

Dental Excellence Complaints Procedure

At our dental practice we strive to provide quality dental care, appropriate to your needs, in a pleasant and stress free environment. Occasions may occur where there are concerns or complaints about the way you are treated. If you have a complaint or concern about the service you have received from your dentist or any member of our staff, please let us know. If your concern is about dental work undertaken, we welcome the opportunity to put this right.

Patients have the right to make a complaint about a practitioner in any manner appropriate to them. Practitioners have an obligation to deal with complaints fairly and promptly taking reasonable actions to give effect to patient rights, and to comply with the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumer's Rights.

How to complain:

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If your problem cannot be sorted out in this way and you wish to make a complaint, we would like you to let us know as soon as possible, ideally within a matter of days or at most a few weeks. This will enable us to establish what happened more easily.

Complaints should be addressed to our Practice Owner. You can contact our practice owner & principal dentist Fiona Bailey by email:

fb@dentalexcellence.co.nz

What we will do:

We shall acknowledge your complaint or concern within 5 working days of receipt, unless resolved within this period. We will investigate your complaint and keep you informed about the progress of the complaint, within 10 days of our written acknowledgement of your complaint. If more time is required for us to investigate the complaint then we will advise you of this and the reason for the delay. We shall then offer you an explanation and/or a meeting to discuss the complaint.

In investigating your complaint we shall aim to:

- Establish the facts.
- Make it possible for you to discuss the problem with those concerned, if

you would like this.

- Make sure you receive an apology, where this is appropriate.
- Identify what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't happen again.

If you are dissatisfied by the result of the complaint investigation there are alternative avenues for managing complaints:

NZDA Consumer Complaints procedure, through the local Branch of the New Zealand Dental Association (NZDA) the Consumer Affairs Officer (CAO) can be contacted:

CAO Waikato/BOP Branch NZDA
PO Box 9563
Hamilton 3240

If satisfactory resolution of the complaint cannot be achieved between the complainant and the dentist, then if appropriate the complaint can be referred by the CAO to **NZDA Regional Peer Review**, if the matter relates to 'quality and appropriateness' of dental treatment or may be referred to another agency as appropriate (see below).

Health & Disability Commissioner Complaints investigations.

A patient has the right to make a complaint about a practitioner directly to the HDC who will determine if the complaint can be resolved by advocacy, mediation, if the complaint requires referral to another agency (e.g. Ministry of Health), or further investigation by the HDC.

A variety of useful resources are available on the Health and Disability Commissioner website: <https://www.hdc.org.nz/making-a-complaint/>

Health and Disability Advocacy Service

Advocates help consumers to resolve complaints about health and disability services. They operate independently of government agencies, HDC, and the funders of health and disability services. Advocates aren't investigators or

mediators, nor do they make decisions on whether there has been a breach of the code, they are provided to support the patient, encourage them to take action (including making a complaint) and assist the patient in resolving their concerns.

See the Health and Disability Advocacy website: <https://www.advocacy.org.nz/>

Dental Council

You can complain directly to the NZ Dental Council, these complaints usually fall into one of three categories: competence, conduct and health.

See the Dental Council Website:

<http://www.dcnz.org.nz/patients-the-public-and-employers/concerns-and-complaints-for-patients/>

Disputes Tribunal

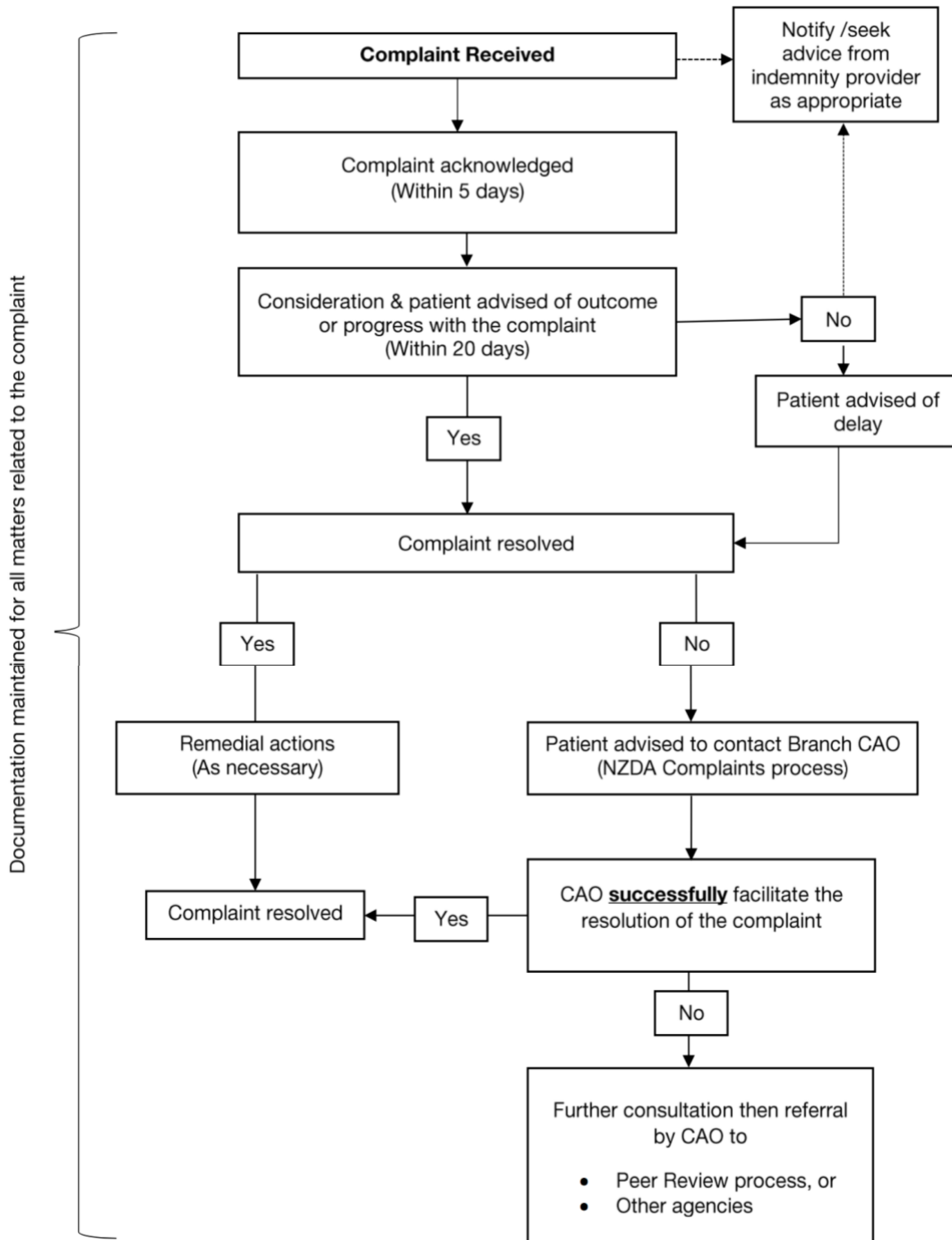
The Ministry of Justice, Disputes Tribunal provides a private way to help resolve a wide range of civic disputes when an applicant makes demand for money, property, or for enforcement of a right provided by law against the respondent because they disagree about the circumstances surrounding the claim.

See the Disputes Tribunal Website:

<https://www.justice.govt.nz/tribunals>

Complaints pathway diagram detailed below:

Complaints should be dealt with within the practice setting at the first possible opportunity*



* **Health and Disability Commissioner Act 2006**