



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 patient safety event and a complaint/grievance?

A Community Care patient safety event is an adverse event or close call impacting a Veteran that occurs at a facility outside VA that is providing care on behalf of VA.

Complaints stem from minor issues that can typically be resolved by staff present at the time the concern is voiced, while grievances are more serious and generally require investigation into allegations regarding the quality of patient care. VHA encourages reporting of any complaint or dispute expressing dissatisfaction with any aspect of the operations, activities, or behavior of the CCN coverage, staff supporting this program, or its providers, regardless of whether remedial action is requested.

2. Who can submit a patient safety event 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 patient safety and quality event or complaint.

A Veteran may also report a patient safety event or a complaint/grievance directly to the Third-Party Administrator (TPA), through their websites. The Veteran must log onto the patient portal for the respective TPA to submit the complaint. To submit a patient safety event and/ or a complaint/grievance for regions 1-3, please refer to the [Optum Veteran Patient Portal](#) and sign in. To submit a patient safety event and/ or a complaint/grievance for Regions 4-5, please refer to the [TriWest Veteran Patient Portal](#) and sign in.

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.

A Patient Advocate is an employee who is specifically designated at each VHA facility to manage the feedback received from veterans, family members and friends. The Patient Advocate works directly with management and employees to facilitate resolutions. You may contact the Patient Advocate at your facility- [Find your nearest VA](#).

Review and Next Steps

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

The Patient Advocate will document the Veteran's concern in the Patient Advocate Tracking System (PATS) will assign the incident to the Community Care service line in PATS, which will route the concern to the facility Community Care office for resolution.

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

Patient Advocates will partner with the Veteran and 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).