

# Oviva UK Complaints Policy

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# Contents

1. Introduction
2. Scope
3. Roles and Responsibilities
4. Duty of Candour
5. How to make a complaint
6. Who can make a complaint
7. Time limit for making a complaint
8. Complaints about more than one provider
9. Acknowledgement
10. Complaints Procedure -
  - a. Stage 1: First Line Resolution
  - b. Stage 2: Feedback/Concern Requiring Further Review
  - c. Stage 3: Formal Complaint
11. Appeals
12. Monitoring and Review
13. Confidentiality and consent

# 1. Introduction

The policy outlines our commitment to handling complaints about contracted services delivered and subcontracted by Oviva UK Ltd. Where a service is commissioned by the NHS in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, we will handle complaints in line with the [UK Government: NHS complaints in England](#), [NHS England Feedback and complaints about NHS services](#) [NHS Constitution](#) in concert with the Local Authority Social Services and NHS Complaints Regulations 2009.

## 2. Scope

This policy only applies to the handling of complaints related to Oviva-delivered services and those delivering services on behalf of Oviva. This would include all programmes, whether NHS commissioned or otherwise. It also applies to services whereby Oviva has subcontracted another provider to deliver services on our behalf. More information about the services provided by Oviva can be found on our website at <https://oviva.com/uk/en/our-programmes/>.

For the purposes of this policy:

**Negative feedback** is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about an act, omission or decision, either verbal or written, and whether justified or not, which requires a response.

A **formal complaint** is defined as a written or verbal expression of an escalation of dissatisfaction and/or negative feedback that has not been satisfactorily resolved.

Unless there is an imminent risk to health, a breach in agreement, or the person giving feedback explicitly says they would like the "Scope" section defines exactly which areas, departments, individuals, or products the SOP applies to. It acts like an instruction label, clearly specifying where and when this SOP should be applied.

## 3. Roles & Responsibilities

The UK Operations Director has overall accountability for ensuring that the Oviva complaints policy meets the statutory requirements as set out in the appropriate NHS regulation. The Regulations permit the approval and signing of complaint response letters to be delegated appropriately. The UK Operations Director is responsible for the operational delivery of the Oviva UK complaints policy. This does not remove accountability from other Oviva leaders in delivering services in their respective departments.

Roles and responsibilities are defined in the Oviva UK Complaints Procedure.

The "Responsibilities" section defines who is responsible for each step or task within the complaints process. Clear responsibilities help avoid misunderstandings, improve efficiency, and ensure quality. The [RACI matrix](#) shows the escalation routes.

Task	Complaints team	Operations Director	Oviva Legal Team	Medical Director	SME for specific branch
Responding to requester	R	A/I		C	C
Escalation	R	A/C	I	A	I
Handling escalation		R	R	A/I	C/I

*R (Responsible): Performs the task of initial complaint/feedback handling*

*A (Accountable): Ultimately answerable for the result*

*C (Consulted): Provides input before the task is completed*

*I (Informed): Must be informed about outcomes or progress*

- **Responsibilities:** It is clear that initial handling of the complaint is addressed by the Patient Complaints team, this provides a single point of contact externally and internally.
- **Departments:** Responsibility at departmental level can be more than one area hence the application of the Subject Matter Expert (SME) column. This ensures that information is kept in one point of contact, but that other business areas have a service level agreement to consult or provide technical input e.g. business intelligence, or product teams. NOT directly patient involved but they may be required to share any impact analysis as needed.
- **Roles:** Responsibility can be linked to specific roles within the company (e.g., team leader, specialist). The roles highlighted here are the minimum start point.
- **Escalation paths:** It is defined to whom a problem must be forwarded if one person cannot solve the task. The complaints team are trained to handle in the first instance and escalation

## 4. Duty of Candour

### 4a. Purpose and Commitment

Oviva UK is committed to a culture of openness, transparency, and learning. In line with the statutory Duty of Candour, Oviva ensures that when a notifiable safety incident occurs, affected patients and/or their representatives are informed in a timely, open, and compassionate manner.

This duty reflects Oviva's values and our commitment to treating patients with honesty, respect, and dignity, particularly when care has not met expected standards or has resulted in harm.

### 4b. Statutory Duty of Candour

Oviva UK complies with the statutory Duty of Candour as set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

A notifiable safety incident is defined as an unintended or unexpected incident that occurred during the provision of a regulated activity which resulted in, or could have resulted in, moderate harm, severe harm, or death.

