

Informal Dispute Process: Guidance for GOS Contractors

Overview

If you have received a PPV outcome report and wish to dispute identified recoveries, you can request an informal meeting with an NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) Clinical Advisor in line with the Eye Health Policy, Section 10.3, Managing Disputes – Informal Process.

Purpose of the informal meeting

The informal dispute meeting is part of the 'Managing Disputes' process outlined in the Eye Health Policy. During this informal stage, both parties must make every reasonable effort to communicate effectively about the disputed issues and cooperate with each other to resolve matters before considering formal dispute resolution procedures.

The meeting will focus specifically on identified recoveries that you wish to dispute. Claims marked as 'No Action' or 'Education and Feedback' will not be discussed, nor will recoveries that have already been agreed to be rescinded based on additional evidence you provided by the disputes template.

Meeting principles

To ensure the informal meeting is productive and supportive, all parties must follow these principles:

- **Professional representation:** Either party may involve relevant professional representative bodies to help achieve resolution. However, professional representatives attending the meeting are there for support only and cannot speak or act on behalf of either party. If consultation with a professional representative is needed, a short break will be called.
- **Review process:** Each identified recovery has undergone review by a caseworker (non-clinical), followed by two clinical advisors (both registered optometrists).
- **Discussion format:** Identified recoveries are grouped by trends, which will be discussed first. You will then have the opportunity to discuss specific recovery claims with the NHSBSA Clinical Advisor.
- **Meeting record:** The meeting will not be recorded. However, you will receive a written summary by email after the meeting concludes, outlining the outcome and any next steps.

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the next steps include:

Stage 1 – Local Dispute Resolution: If both parties have made reasonable efforts to communicate and cooperate during the informal stage, you may invoke the first stage of

formal dispute resolution with your relevant Integrated Care Board (ICB). Further information is available in the Eye Health Policy.

Stage 2 – NHS Dispute Resolution Procedure: If agreement cannot be reached at the informal and Stage 1 formal stages, you may submit a written request for dispute resolution to the FHSAU, which carries out NHS dispute resolution functions under the GOS Regulations. Further information is available in the Eye Health Policy.

After the meeting

If any recoveries are rescinded following the meeting, you will receive a revised PPV outcome report detailing:

- The number of identified recoveries remaining on your account
- The number of identified recoveries rescinded
- The costs associated with remaining recoveries
- Links to relevant documents, guidance and regulations for both recovered and reverted claims

About our Clinical Advisors

All NHSBSA Clinical Advisors are registered optometrists with the General Optical Council, who have experience of working in practices with GOS contracts. Their email addresses and GOC registration numbers are available on request.

For more information about the dispute process, please refer to the Eye Health Policy, Section 10.3.