



# Complaints Process Exit Survey Annual Report

Reporting Period  
March 2019 to February 2020

July 7, 2020

Prepared by



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## INTRODUCTION

The College of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia commissioned Pivotal Research Inc. to develop and administer a complaints process exit survey for complainants and registrants once their file has been closed. Feedback is received via two surveys: one for registrants and another for complainants (see Appendix A). Both surveys can be completed online at [www.pivotalresearch.ca/cdsbc](http://www.pivotalresearch.ca/cdsbc) although complainants have the option to complete a paper survey and return it to Pivotal Research in a postage-paid business reply envelope.

To complete the online survey participants require a unique access code to log in. The access code differentiates the survey version viewed by participants (registrant or complainant), identifies the complaint outcome and the month their file was closed. All paper surveys provided to complainants also included an access code. Access codes are provided each month to College staff who then distributes them to complainants and registrants upon closure of a complaint file.

This annual report includes results from surveys distributed between March 2019 and February 2020. Surveys returned by March 31, 2020 that were distributed within this time period, are included in this report. Semi-annual reports over the course of the previous 12 months were provided to the College.

## Annual Participation

Overall, 18 complainants and 13 registrants completed the exit survey.

It is important to note that the overall number of completed surveys is small. As such, results are directional and statistical comparisons are not conducted.

Table 1 shows the number of responses based on the complaint outcome.

**Table 1. Number of responses by complaint outcome**

Complaint Outcome	Number of complainants	Number of registrants
Dismissal	5	8
Letter of Agreement (Undertaking without monitoring)	5	4
Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding (Undertaking with monitoring)	8	1
TOTAL	18	13

## Complaint Resolution Options

CDSBC investigates all complaints related to the conduct or competence of its registrants:

- Dismissal refers to complaints that are closed with no action taken, or with some recommendations/best practice advice.
- Letter of Agreement (LOA) and Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding (MOU) both refer to complaints that are closed with the registrant signing an agreement (or "undertaking") to take certain steps to improve their practice. The difference is that MOU undertakings also require monitoring by the CDSBC.

More information about CDSBC's complaints process is available on the [College's website](#).

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Following are general observations drawn from the results.

### Complainant Survey

Complainants agree that their complaint was handled with courtesy and, for the most part, respect. However, complainants are split regarding their agreement with how fairly, thoroughly, and timely their complaint was handled.

Results show that those whose complaints were dismissed or resulted in a letter of agreement are more likely to draw mixed responses with the various aspects of the complaint process. In contrast, those whose complaints resulted in a memorandum of agreement/understanding with the registrant are more likely to be satisfied in all aspects of the process.

Complainants are generally in agreement with CDSBC's communications practices regardless of the outcome of their complaint. Complainants are likely to recommend to someone they know to proceed with a complaint to CDSBC should they have a concern about their dentist, dental therapist, or certified dental assistant. When the outcome of their complaint is somewhat or not as expected, complainants indicate varying levels of satisfaction with the investigative process. Complainants whose files result as expected are most likely to very satisfied with the complaints process.

### Registrant Survey

Registrants who completed the survey, in general, tend to strongly agree with how the process is conducted in terms of fairness, courtesy, thoroughness, and respectfulness. However, when it comes to the timeliness of the process, more registrants indicated dissatisfaction than satisfaction with the process. It is notable to observe that over half of the registrants who provided feedback had the complaints filed against them dismissed.

Registrants show agreement with the way CDSBC communicates with them during the investigation and resolution process.

Outcomes appear to match the expectations of registrants for the most part. As such, they are satisfied with the process that follows to investigate their complaint.

## RESULTS

The results are organized by survey (complainant and registrant) and by question item where questions are presented in the same order as viewed by survey participants. The results of closed ended items are displayed in tables and graphics while free text comments are provided verbatim.

## COMPLAINANT

### Reason for filing a complaint

Complaints revolve around three themes. They are:

- To bring forward perceived unethical or questionable behaviour;
- Prevent further harm to self and others; and
- Accountability or compensation.