## **4c. What Patients Can Expect**

Where a notifiable safety incident is identified, Oviva will:

- Notify the patient (or their representative) as soon as reasonably practicable
- Provide a truthful, clear, and timely account of what is known about the incident
- Offer a sincere apology, recognising that an apology does not constitute an admission of liability
- Explain the next steps, including any investigation or review process
- Keep the patient informed of progress, findings, and actions taken
- Offer appropriate support and signposting, including advocacy where required

All communication will be delivered sensitively, using language that is clear and accessible, with reasonable adjustments made where necessary.

## **4d. Relationship to Complaints Handling**

Duty of Candour applies regardless of whether a complaint has been made. However, where a concern or complaint identifies a potential notifiable safety incident, the Duty of Candour process will be initiated alongside the complaints procedure.

This ensures that:

- Patients are not required to pursue a complaint in order to receive openness or an apology
- Learning and improvement are prioritised over blame
- Investigations are proportionate, coordinated, and patient-centred

## **4e. Documentation and Governance**

All Duty of Candour actions will be clearly documented, including:

- Details of the incident
- Records of verbal and written communication with the patient or representative
- Copies of written apologies and explanations
- Evidence of learning and improvement actions

Duty of Candour compliance will be monitored through Oviva's governance and quality structures, with themes and learning shared to prevent recurrence and improve patient experience.

## 4f. Staff Responsibilities

All Oviva staff are responsible for:

- Acting with honesty and integrity when things go wrong
- Escalating concerns promptly through appropriate governance routes
- Supporting patients with empathy and professionalism
- Engaging constructively in learning and improvement activities

Senior leaders are accountable for ensuring that Duty of Candour obligations are met consistently and that staff are supported to uphold these principles.

## 5. How to make a complaint

An expression of a concern or dissatisfaction can be made by all Oviva channels, this includes:

- By email: [feedback@oviva.com](mailto:feedback@oviva.com)
- By post: FAO Complaints Team, Oviva UK Ltd, Runway East, 20 St Thomas Street, London, SE1 9RS
- By social media channels: [Facebook, Instagram, TrustPilot, Twitter etc]
- Through our app
- Through the Oviva Website - <https://oviva.com/uk/en/contact/>
- Through any Oviva staff member: Patient Services(Operations), Clinical, Medical, Commercial.
- Through a local commissioner/Integrated Care Board (ICB)

Please note, submissions to an individual's personal email address, social media or telephone will not be deemed appropriate - communications must come through an Oviva channel or associated registered NHS staff.

British Sign Language (BSL) users can talk to us via a video call to a BSL interpreter. This call needs to be booked in advance - please contact us via email or letter to arrange. We will seek to make the necessary reasonable adjustments in order to resolve all issues and concerns . For people whose first language is not English, we have access to a translation and telephone interpreting service. We can also communicate using alternative formats such as Braille.

All correspondence should include:

- Patient name, date of birth, and preferably NHS number too.
- Who or what the concerns are about, including the names of staff if you know them
- Where and when the event(s) happened.

The subsequent management of your complaint by Oviva is outlined in the UK Complaints Operating Procedure.

## 6. Who can make a complaint

A complaint can be made by 'a person who receives or has received services' or 'a person who is affected, or likely to be affected, by the action, omission or decision...which is the subject of the complaint'.

A complaint may be made by a representative acting on behalf of a person mentioned above who:

- Has died - the complainant would usually be the personal representative of the deceased. In order to respond to the personal representative, Oviva may need to request some formal documentation from this person such as a copy of a will (to demonstrate role as executor) or a lasting power of attorney, relating to health care.
- Is a child - Oviva must be satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the complaint to be made by a representative of the child (rather than by themselves) and that the representative is making the complaint in the best interest of the child (a child is considered anyone up to the age of 18).
- Has physical or mental incapacity - In the case of a person who is unable to make the complaint themselves because of either physical incapacity or who lacks capacity within the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- Has given consent to a third party acting on their behalf - In this case, Oviva will require the following information - this will be recorded as part of the complaint file:
  - Name and address of the person making the complaint
  - Name and date of birth or address of the person who is subject of the complaint
  - Consent form signed by the person who is the subject of the complaint
- Has delegated authority to act on their behalf - In this case, an example would be a registered Power of Attorney which must cover health affairs.

## 7. Time limit for making a complaint

A complaint must be made no later than **12 months after the date on which the subject of the complaint occurred** or, if later, the date on which the complaint came to the notice of the complainant. The time limit shall not apply if Oviva is satisfied that the complainant had good reasons for not making the complaint within that time limit and, notwithstanding the delay, it is still possible for a fair and effective investigation. If we do not see a good reason for the delay or we think it is not possible to properly consider the complaint (or any part of it) we will write to the complainant to explain this.

