

# **Practice Complaints Handling Policy**

## **Notes for Clients**

### **Our complaints policy**

We are committed to providing a high-quality veterinary service to all our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

This Practice is part of the Independent Vetcare Group (IVC) where local leadership and management is core to the company's philosophy. As such we believe the best place to resolve complaints is with us here at the practice.

If you have a complaint, please contact us, the practice, with the full details. We have eight weeks to consider your complaint.

### **What will happen next?**

1. We will send you a letter, or e mail, acknowledging receipt of your complaint within three days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally be undertaken by the practice senior Clinical Director (CD) or Practice Manager (PM), who will review your client file and speak to the members of staff involved with your case. Where the senior CD is the subject of the complaint another will be asked to undertake the investigation. Where either of the above is not practicable a member of IVC management team will assume the role, though this may be via remote communications.
3. The CD will then invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. S/he will do this within 14 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
4. Within three days of the meeting, the CD will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions s/he has agreed with you.
5. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible, the CD will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including his/her suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us at the practice again making a formal request for a review of the decision. We the practice will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.  
If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the review we will recommend:
  - a) That you contact the Veterinary Client Mediation Service, [www.vetmediation.co.uk](http://www.vetmediation.co.uk), or The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

[www.rcvs.org.uk](http://www.rcvs.org.uk).. We undertake to cooperate fully with these bodies and to implement any recommendation or direction they make.

- b) You may commence legal action against us. You will need to write to us at the practice stating your reasons and financial losses. We will send all notes, files and correspondence to our Indemnity Insurers, for their consideration.