### Process

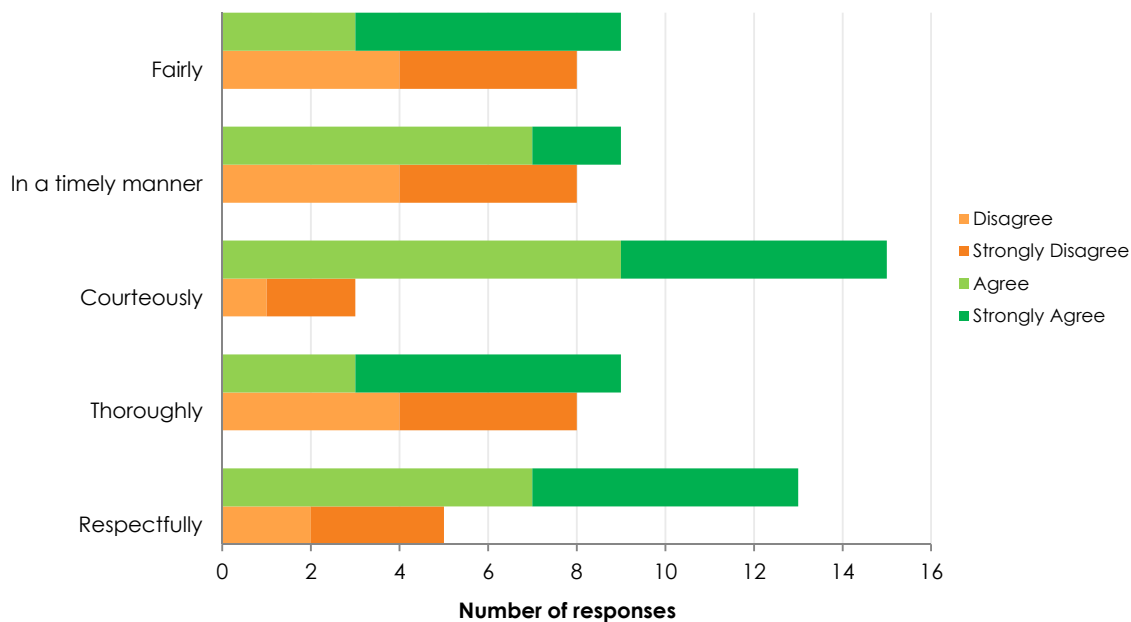
Complainants are more likely to agree that their complaint was dealt with respectfully and courteously. However, respondents are split on agreement with respect to how fair, thorough and timely their complaint was handled.

**With regard to the way that CDSBC dealt with your complaint, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.**

**Table 2. My complaint was dealt with...**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
Fairly	6	3	4	4	1
In a timely manner	2	7	4	4	1
Courteously	6	9	1	2	-
Thoroughly	6	3	4	4	1
Respectfully	6	7	2	3	-

Figure 1. My complaint was dealt with...



When reviewing the results by the outcome of the complaint, those complainants whose files resulted in a memorandum of agreement/understanding displayed higher levels of agreement with aspects of how their complaint was handled in comparison to those whose files resulted in a dismissal or letter of agreement. Although the number of responses is small, there appears to be more variability in levels of agreement on aspects of how their complaint was handled when complainants' files were dismissed or resulted in a letter of agreement. A visual depiction is provided in Figure 2.

