



VCMS Press release

02-06-2025

For immediate release

Which? research shouldn't put off pet owners looking for help with their vet complaints

A spokesperson from the Veterinary Client Mediation Service (VCMS), the approved alternative dispute resolution service for pet owners and veterinary professionals, is reassuring pet owners and veterinary practices that they are in good hands with the VCMS after the publication of Which? research into vet industry complaints.

Jennie Jones, Head of Service at the VCMS, said: "We appreciate that comments on individual complaints may cause pet owners to worry that escalating their complaint to the VCMS may not be productive. The Which? survey results also referenced consumers who had a positive experience through using the service, as well as one complaint which came to the service five years ago."

"The VCMS is available to all pet owners and veterinary practices in the UK. The VCMS is not a membership scheme. When a pet owner comes to us, we approach the practice and around 80% of practice welcome the input of the VCMS and the complaint is mediated. A practice declining is very much the exception and can be for appropriate reasons".

The service has evolved since its trial in 2017. It continues to develop the mediation process to improve outcomes and satisfaction for consumers and practice teams, as well as the delivery of veterinary care. 88% of pet owners who used the service this year would recommend the VCMS to other pet owners. The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons funds the service, and it is free at the point of use for consumers.

Recent feedback from pet owners illustrates the benefits of using the service: "*I highly recommend going through the VCMS for help and support to navigate what is a painful and stressful situation*" and another commented "*very helpful...calm, understanding and balanced and I greatly appreciated their efforts to help resolve an upsetting situation*".



As Jennie explains, “the VCMS process is easy to navigate, and the team provide impartial and compassionate mediation support to help the pet owner and practice resolve complaints and often distressing issues. Resolutions agreed can be financial and others include changes in the practice to improve the experience in the future. It is also important that insight and learnings from complaints are fed back into the veterinary profession as part of continuous improvement to help pet owners and practices work together in the best interests of our beloved family pets.”

The VCMS welcomes the CMA investigation into the veterinary market and is hopeful this will bring about much needed and called for updates to the regulatory framework which includes the regulation of businesses as well as individual veterinary professionals. The investigation is also consulting on changes to the VCMS including making the process mandatory and increasing awareness of the service.

For more information on the VCMS process, how to contact us, and insight into the complaints resolved, please visit www.vetmediation.co.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information, contact Jennie Jones, Head of VCMS jenniejones@vetmediation.co.uk on 01279 712580 or sueclark@nockolds.co.uk for press enquiries.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. The RCVS is the regulatory body for veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses in the UK and sets, upholds and advances veterinary standards, so as to enhance society through improved animal health and welfare.
2. Veterinary Client Mediation Service (VCMS) is a free service funded by the RCVS and administered by Nockolds Solicitors which aims to resolve disputes between veterinary clients and veterinary professionals through mediation. Further details about the service, the VCMS process and insight can be found at [Welcome to the Veterinary Client Mediation Service \(VCMS\)](#)

The VCMS is an approved ADR body for the veterinary profession - <https://www.vetmediation.co.uk/resources/news/did-you-know-that-the-veterinary-client-mediation-service-vcms-is-an-approved-adr-provider/> audited by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute.

For information on the VCMS response to the CMA investigation - [Veterinary Client Mediation Service | CMA Working Papers published 6 Feb 2025 | Veterinary Client Mediation Service - Optical Consumer Complaints Service](#)

3. Nockolds delivers the VCMS, and are a regulated firm of solicitors. More information can be found on their [website](#) – www.nockolds.co.uk. Having been one of the earliest solicitor's practices to obtain the Law Society Lexcel accreditation over 20 years ago and building on this to obtain Gold standard Investors in People, client care is at the heart of their business. Regulated by the Solicitors' Regulatory Authority, Nockolds understands the expectations of clients and the challenges of the professions delivering a service in a regulated sector. A well-established background in dispute resolution and mediation, enables the firm to offer this holistic yet independent service to benefit both clients and members of the professions.