Dental Surgery Limited which is registered with Companies House in England.

Thornhill Dental Surgery Limited • 4 Edge Lane  
Dewsbury • West Yorkshire  
WF12 0QR • Company Number 08171101

**G R Tattersfield**  
BChD (Leeds) MFGDP (UK) RCS Eng  
& Associates



This information leaflet contains a summary of the contents of practice policies for quick reference. For more information or details about the practice complaints policy and procedure or details about the practice appeals policy or procedure, please ask a member of our team for a copy of the full policy.

## FEEDBACK

### INTRODUCTION

Here at Thornhill Dental, we pride ourselves on delivering the best levels of care and service possible. We can only do this if we understand what our patients like about our service and what we could improve.

We listen to all feedback and regularly discuss it at our team meetings and make decisions based on it.

We also participate in the NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT) and statistics are submitted to the NHS monthly for publication on the NHS website.

### METHODS

We often contact patients to ask them for their feedback on the service which they have received. This will usually be done via email and the patients will be asked to provide feedback via:

- NHS Friends and Family Test
- Internal practice satisfaction survey
- Facebook
- Google

There are lots of ways and places which patients can provide us with feedback at their leisure. These include:

- Verbally via a team member
- Via email
- NHS Friends and Family Test comment slip
- Facebook
- Google
- NHS website

## COMPLAINTS

### INTRODUCTION

At Thornhill Dental we take feedback, concerns and complaints very seriously and aim to ensure that all our patients are pleased with their experience of our service. Whenever patients provide feedback, concerns or complaints, they are dealt with courteously and without prejudice so that the matter is resolved as quickly as possible to a satisfactory outcome.

The complaints manager is responsible for the complaints process. In the absence of the complaints manager, a deputy complaints manager acts on their behalf. A deputy complaints manager will acknowledge a complaint and advise the complainant of an expected timescale for a response. The main complaint investigation and response will be conducted by the complaints manager on their return.

### HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

Complaints can be made in writing (by letter or email), via telephone or in person.

All complaints in writing should be addressed to "the complaints manager". Written complaints by letter should be sent to the practice at Thornhill Dental, 4 Edge Lane, Thornhill, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, WF12 0QR. Written complaints by email should be sent to [hello@terrificsmiles.co.uk](mailto:hello@terrificsmiles.co.uk).

If the complainant would like to make a complaint in person or via telephone, they should advise a member of the practice team. The complaints manager will be informed of the request to make a complaint and contact the complainant to arrange a mutually convenient time to listen to the complaint.

During the meeting or telephone conversation to listen to the complaint, the complaints manager will make notes on the details of the complaint and may ask questions in order to fully understand the complaint. The complaints manager will not provide an outcome, resolution or explanation at this meeting or during the telephone conversation. The complaints manager will use the information gathered to investigate the complaint and provide a full response.

A deputy complaints manager will usually accompany the complaints manager to any meetings or telephone conversations. The complainant is welcome to be accompanied by someone for support.

### WHEN TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

Complaints should be made as soon as possible after the reason to make a complaint has arisen or of the complainant knowing they had cause to complain. This will increase the likelihood of the practice being able to resolve the complaint quickly and satisfactorily.

Complaints should be made within 12 months of the event or within 12 months of the complainant knowing they had cause to complain. Complaints made after this time may be rejected by the complaints manager and referred to the ombudsman.

Complaints should be made by the person who the complaint is regarding. If the complaint is regarding somebody who is under 18 years of age, the parent or legal guardian may make the complaint on behalf of the person.

If a complainant finds it difficult or is unable to communicate their complaint, a friend, family member or representative is able to make the complaint on their behalf. The complainant may also approach an advocacy services for assistance making a complaint.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RESOLUTION

The complaints manager or deputy will acknowledge the complaint no later than the 3rd working day after it is received. The complaint will usually be acknowledged via the same method to which it was received, unless the complainant requests it to be acknowledged by a different method.

Once the complaints manager has acknowledged the complaint and has gathered all the information which they need from the complainant, the complaints manager will investigate the complaint. The investigation will usually involve meeting with team members relevant to the complaint to discuss the points raised in the complaint and understand what happened. The timescale for investigating and providing a response to complaint will depend on the complexity of the complaint. An expected timescale will have been given in the acknowledgement of the complaint. The practice aims to provide a full response within 40 working days of acknowledging the complaint.

When the complaints manager has completed their investigation, they will provide the complainant with a full response. The response will include a summary of the complaint and the investigation undertaken; an explanation of what happened and why; an apology for any shortcoming of service or care; an offer to remedy the situation; and details of any learning outcomes and action taken by the practice as a result of the complaint.