Table 3. My complaint was dealt with...Dismissal (n=5)

Resolution = Dismissal	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
Fairly	1	0	1	3	-
In a timely manner	1	1	1	1	-
Courteously	1	1	1	2	-
Thoroughly	1	-	-	3	1
Respectfully	1	1	-	3	1

**Table 4. My complaint was dealt with...Letter of Agreement (n = 5)**

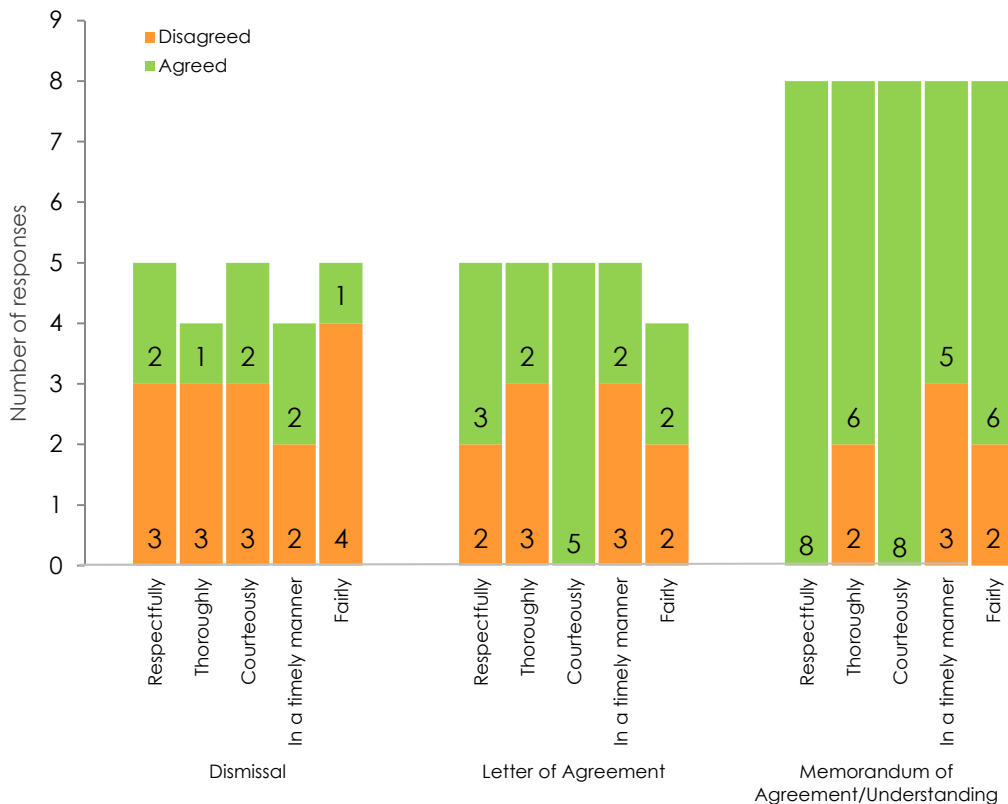
<b>Resolution = Letter of Agreement</b>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
Fairly	1	1	2	-	1
In a timely manner	-	2	1	2	-
Courteously	1	4	-	-	-
Thoroughly	1	1	3	-	-
Respectfully	1	2	2	-	-

**Table 5. My complaint was dealt with... Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding (n=8)**

<b>Resolution = MOU</b>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
Fairly	4	2	1	1	-
In a timely manner	1	4	2	1	-
Courteously	4	4	-	-	-
Thoroughly	4	2	1	1	-
Respectfully	4	4	-	-	-

