



GUIDE FOR CHIROPRACTIC PATIENTS

How We Can Help

All chiropractors and chiropractic clinics should have their own complaints procedure to address concerns raised by patients. Many concerns can be resolved directly with the clinic. However, when a complaint remains unresolved, the Chiropractic Complaints Mediation Service (CCMS) provides an independent and impartial service to help patients and chiropractic professionals work towards a satisfactory outcome.

We understand that complaints can be stressful and that people want them resolved fairly, respectfully and without unnecessary delay. We are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion, and everyone involved in the complaints process will be treated with courtesy, fairness and respect.

The service is a free to use service as it is currently operating as pilot funded by the General Chiropractic Council, who are the statutory regulator of the chiropractic profession. The pilot launched on 1 September 2026 for an initial seven-month period.

The pilot is being delivered by Nockolds Resolution, who run ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) Approved Body services in other sectors including the eyecare/optics and veterinary care in the UK.

What We Do

The CCMS Mediation Process

CCMS is an independent, confidential, telephone-based mediation service that helps patients and chiropractic professionals resolve complaints through constructive communication and collaborative problem-solving.

Mediation seeks to resolve disputes without taking sides, making judgments, conducting investigations or providing legal advice. We do not determine who is right or wrong. Instead, we facilitate discussions to help both parties better understand your concerns and explore mutually acceptable resolutions. An impartial resolution manager will be assigned to help you and the chiropractor to resolve your complaint in a mutually acceptable way.

Your CCMS resolution manager will:

- Listen and understand your concerns.
- Gather information from both parties.
- Encourage constructive communication through shuttle mediation (talking to each party separately).
- Use mediation techniques to help clarify misunderstandings, address concerns and explore key elements that require resolution.
- Help identify practical solutions and proposals.
- Support both parties in reaching a mutually acceptable resolution.

By exploring your concerns and understanding the chiropractic professional's perspective, we help everyone involved focus on finding a positive way forward.

CCMS is an independent service for patients and chiropractic professionals. Our aim is to facilitate fair and effective complaint resolution while maintaining impartiality throughout the process.

The CCMS process is:



Independent

As the pilot is operated by a third party ADR expert, the service is independent from the chiropractic sector and stakeholders. CCMS does not 'work' for either party and has no vested interest in the outcome.



Impartial

The process and standards underpinning the pilot ensure it is fair, neutral and without professional or regulatory bias. The resolution managers listen to both sides fairly and do not favour one party over the other.



Resolution Focused

The process supports and facilitates finding a resolution which both parties can agree, and which allows both parties to bring the matter to a close, feel heard and also give an opportunity to gain insight as part of reflective practice and continual improvement.

Mediation is a well-established dispute resolution technique, and is based on the following core principles:

- Confidential – the discussions take place with the resolution manager and remain within the mediation process. This creates a safe space for both parties to share their perspectives and explore how concerns can be understood, addressed and resolved.
- Without prejudice – the matters discussed within the process cannot be referred to in any subsequent civil legal proceedings involving the complaint. This is an accepted approach in both formal legal and ADR processes which allows the parties to make offers, proposals or share information in the spirit of resolving the complaint or dispute.

These elements and expectations are clearly set out in an Agreement to Mediate which both parties sign, and in the Mediation Resolution Agreement which confirms the agreed outcome.

Our aim is to help patients and practitioners resolve complaints efficiently and fairly, and can be highly effective where a complaint can be resolved with:

- An explanation
- An apology or acknowledgement
- Remedial action or communication
- A refund discussion where appropriate
- Clarification of treatment plans
- Agreement regarding future care or conduct
- Signposting, and
- Other proposals which both parties are willing to agree and bring matters to a close.

Because mediation is collaborative rather than adjudicative, we do not impose decisions or award compensation.

The process is informal, and legal representation is not required. If you wish, a family member, friend or advocate can support you throughout the process.

Who Can Complain to Us?

You may bring a complaint to CCMS if you:

- Are receiving or have received chiropractic care from a registrant of the General Chiropractic Council; or
- Have sought chiropractic services and experienced concerns regarding the treatment, service or conduct of a chiropractic clinic or practitioner within our remit.

What Complaints Can We Help With?

We may be able to assist with concerns relating to:

- The quality of customer service received.
- Communication issues.
- Concerns about treatment planning or explanations provided.
- Administrative issues.
- Delays or misunderstandings.
- Fees, billing or service-related disputes.
- Concerns regarding treatment outcomes where mediation is appropriate.

