# UK Competition and Markets Authority Launches Investigation into Veterinary Market Amid Rising Concerns



The UK Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has launched a thorough investigation into the veterinary market over concerns regarding high prices and limited choices for pet owners. Announced on May 23, 2024, the probe will examine whether consumers are receiving sufficient information to make informed decisions, if profits align with competitive market expectations, and the impact of recent consolidations by large vet groups.

The CMA noted that approximately 60% of veterinary practices are now owned by a few large companies, compared to just 10% in 2013. The investigation was prompted by nearly 56,000 responses from pet owners and industry professionals following an initial review. The regulator’s aims include potentially capping prescription fees, mandating the sale of parts of larger vet groups, and ensuring transparency in fees and services offered to consumers.

CMA's Chief Executive Sarah Cardell stated that the investigation reflects significant concerns about excessive vet bills, overpricing of medicines, and limited treatment options. While acknowledging challenges such as staff shortages, the CMA sees the market probe as essential for both pet owners and veterinary professionals. The investigation will be conducted by an independent group and is expected to take up to 18 months.