## 8. Complaints about more than one provider

When Oviva receives a complaint, which contains issues about more than one provider or organisation it will have a discussion with the complainant about who is best placed to coordinate the investigation and provide the response. Where it is agreed that Oviva will coordinate and respond on behalf of the providers, consent will be obtained to share the complaint as appropriate.

Where Oviva is not the lead organisation, it will fully cooperate with the organisation who has been identified as the lead. In this event we would liaise with that organisation to ensure appropriate consent is in place.

## 9. Acknowledgement

Where a complainant has specified the way in which they wish to be addressed all communication from the acknowledgement stage onwards will follow that request, including the use of pronouns.

An acknowledgement to a formal complaint:

- Must be within **3 working days**;
- Will be in writing unless in exceptional circumstances where it may be verbal (if made verbally it must be followed up in writing as soon as is possible);
- Should include a summary of what the complaint is about and, where unclear, offer to discuss the desired outcome;
- When the complaint has been made verbally, it must include the written statement which has been recorded as the formal complaint;
- Will address any issues of consent; and
- Must include the name and title of the complaints handler who will be the point of contact for the complainant throughout the complaints process.

## 10. Complaints Procedure

Oviva's feedback and complaints process is structured across three defined stages to ensure concerns are addressed appropriately and escalated when necessary:

- a. First Line Resolution
- b. Feedback/Concern Requiring Further Review
- c. Formal Complaint

### 10a. Stage One: First Line Resolution

Unless the complainant explicitly states an intention to lodge a formal complaint (in which case refer to section 9c), Oviva staff receiving oral negative feedback must take all reasonable steps to resolve the issue at the first point of contact.

If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily and a more comprehensive response is required, it will proceed to Stage Two of the complaints procedure.



## 10b. Stage Two: Feedback/Concern Requiring Further Review

All feedback received across Oviva's various communication channels will be reviewed, collated, and evaluated to determine if further action is necessary.

Where investigation and response to the patient is required, the relevant Clinical Services Manager or Patient services Manager will be assigned to action.

A full investigation must be carried out, with a written/verbal response issued to the complainant within **14 working days**. The response must outline:

- The steps taken during the investigation
- Key findings and conclusions
- Any corrective action initiated as a result
- The resolution offered

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, or specifically requests escalation, the concern should be formally logged and progressed to Stage Three.

## 10c. Stage Three: Formal Complaint

Stage three applies either when a concern is escalated to a formal complaint or when the complainant clearly communicates that they wish to register a formal complaint from the outset.

A Patient Relations Specialist will be assigned to manage formal complaints, in accordance with the Oviva UK Complaints Procedure.

An acknowledgment of the complaint will be issued, either in writing or by telephone, within 3 working days or as soon as reasonably practicable and the anticipated timeframe for a full response.

A thorough investigation will be conducted, and a final definitive written response provided to the complainant within **40 working days**. If a complete response cannot be given within that timeframe due to an ongoing investigation, a progress update must be issued with an expected timeframe for resolution. The final response will include:

- A summary of investigative actions
- Conclusions reached
- Any actions taken
- Outcome and resolution offered

## 11. Appeals

If the complainant wishes to appeal the final decision, they may do so by raising the appeal within 7 working days of receiving the complaint outcome letter. Patients may appeal their complaint

outcome and on those instances we escalate all appeals to a meeting chaired by the Director of Patient Services, the patient is then invited to a meeting with the most senior responsible person for this department or area, with a view to seeking resolution for the patient, as well as ensuring learning from incidents is given the most senior scrutiny. Responsible persons are:

Area	Responsibility
Clinical Operations (delivery)	The Senior Clinical Service Manager is the primary contact, with escalation to the Senior Director Clinical if required
Operations (patient services administration)	Director Patient Services
Medical (primary care)	Medical Director
Medical (consultant secondary care)	Lead Consultant

Should the complainant continue to feel dissatisfied with the outcome, they may contact the **Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman**:

 Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP  Phone: 0345 015 4033

## 12. Monitoring and Review

The organisation will ensure that all complaints are reviewed to identify themes and opportunities for improvement.

Lessons learned will be shared across the service and incorporated into quality improvement initiatives.

Progress on actions taken will be monitored through the governance structure and reported to the Board.

## 13. Confidentiality and Personal Data

Oviva has a legal duty to maintain confidentiality of personal data which is handled in accordance with our Privacy Policy available here: <https://oviva.com/uk/en/legal/#privacy>