Our role is to help patients and chiropractic providers discuss concerns constructively and work towards a mutually acceptable resolution.

When Should a Complaint Be Referred?

We encourage patients to raise concerns with the chiropractic clinic as soon as possible. Most clinics have an internal complaints process, and this should be completed first.

You may wish to contact CCMS if:

- Your complaint has not been resolved through the clinic's complaints process.
- You have received a final response that does not resolve your concerns.
- You would like impartial guidance during the complaints process.

We generally encourage complaints to be raised within twelve months of the events concerned.

What Complaints Can't We Help With?

CCMS will not be able to assist where the complaint relates primarily to:

- Concerns involving a clear public protection risk, serious or repeated allegations, dishonesty, abuse, serious clinical concern, safeguarding concern, immediate risk to patients or the public, or matters likely to require formal Fitness to Practise investigation.
- Complaints where mediation could compromise an ongoing investigation, delay urgent regulatory action, or create confusion about the GCC's statutory responsibilities.
- Allegations involving illegal practice, misuse of protected title, failure to cooperate with the regulator, serious misconduct or information suggesting wider risk to patients or the public.
- Possible Clinical Negligence- if a patient believes they have suffered significant harm as a result of negligent treatment and are entitled to compensation, they should seek independent legal advice from a solicitor specialising in clinical negligence.
- Complaints Outside Our Jurisdiction- where appropriate, we will direct patients to another organisation better placed to assist them.

- Historic complaints where the circumstances of the complaint or the final response from the Chiropractor was more than 12 months ago. The CCMS has a discretion to assist in these matters, and a decision will be taken on a case-by-case basis.

If we cannot help directly, we will endeavour to signpost you to an organisation better placed to assist.

How Can a Complaint Be Referred?

You can contact CCMS by:

Telephone:

Email: enquiries@chirocomplaints.co.uk

Online form [\[link\]](#)

Written: CCMS, 6 Market Square, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 3UZ

Our team will explain the process and discuss whether mediation is appropriate for your circumstances.

What Happens Next?

When we receive your complaint, we will:

- Review the information you provide.
- Confirm whether the complaint falls within our remit.
- If your complaint is not suitable for mediation, we will provide further guidance to signpost you to an appropriate organisation or pathway wherever possible.
- If your complaint is suitable for mediation, we will assign a resolution manager and contact the chiropractic professional or clinic to obtain relevant information.
- Arrange the shuttle mediation calls so we can discuss the issues separately with each party.
- Facilitate mediation and explore possible resolutions.
- If appropriate, confirm the agreed outcome in a 'Mediation Agreement'.

Either party may withdraw from mediation at any stage.

Where a complaint is successfully resolved through mediation, the parties may be asked to confirm that the agreed outcome settles the complaint and brings the matter to a close. Any legally binding effect will depend on the terms of the agreement reached.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

CCMS is committed to providing a service that is accessible, fair and respectful.

We strive to ensure that our services are accessible and responsive to individual needs wherever reasonably possible.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the cost of using the service?

CCMS is funded by the General Chiropractic Council so is free at the point of use.

Will CCMS represent me?

No. We are an impartial mediation service and do not represent either the patient or the chiropractic professional.

How long will the process take?

We aim to have completed the CCMS process within XX days of the Agreement to Mediate being signed.

Can CCMS decide who is right?

No. Our role is not to judge or investigate complaints but to help both parties communicate effectively and explore solutions.

Can CCMS award compensation?

No. We do not make legal determinations or award compensation. Mediation focuses on reaching an agreed resolution.

Will mediation involve a joint meeting?

No. Mediation will involve separate telephone conversations with each party or, where appropriate and agreed, a joint discussion.

What if mediation does not resolve the complaint?

If no agreement is reached, both parties remain free to explore other available options, including legal or regulatory routes where appropriate.

Who will be mediating my complaint?

A CCMS resolution manager will be assigned to your complaint and will work with you and the chiropractor/practice. They will be one of the trained and impartial resolution managers who work in accordance with the requirements of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Approved Body framework and have experience in complaint resolution or chiropractic practice.

What happens if the pilot ends before my complaint mediation is concluded?

CCMS will complete the resolution process for any referrals received during the pilot and where the mediation process has commenced.