

Nobody likes to receive complaints but our ability to respond to them constructively, and to learn any lessons that they provide for us, goes to the very heart of professionalism. However good you and your team are you will occasionally receive complaints. Research shows that where a complaint is handled well, then the loyalty of that patient is often strengthened. A complaint handled professionally can actually be a practice builder.

Objectives

The session will cover:

- Good customer service
- What is in the NHS Regulations
- The stages of the complaints process and who might be involved
- Planning an investigation
- Exploring various approaches to an investigation
- Co-ordinating a response when more than one person is the subject of the complaint
- How to deal with a complaint when the clinician is no longer at the practice
- The elements of a good response
- Learning from a complaint
- Valuing feedback
- NHS England
- The role of the Ombudsman
- The Dental Complaints Service
- GDC expectations
- CQC expectations

We will also explore how handling a complaint effectively can resolve the patient's complaint and avoid escalation to the GDC or to litigation. The session promotes good practice and first tier resolution.

Educational Outcomes

By the end of the presentation delegates will have an understanding of professional complaints handling and be able to select the appropriate management techniques and be able to implement the relevant strategies in the practice setting.

Educational methods used will include:

- Brief presentation of factual material
- Case studies
- Facilitated exercises in small groups
- Interactive discussions
- Written materials to support the workshop eg complaint handling guides

Presenters

Our presenters are case handlers who have a wealth of experience in assisting dentists and their teams in the effective handling of complaints.

Sarah Cree is a Dental Complaints Adviser at Dental Protection. She has worked in primary care dentistry for 23 years. Sarah worked as a qualified dental nurse initially and then as a practice manager in a six surgery practice which provided both NHS and private dental care. Sarah then went on to work with a Primary Care Trust for over five years as an NHS Dental Contract Manager. Sarah's past experience has given her a wealth of experience in relation to managing and advising on dental complaints.

Zoë Wray is a Dental Complaints Adviser at Dental Protection. She has experience of primary care complaints having worked for a Health Authority, several PCTs and latterly a Commissioning Support Unit. She also worked for the Healthcare Commission undertaking second stage complaint reviews and investigations and was seconded to the Department of Health to be part of a small team that developed and implemented the current NHS Complaints Regulations. Zoë's past experience has given her a wealth of experience in relation to managing and advising on dental complaints.

Sue Boynton is a Senior Dento-Legal Adviser at Dental Protection. She is a UK graduate with over 20 years' experience as a dentist in primary care dentistry. Sue has a Master's Degree in Medical Law, a fellowship from the Faculty of General Dental Practice and is an NLP Master and a trained mentor. She lectures in the UK and internationally on the subject of risk management. Sue is enthusiastic about risk management even though she has been known to take part in fire eating and free fall parachuting.