



What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of your dentist

About this booklet

This guide is for you if you receive treatment or care from a dental practice in England.

It helps you understand what standards of care you have a right to expect from your dental practice and what you should do if you receive poor quality care.

This guide explains how we work to make sure that dental practices meet national standards of quality and safety and the action we can take if we find dental practices are not meeting standards.

About us

We are the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the independent regulator of health and adult social care services in England.

We make sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and we encourage care services to improve.

We monitor, inspect and regulate services to make sure they meet fundamental standards of quality and safety and we publish what we find, including performance ratings to help people choose care.

We also protect the interests of vulnerable people, including those whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.

We put the views, experiences, health and wellbeing of people who use services at the centre of our work, and we have a range of powers we can use to take action if people are getting poor care.

Registering and inspecting dental practices

By law, all dental practices in England must make sure that the care and treatment they provide meet national standards of quality and safety.

We register dental practices if they can show us that they are meeting national standards.

If dental practices are not registered with us, they will not be able to provide services.

We inspect dental practices to make sure they are meeting the national standards. We can inspect a dental practice at any time if there are concerns about the care it provides.

If we find that a dental practice isn't meeting the standards, we take action and then re-inspect it.

On the following pages we summarise what you should expect when a dental practice is meeting national standards of quality and safety.



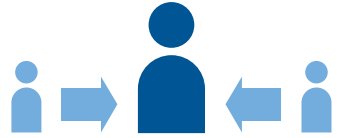


1 You can expect to be respected, involved and told what's happening at every stage

- You, or someone acting on your behalf, will be involved in discussions about your dental care and treatment.
- You will get support if you need it to help you make decisions and staff will respect your privacy and dignity.
- Before you receive any treatment you will be asked whether or not you agree to it.

Example

Gunes and his family belong to a large Turkish community in the South East of England. They are regular patients at a local dental practice. Gunes' family have a basic knowledge of the English language but communicate more effectively in Turkish. The dental practice provides information leaflets about common treatments written in Turkish. When Gunes' nine-year-old son needed to have a tooth removed, he and his son could understand what was involved and why the procedure was necessary, so they agreed for the dentist to go ahead with the treatment.



2 You can expect care, treatment and support that meets your needs

- Your personal needs will be assessed to make sure you get safe and appropriate care that supports your rights.
- You will get the care that you and your dentist agree will make a difference to your dental health and wellbeing.
- Where appropriate, before or after your dental care or treatment you will be advised what is best for you to eat and drink to meet your dental-health needs.
- Your dental-care needs are coordinated if you move from one dental practice to another.
- Staff respect your cultural background, sex (gender), age, sexuality (whether you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual person), religion or belief, and your disability, if you have one.

Example

June is 80 and can no longer get to her regular dentist. A care worker provides June with personal care and nursing care in her own home. June phones her dentist to ask about a home visit. The dentist gives her the number of the primary care trust's helpline, which puts her in touch with a dentist who can visit her in her home. June contacts them and finds it easy to book an appointment because the practice agrees to send a dentist to her home at a time which fits in with her care schedule. When the dentist arrives, she knows about June's dental history as June's regular dentist has shared this with her.

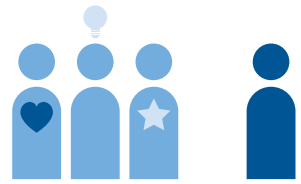


3 You can expect to be safe

- You will be protected from abuse or the risk of abuse.
- You will be cared for in a clean environment where you are protected from infection.
- Where appropriate, you will get the medicines you need, when you need them, and in a safe way.
- You will be treated in a safe and accessible place.
- You will not be harmed by unsafe or unsuitable equipment.

