

## **Dental Complaints Resolution Service**

### **Explanatory memorandum – For dentists**

#### **What is the Dental Complaints Resolution Service?**

The Dental Complaints Resolution Service (DCRS or the Service) assists dental patients and participating dentists to resolve complaints relating to the provision of dental care in the Republic of Ireland. It is intended to be availed of between dental patients and their treating dentist. It is an independent voluntary and confidential service provided by the Irish Dental Association (IDA). The Service is endorsed and approved by the Dental Council. The aim of the Service is to resolve complaints fairly, efficiently, transparently and quickly by working with the patient and their treating dentist.

#### **Who is the Facilitator?**

Mary Culliton is the Facilitator of the DCRS. She is an independent healthcare consultant and mediator with specialist experience of the management of complaints. Her contact details are as follows:

Email: [mary@dentalcomplaints.ie](mailto:mary@dentalcomplaints.ie)

Mobile: 087-354 5842

#### **What can the DCRS do?**

The DCRS is a voluntary service dealing with complaints relating to the provision of dental care in the Republic of Ireland. It should be noted that either party can refuse to take part or withdraw at any stage. We attempt with the willingness of both parties to resolve disputes; however, it is important to recognise the limitations of the Service, as we do not arrange compensation or investigate misconduct or malpractice. Equally, it is not a service to deal with issues arising under the Medical Card scheme (Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS) and/or the PRSI scheme (Dental Treatment Benefit Scheme (DTBS), for which alternative complaint services are operated by the HSE and Department of Social Protection, respectively. Outcomes of the DCRS process could involve a refund of fees paid/an apology/transfer of the patient to another dentist/remedial treatment and payment/accepting responsibility for the issue which is the subject of the complaint.

#### **Why should you participate?**

Dentists that participate in the DCRS follow the professional guidance issued by the Dental Council, which states that dentists should have a complaints procedure. All dentists who participate in the DCRS are practising in accordance with those Dental Council guidelines. Dentists should seek the advice from their defence organisation/insurer where appropriate.

#### **Are there charges?**

The Service is free to members of the IDA who are also members of the Medical Protection Society. Dentists who are not members of the IDA or the Medical Protection Society may use the Service at a cost of €450.00 payable to the IDA. Dentists who are members of the Medical Protection Society but are not members of the IDA, or are members of the IDA and not members of the Medical Protection Society may use the Service at a cost of €225.00 payable to the IDA.

**Procedure involved:**

- prior to contacting the DCRS, the complainant should have made a complaint to their treating dentist or person nominated to deal with complaints in that practice;
- when a complaint is received in respect of a treating dentist, Mary Culliton will provide a copy of the complaint to the treating dentist;
- Mary Culliton will (subject to the agreement of both parties) engage with the complainant and the dentist with a view to resolving the complaint;
- the DCRS is confidential in nature and all documents exchanged by the parties and statements whether oral or written made in the course of the Service process and any concessions or admissions of law or fact shall be confidential and be treated as exchanged upon a “without prejudice” basis with a view to settling the dispute and shall be privileged accordingly; and,
- any outcome is not binding and does not limit or impinge any rights or entitlements available to either party within any other redress mechanism including the civil courts unless and until agreement is reached and signed up to by both parties.

**What happens to my data?**

Data will be retained in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988-2018 by the Irish Dental Association and same will be retained for a period of six years.