**Figure 2. My complaint was dealt with...(by file outcome)**

Disagreed = Strongly disagree + disagree; Agreed = strongly agree + agree



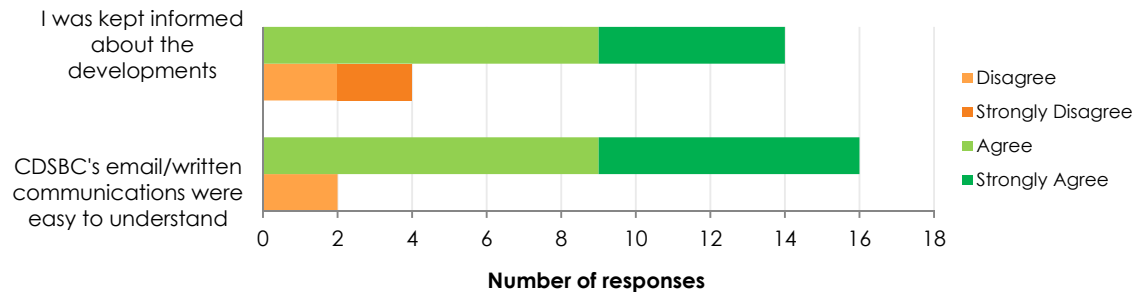
## Communication

Complainants are generally in agreement with CDSBC's communications practices in terms of the ease of email and written correspondence. Complainants are slightly less in agreement with how the College keeps them informed about developments pertaining to their complaint.

**Table 6. With regard to the way that CDSBC communicated with you, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
I was kept informed about the developments	5	9	2	2	-
CDSBC's email/written communications were easy to understand	7	9	2	-	-

**Figure 3. With regard to the way that CDSBC communicated with you, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.**





## Expectations and Satisfaction

A third of complainants indicated that the outcome was as expected (n=6) while half (n=9) found the outcome somewhat as expected. In terms of satisfaction with the process during the investigation, one-half are dissatisfied with the process.

**Table 7. Thinking about the outcome of your complaint, was it what you expected?**

	Number of responses
Yes	6
Somewhat	9
No	3

**Table 8. How satisfied are you with the process followed to investigate your complaint?**

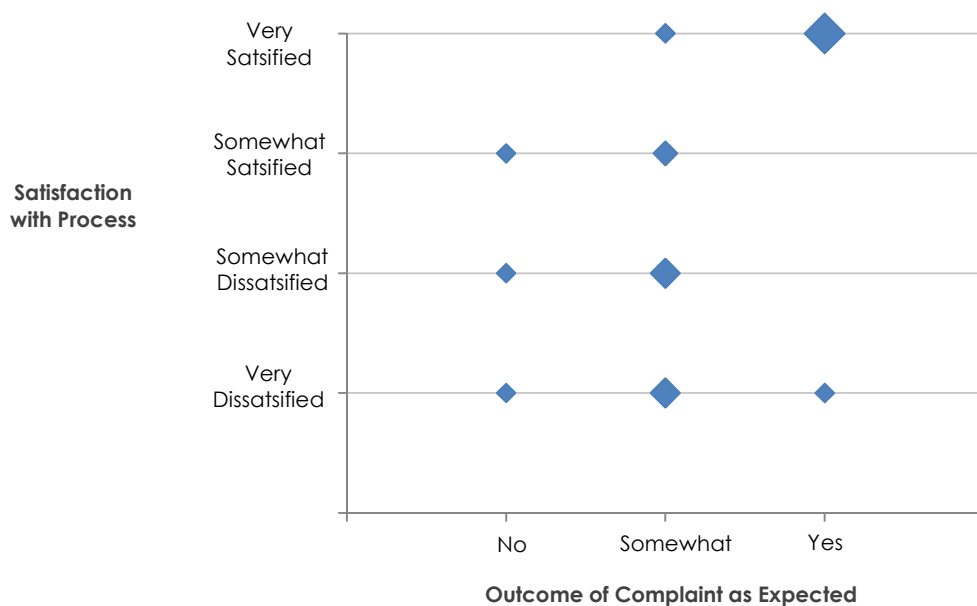
	Number of responses
Very Satisfied	6
Somewhat Satisfied	3
Somewhat Dissatisfied	4
Very Dissatisfied	5

Figure 4 correlates the results for the previous two questions to assess the relationship, if any, between expectation of an outcome and satisfaction with the process.

When the expected outcome of the complaint was somewhat or not as expected, complainants indicate a variety of satisfaction with the complaint process. However nearly a third of respondents (n=5) were very satisfied with the process when the outcome of the complaint was as expected.

The size of the diamond in the graph corresponds to the number of observations.

