

## Complaints Policy

### **Introduction**

Acculabs Diagnostics strive to ensure our services always meet your expectations. If you feel dissatisfied with our services for any reason, we would like to hear from you so that we can address your concerns and learn from our mistakes wherever possible. Acculabs Diagnostics take all complaints very seriously, and aim to address them impartially and responsibly, with a goal to achieve the best outcome for all users of our services.

### **What is a complaint?**

Some issues raised by a complainant may be identified as a simple misunderstanding, and with the help of our team it may only require a little clarification to address your concerns. However, we fully acknowledge that some issues raised could be a genuine cause for complaint, such as when it is highly likely that the laboratory has made a significant error. In these circumstances, we will do everything possible to achieve a satisfactory outcome for you, provide you with a formal written response, and provide you with the reassurance that the issue is unlikely to recur.

### **How to raise a complaint**

You can raise a formal complaint by contacting the laboratory directly via telephone and ask to speak to the Laboratory Manager. The telephone number is: 01740 644439

Alternatively, you can contact us via email at: [enquiries@acculabsdiagnostics.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@acculabsdiagnostics.co.uk)

Please try to ensure you have all relevant information to hand when you contact us as this will help us resolve any issues quickly.

### **How we deal with your complaint**

We may need to ask for more information such as your personal details (i.e., name and date of birth) and the type of test you have had in order to process your complaint. Once all the relevant data has been retrieved, we can then investigate thoroughly. You can expect to receive a response from us within 24 hours on weekdays. Depending on the nature and complexity of the issue raised, more time may be required to investigate and address the issue.

Upon investigation we will determine if your complaint is justified. If we detect that there has been a failing on the laboratory's part, we will work to identify the root cause of the issue. Identifying the true root cause of the issue is crucial to ensuring that any corrective action put in place is going to prevent recurrence. We will then ensure that all corrective action is agreed upon by management and implemented within a given timeframe that is proportionate to the action required.

## **Confidentiality**

We treat all complaints with the strictest confidentiality. The details of your complaint will only be shared with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party in circumstances where it is absolutely relevant. We would not share any personal data with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party that does not already hold your personal data. For example, if you raise a complaint directly with us, but you had your sample taken and sent to us by a clinic who works with us, we may need to share information with the clinic to ensure they are aware that an incident has taken place, as it may have implications for them and their users.

## **What you can expect from us**

Upon receipt of your complaint, we will respond by advising you that an investigation will be initiated. If you raise your complaint via telephone, this will be stated immediately. If you raise your complaint via email, this will be stated within 24 hours (weekdays). If we require further information to assist with the investigation, we will contact you as soon as possible to request it.

If your complaint is not relevant to the work conducted here at Acculabs Diagnostics, we will advise you to contact the relevant organisation (i.e., your complaint may be in relation to work performed by your clinic, rather than our laboratory). If your complaint is in relation to the work we conduct, we will investigate thoroughly. Please be patient during this time as investigations may be complex in nature.

If the investigation determines that the laboratory has made a significant error which may impact your test results, you will be informed at the earliest opportunity. This may mean that the root cause of the issue is still yet to be determined and the investigation will continue until it is concluded, and corrective action agreed. Following closure of the investigation, a final report will be documented. This document is called a 'Non-Conformance Report (NCR)' and will detail the issue that was raised, the identified root cause of the issue, and the corrective action which was agreed. This ensures that the laboratory holds detailed records of any adverse events so that mistakes can be learned from.

You will receive a letter which will summarise the investigation findings and provide details of the investigation outcome. It may take up to 20 working days from the initiation of the investigation for you to receive this final written response. In rare circumstances, an investigation of significant complexity may take more time to conclude. If this is the case, we will contact you with a revised deadline.

If for any reason you are still dissatisfied with the investigation outcome, you may request that the investigation is reviewed, but requests such as this must be justified in order to be considered.

### **Unreasonable behaviour**

Acculabs Diagnostics understand that it can be frustrating if things do not go to plan, however we must ask that you treat our staff with courtesy and patience as we try to resolve any issues for you. Our staff are under no obligation to maintain communication with you if you are aggressive toward them, however if the details of your complaint have been raised, we will always investigate in full, and to the best of our ability.

Please be aware that persistent complaints may be deemed unreasonable and the laboratory is under no obligation to investigate if this is determined by management. Although highly unlikely, the laboratory reserves the right to refuse to investigate your complaint further if your behaviour is deemed unreasonable. The laboratory will document this as significant justification for refusal to investigate your complaint(s) further.