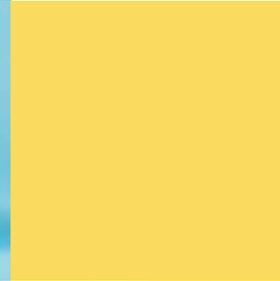


COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Practice Division



CVS GROUP PLC PRACTICE DIVISION COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Our complaints policy

We are committed to providing excellent service to our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our service and standards.

We strongly advocate informal resolution of complaints by speaking directly with the practice in the first instance. Communication is key and, if your complaint can be resolved quickly and easily, we will endeavour to do so.

If you are not able to reach an informal resolution with the practice, a formal process is in place and outlined below.

Practice Management

STAGE 1

Local Resolution
- in the Practice

- Formal Complaints can be raised directly with the practice by a complainant or on behalf of within three months of the complaint event or as soon as this matter first came to the attention of the complainant
- Acknowledgement sent within two working days of receipt of complaint
- Full response within 20 working days or
- Holding letter every 20 working days until final response
- Please expect to wait up to 20 working days for an outcome response. This is to allow time for a full and detailed investigation of your complaint.

Regional Management

STAGE 2

Escalated to
Operations Director

- Complaint received within three months of final response to Stage 1
- Acknowledgement sent within two working days of receiving complaint
- Complaint passed to Regional Director for investigation
- Full response within 20 working days by Regional Director or
- Holding letter at least every 20 working days until final response

STAGE 3

Independent Mediation

- Veterinary Client Mediation Service
- We recommend that Stage 3 is only invoked after Stage 1 and 2 processes exhausted

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

Stage 1

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within two working days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will then investigate your complaint as a Stage 1 complaint. This will involve passing your complaint to the Clinical/Practice Director/ Practice Manager of the practice to which your complaint relates, and they will then commence an investigation.
3. We will aim to investigate and respond to your complaint within 20 working days of receipt. If further time is needed in which to thoroughly investigate your complaint, we will write to you again to let you know, and will do so every 20 working days until we are able to provide a full response.

Stage 2

4. In the event that you are not able to resolve your complaint directly with the practice, you may write to the Director of Practice Operations at the address below to request that your complaint is reinvestigated by a Regional Director. This must be done within three months of the final response at Stage 1 and, when doing so, you should **clearly state the reasons you are not satisfied with the Stage 1 investigation and outcome.**

Director of Practice Operations
CVS (UK) Limited
168 Birmingham Road
Bromsgrove
B61 0HB

5. The Director of Practice Operations will acknowledge receipt of your letter within two working days of receipt. This letter will include the name of the Regional Director that your complaint has been passed to in order to conduct a further investigation.

6. The Regional Director will send a written acknowledgement to you within two working days, unless the complaint can be answered and a full reply can be sent within five working days.
7. If a full reply cannot be sent within five working days, the Regional Director will aim to investigate and respond to your complaint within 20 working days of receipt. If they need further time in which to thoroughly investigate your complaint, they will write to you again to let you know, and will do so every 20 days until they are able to provide a final response.

Stage 3

8. Stage 2 is the final stage of our internal complaints procedure. If, after this stage is complete, you are still not satisfied, Stage 3 of our complaints procedure provides for external mediation via the Veterinary Client Mediation Service (VCMS):

Veterinary Client Mediation Service

6 Market Square
Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire
CM23 3UZ
T: 0345 040 5834
www.vetmediation.co.uk

The online VCMS submission form can be found at: <https://submit.vetmediation.co.uk/SubmitComplaint/>

We recommend that you only invoke Stage 3 of the complaints procedure once Stages 1 and 2 have been exhausted.

You should provide reasons to explain your dissatisfaction with the outcome of the local complaints procedure at Stages 1 and 2, and have also received a final written response to the complaint from us.