**Figure 4. Complainants expected outcome and satisfaction with investigative process**



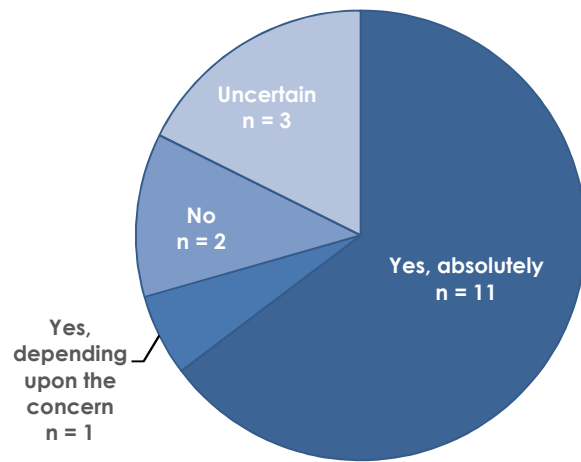
## Recommendation

Two-thirds of complainants would either absolutely (n = 11) or depending on the situation (n = 1) recommend to someone they know to proceed with filing a complaint to CDSBC should they have a concern about their dentist, dental therapist, or certified dental assistant.

**Table 9. If someone you knew had a concern about their dentist, dental therapist or certified dental assistant, would you recommend that s/he make a complaint about that practitioner to CDSBC?**

	Number of responses
Yes, absolutely	11
Yes, depending upon the concern	1
No	2
Uncertain	3

**Figure 5. Recommendation of CDSBC to others**



## REGISTRANT

### Process

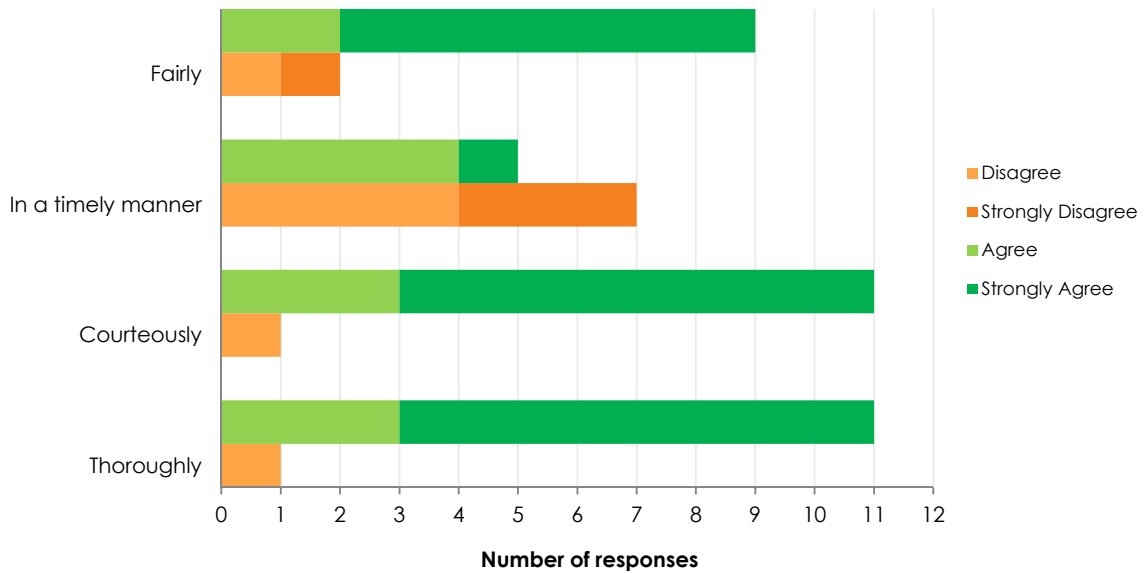
In general, registrants tend to strongly agree with how the process is conducted in terms of fairness, courtesy, and thoroughness. However, they are more likely to disagree with the timeliness.