Example

A dental practice is not accessible for people who use a wheelchair because it is on the second floor of a building and can only be reached by a narrow flight of stairs. It is not possible to have a lift installed in the building. The practice has fitted secure handrails to the staircase and installed a buzzer at the door to call for help. Since the practice is still not accessible for some people, it has agreed to provide a basic home-visit service for any existing patients with disabilities. New patients who want to make an appointment at the practice are told about the stairs and, if necessary, referred to a local dentist with an accessible surgery.

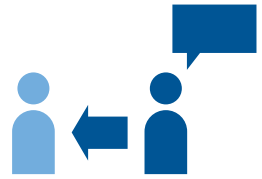


4 You can expect to be cared for by staff with the right skills to do their jobs properly

- Your dental health and welfare needs will be met by staff who are properly qualified.
- There will always be enough members of staff available to keep you safe and meet your needs.
- You will be looked after by staff who are well managed and have the chance to develop and improve their skills.

Example

All professional staff at a large dental practice have a plan for continuing professional development, and are up to date with the requirements of the General Dental Council. Managers of the practice keep a record of all the training their staff take. They are confident that everyone who visits the practice is cared for and treated by staff who have the right knowledge and skills to do their jobs properly.



5 You can expect your dental practice to routinely check the quality of its services

- The managers of your dental practice regularly monitor the quality of its services to make sure you receive the care you need.
- Your personal records will be accurate and kept safe and confidential.
- You, or someone acting on your behalf, can complain and will be listened to. Your complaint will be dealt with properly.

Example

A dental practice run by two partners recently took over another local, private practice. When the practice changed hands, the partners found there was no process in place for reviewing and learning from patients' complaints and feedback. They quickly set up a new procedure for dealing with complaints, and updated the practice's information leaflet and website to tell patients about the new procedure.

What to do if you think your dental practice is not meeting national standards

If you, or someone you care for, experiences poor care you can:

- raise your concerns with the dental practice, including making a formal complaint; and
- tell us about the matter.

Raise your concerns with the dental practice

If you have concerns about the care being provided by your dental practice, the first thing you should do is tell the management of the practice. If your concerns cannot be resolved straight away, you can go through their formal complaints process.

By law, every dental practice must have an efficient procedure for dealing with complaints.

If your complaint is about NHS dental treatment and you are not happy with the way your dental practice deals with your complaint, you can contact the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman on **0345 015 4033**. Your rights are explained at www.nhs.uk/NHSConstitution.

If you pay for your treatment privately and you are not happy with the way your dental practice has dealt with your complaint, you can contact the Dental Complaints Service on **08456 120540**.

Tell us

Our role as regulator means that we do not settle individual complaints ourselves, but we still want you to tell us about your experiences of care. Your information is valuable to us. It helps us decide when, where and what to inspect.

When we find that a dental practice is not meeting the standards we will take action. You can tell us about concerns even when you do not want to make a complaint to the dental practice.

We also want to hear about good experiences of care.

The best way to get in touch with us is by filling in our 'Share your experience' form online at www.cqc.org.uk. You can also phone us on **03000 616161** or write to us at the address shown on the back of this guide.

You can also tell us about your experience of care through a local support group such as your local Healthwatch.

How we carry out inspections and take action

When we carry out an inspection we talk to people and look at their experiences of care, as well as checking systems and processes. We often involve other experts in our inspections, including people with experience of care. We call these people 'experts by experience'.

If we think that services aren't meeting national standards, we take action. We make the dental practice tell us what they will do to put things right. We can also:

- issue fines or formal warnings; and
- suspend or cancel a dental practice's registration.

We publish any formal action we have asked a dental practice to take on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

We update our website when the dental practice has made the necessary improvements to meet the national standards.

Other booklets available from our website

- What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of your hospital
- What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of your care home
- What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of agencies that provide care in your own home
- What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of your dental practice

How to contact us

Call us on: **03000 616161**

Email us at: **enquiries@cqc.org.uk**

Look at our website at:
www.cqc.org.uk

Write to us at:
**Care Quality Commission
Citygate, Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA**



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