



# Reporting Veteran Concerns With Community Care

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) encourages Veterans to help VA improve the quality and safety of care Veterans receive in the community. Veterans referred by VA providers to community providers can report concerns regarding the quality or safety of services received during a community care visit or other issues related to community services.

## Overview

### 1. What is the difference between a quality and safety concern and a complaint/grievance?

Quality and safety concerns are concerns regarding the quality or safety of health care services performed by community care providers. For example, a provider prescribes an incorrect dosage for a medication or orders an incorrect test/procedure (e.g., x-ray completed on the right shoulder instead of the left shoulder).

Grievances are any complaints or disputes about dissatisfaction with operations, activities, or behavior of the community provider or staff supporting the provider. Examples include discrimination, staff rudeness, cleanliness of office, or the length of wait times in the office.

### 2. Who can submit a quality concern or complaint/grievance?

A Veteran, or a representative of a Veteran, such as spouse and family member, can work with VA Medical Center (VAMC) Patient Advocates to report a quality concern, safety concern, or complaint.

### 3. Who are Patient Advocates and how can I get in touch with them?

Patient Advocates are highly trained professionals available at VAMCs to help Veterans with concerns that cannot be resolved with their health care provider or team. Patient Advocates listen to questions, complaints or compliments Veterans have and work with the appropriate staff to facilitate resolution.

Patient Advocate contact information is available on each VAMC website. Please refer to the VAMC directory, <https://www.va.gov/health/vamc/>, to find your local Patient Advocate.

## Review and Next Steps

### 4. What happens after I report a quality or safety concern?

Patient Advocates will forward a complaint about a quality or safety concern to the VAMC's Community Care Office for review and submission of a form to the community provider's contracted network, if applicable. The Community Care Office may also report the event to the VAMC's Patient Safety Manager to review the concern and implement corrective actions in partnership with the community provider. The VAMC's Community Care Office will provide a response back to the Veteran (or representative of Veteran).

### 5. What happens after I report a complaint/grievance?

Patient Advocates will partner with the VAMC's Community Care Office to submit a grievance form to the community provider's contracted network, if applicable, request investigation and resolution, or follow established VA guidance and procedures for resolution and corrective action implementation when necessary. VAMC Community Care Office staff ensure complaints/grievances are addressed and resolved, as possible, and that a response is provided to the Veteran (or representative of Veteran).