**With regard to the way that CDSBC dealt with the complaint against you, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.**

**Table 10. My complaint was dealt with...**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
Fairly	7	2	1	1	1
In a timely manner	1	4	4	3	-
Courteously	8	3	1	-	-
Thoroughly	8	3	1	-	1

**Figure 6. My complaint was dealt with...**



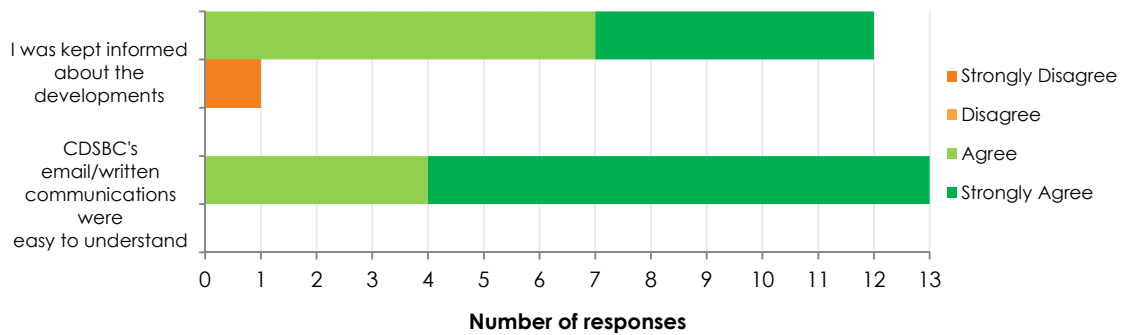
## Communication and Interaction

For the most part, registrants agree with the way CDSBC keeps them informed about developments pertaining to the complaint and with the ease to understand email and written communications during the investigation and resolution process.

**Table 11. With regard to the way that CDSBC communicated with you, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
I was kept informed about the developments	5	7	-	1	-
CDSBC's email/written communications were easy to understand	9	4	-	-	-

**Figure 7. With regard to the way that CDSBC communicated with you, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.**

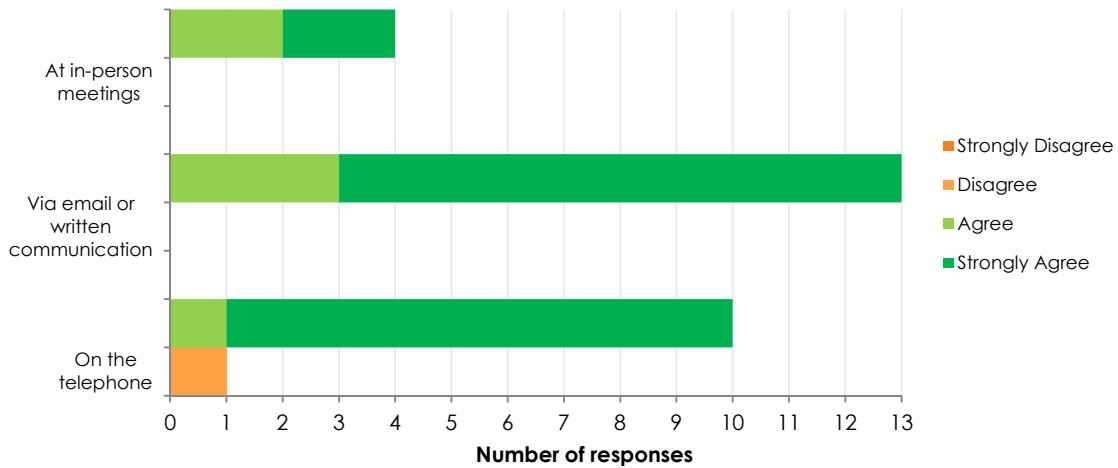


When interaction is required, nearly all registrants agree that CDSBC treats them with respect whether the interaction takes place through in-person meetings, on the phone or via email or written communication.

