

# CMA to issue consumer law guidelines for the IVF sector

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has concerns about possible cases of mis-selling of services such as IVF 'add-on' treatments, and possible misrepresentation of clinics' success rates. The CMA is working closely with the sector regulator, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), to understand patients' experiences and learn more about how clinics operate.

Going through or exploring potential fertility treatments can be a stressful and emotional experience, with people having to make decisions in challenging circumstances. As such, it is important that clinics provide all the necessary information on treatments to allow patients to make informed choices.

Currently, there is no written guidance on consumer protection law for the IVF sector. The CMA is therefore concerned that clinics might not be aware of their obligations, and so is producing guidance which will cover issues such as:

- Price transparency: Clinics should present clear and upfront prices for their treatments.
- Potential mis-selling of treatments: Patients should not be mis-sold 'add-on' treatments. These are optional extras offered by some clinics that can cost up to £2,500 per cycle. Patients should be given all the information they need before deciding whether an add-on is right for them.
- Success rates: Clinics should not mislead patients about how successful their treatments are and should ensure that rates are accurate and up to date on their websites and in advertising.
- Unfair terms: Terms and conditions should be fair and transparent.

As it develops its guidance, the CMA will consult publicly later this year and would like people to get in touch to share their experiences.

The CMA will also publish some advice for patients.

At this early stage, the CMA has not reached a view as to whether or not consumer protection law may have been broken. However, if it finds evidence that some clinics' practices are misleading or their terms are unfair, it could take enforcement action.

All information relating to this review can be found on the [Self-funded IVF page](#). This also sets out how people can get in touch with information on the concerns identified above.