**Table 12. I was treated with respect...**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain	Not applicable
At in-person meetings	2	2	-	-	-	9
Via email or written communication	10	3	-	-	-	-
On the telephone	9	1	1	-	-	2

**Figure 8. I was treated with respect...**



## Expectations and Satisfaction

Outcomes appear to match the expectations of registrants for the most part. As such, they are likely to be satisfied with the process that follows to investigate the complaint.

**Table 13. Thinking about the outcome of your complaint, was it what you expected?**

	Number of responses
Yes	9
Somewhat	4
No	0

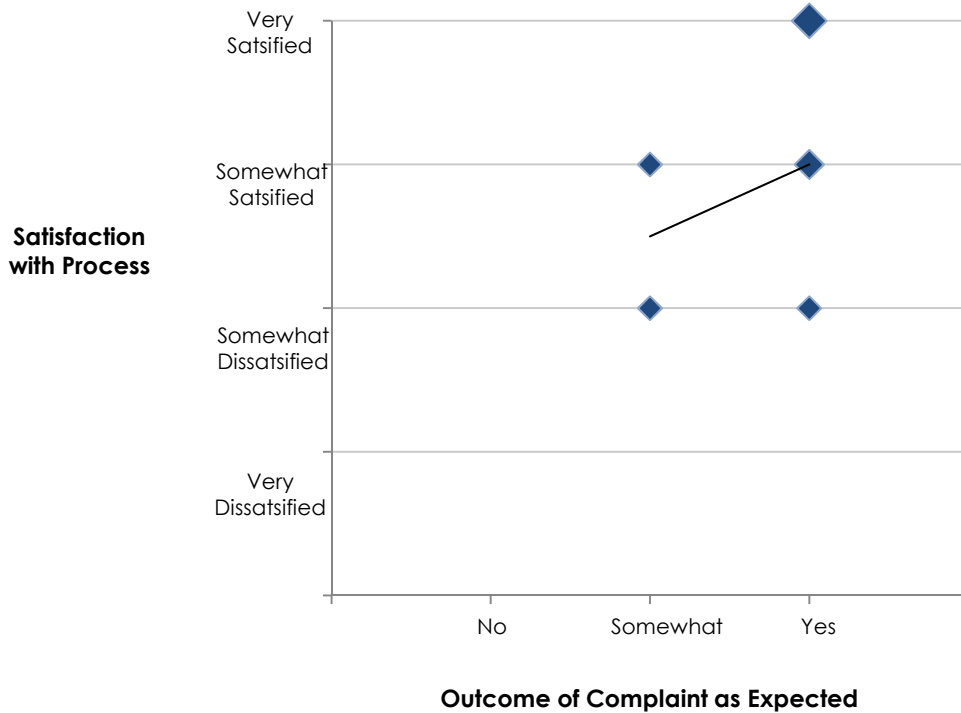
**Table 14. How satisfied are you with the process followed to investigate your complaint?**

	Number of responses
Very Satisfied	4
Somewhat Satisfied	5
Somewhat Dissatisfied	4
Very Dissatisfied	-

Figure 8 correlates the results for the previous two questions. Generally, the results appear to show that registrants are almost always satisfied so long as the outcome matches their expectations.

The size of the diamond in the graph corresponds to the number of observations. The trend line indicates a linear relationship between the two components.

Figure 9. Registrants expected outcome and satisfaction with investigative process



## APPENDIX A. SURVEY INSTRUMENTS





**CDSBC**

College of Dental Surgeons  
of British Columbia

## Complaints Process Exit Survey

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Welcome to CDSBC's Online Complaints Process Exit Survey. CDSBC commissioned Pivotal Research Inc., an independent research firm, to gather feedback and report group data only. They will ensure your responses are anonymous.

Your feedback will be used to assess and improve CDSBC's complaint investigation process. If you have any questions about the collection and use of this information, contact . If you encounter any technical difficulties email .

Please enter your access code below.

Your access code is case sensitive.

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### Survey Instructions

Use the navigation buttons below to proceed through the survey. Do not use your browser's back button.

The survey should take you 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

If you require technical assistance send an email with your access code to [feedback@pivotalresearch.ca](mailto:feedback@pivotalresearch.ca).

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## COMPLAINANT SURVEY

The College of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia is committed to maintaining a fair and transparent complaints process. The purpose of this survey is to give you a chance to comment on how your complaint was handled by CDSBC.

What did you hope to achieve by filing a complaint?

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With regard to the way that CDSBC dealt with your complaint, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

My complaint was dealt with:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
Fairly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In a timely manner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Courteously	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thoroughly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respectfully	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

With regard to the way that CDSBC communicated with you, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
I was kept informed about developments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CSDBC's email/written communications were easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Thinking about the outcome of your complaint, was it what you expected?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

How satisfied are you with the process followed to investigate your complaint?

- Very Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

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If someone you knew had a concern about their dentist, dental therapist or certified dental assistant, would you recommend that s/he make a complaint about that practitioner to CDSBC?

- Yes, absolutely
- Yes, depending upon the concern
- No
- Uncertain

Given your experience, what could CDSBC do to improve the complaint process?

Please share any comments about the CDSBC Complaint Investigator who looked after your file.

## REGISTRANT SURVEY

The College of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia is committed to maintaining a fair and transparent complaints process. The purpose of this survey is to give you a chance to comment on CDSBC's handling of the complaint that was made about you.

With regard to the way that CDSBC dealt with the complaint against you, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

My complaint was dealt with:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
Fairly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In a timely manner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Courteously	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thoroughly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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With regard to the way that CDSBC communicated with you, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
I was kept informed about developments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CDSBC's email/written communications were easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I was treated with respect:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain	Not applicable
At in-person meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Via email or written communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On the telephone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Thinking about the outcome of the complaint, was it what you expected?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

How satisfied are you with the process followed to investigate the complaint?

- Very Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

Given your experience, what could CDSBC do to improve the complaint process?

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Thank you for your valuable feedback. The survey is now complete.  
Please click the submit button to send your feedback.



# Complaints Process Exit Survey

The College of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia is committed to maintaining a fair and transparent complaints process. The purpose of this survey is to give you a chance to comment on how your complaint was handled by CDSBC.

CDSBC commissioned Pivotal Research Inc., an independent research firm, to gather feedback and report group data only. They will ensure your responses are anonymous.

**We encourage you to complete the survey online.**

Go to: [www.pivotalresearch.ca/cdsbc](http://www.pivotalresearch.ca/cdsbc)

and insert your access code:

Alternatively, you can return the paper survey in the postage-paid reply envelope.

Your feedback will be used to assess and improve CDSBC's complaint investigation process. If you have any questions about the collection and use of this information, contact [communications@cdsbc.org](mailto:communications@cdsbc.org). If you encounter technical difficulties email [feedback@pivotalresearch.ca](mailto:feedback@pivotalresearch.ca).

1. What did you hope to achieve by filing a complaint?

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2. With regard to the way that CDSBC dealt with your complaint, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

My complaint was dealt with:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
Fairly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In a timely manner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Courteously	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thoroughly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respectfully	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



3. With regard to the way that CDSBC communicated with you, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
I was kept informed about developments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CDSBC's email/written communications were easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Thinking about the outcome of your complaint, was it what you expected?

- Yes  Somewhat  No

5. How satisfied are you with the process followed to investigate your complaint?

- Very Satisfied  Somewhat Satisfied  Somewhat Dissatisfied  Very Dissatisfied

6. If someone you knew had a concern about their dentist, dental therapist or certified dental assistant, would you recommend that s/he make a complaint about the practitioner to CDSBC?

- Yes, absolutely  Yes, depending upon the concern  No  Uncertain

7. Given your experience, what could CDSBC do to improve the complaint process?

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8. Please share any comments about the CDSBC Complaint Investigator who looked after your file.

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