

# Terms of Business

Welcome to our practice. We would like to thank you for entrusting the care and attention of your cat to The Oxford Cat Clinic. We would ask that you take a few moments to read the following terms of business. If any of the details are unclear please ask for further clarification.

## Practice opening hours

8.00am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday

9.00am to 2.00pm Saturday

10.00am to 12.00pm Sunday

**Clients should be aware that all calls to the Oxford Cat Clinic are recorded for training and monitoring purposes.**

## Fees

All fees, diets and drug charges are subject to VAT at the current rate. Fee levels are determined by the time spent on a case and according to the drugs, materials, consumables and diets used. The cost of most routine surgery includes the cost of one post-operative check, but does not include the cost of any further consultations, dressings, consumables or drugs used. We are happy to provide estimates as to the probable costs of a course of treatment upon request. It remains the owner's responsibility to ensure that they have received an estimate of the costs of treatment prior to it being administered if they have concerns about their ability to pay. Please bear in mind that any estimate given can only be approximate – often a pet's illness will not follow a typical course. Therefore costs may vary according to the response to treatment or other factors.

## Methods and terms of payment

Settlement is expected at the end of a consultation and at the time when drugs or food are collected. We can accept cash or credit card. Only in exceptional circumstances can the practice allow a delay in payment. Delayed payments must be agreed with the veterinary surgeon prior to treatment, with a written note made on the client's records. We reserve the right to request that any delay in payment must be in the form of a standing order with your bank. Payments can be made over the phone.

Should an account not be settled within 14 days then a reminder will be sent. Further reminders will incur an additional accounting fee in respect of administrative costs incurred. The practice reserves the right to use debt collection agencies at any stage where agreed payment plans have not been complied with, or where the practice is concerned about non-payment. Further charges will be levied in respect of costs incurred in collecting the debt.

Any cheques returned by our bank as unpaid, any credit card payment not honoured, and any cash tendered that is found to be counterfeit will result in the original account being restored to the original sum with further charges and administrative costs together with interest on the principle sum.

## Pet Insurance

We strongly support the principle of insuring your cat against unexpected illness or accident. Under the Financial Services act we are unable to recommend any particular insurance policy, but we do have an information sheet to help guide you on your choice of policy. We would generally recommend a "for life" policy. In most cases you will be responsible for settling our bill at the time of treatment and then claiming reimbursement of the amounts covered by your policy from your insurance company. For bills in excess of £300 we can usually make a claim for your insurance

company to pay us directly, as long as you provide us with a signed and completed claim form within 5 working days of invoicing. You will need to pay the policy excess at the time of treatment. Any outstanding amount not covered by the insurers will be due for payment immediately after the insurers have settled the claim. In the unlikely event that a claim for direct payment has not been settled within 6 weeks we will require you to settle the account directly with us. Any claims for ongoing treatment will need to be paid by you at the time, and claimed back from your insurance company. If you require further help please ask for our "How to make a claim" guide sheet or ask a member of staff

## **Phone Calls**

It is our policy to record all phone calls coming into and going out of the practice. These recordings will be used in the case of a complaint or dispute.

## **Transporting your pet**

The responsibility for your pet whilst waiting for a consultation is with you and therefore we would request that all pets arrive at the surgery and leave enclosed in a suitable secure carrier. Baskets are available for sale or hire at reception upon request but we may require 24 hours notice.

## **Repeat Examinations and Repeat Prescriptions**

With the exception of a few simple problems it is practice policy that any animal with an ongoing illness is re-assessed by a vet at intervals of not more than three months. Regular monitoring of your cat ensures that we comply with the appropriate medicines legislation and that best results are achieved. In some cases of chronic disease we can offer repeat prescriptions without the need to see your cat. All requests for repeat medication have to be authorised by one of our veterinary surgeons. Request for repeat prescriptions can be made by e-mail or by telephone, but a 24-hour notice period is required before the medicines are available for collection.

## **Out of Hours Emergency Service provisions**

Out of hours emergency care at The Oxford Cat Clinic (OCC) is provided by Medivet Emergency Service - a dedicated veterinary emergency service based at Parkwood Veterinary Hospital in Hensington Road, Woodstock. In the case of an emergency please ring our normal number – 01865 243000. A phone message will redirect you to the Emergency Clinic. Emergency fees are charged directly by Medivet.

## **Patient records**

Patient records are the property of The OCC, but clients are free at any stage to request a copy of computer record of their pet's clinical case notes. 24 hours notice is required. The practice reserves the right to make a charge to cover the cost of producing these records. This charge will be notified to the client at the time of request or as soon as reasonably feasible thereafter. No charge is made when transferring clinical notes to another veterinary surgery.

## **Ownership of patient records other than clinical notes**

The care given to a patient may require specific investigations, for example radiographs or ultrasound scans. A professional fee is charged for carrying out these investigations and interpreting the results. However ownership of the resulting record, for example x-ray images, remains with the practice.

Clients are encouraged to view and discuss all x-rays/blood results etc when they collect the patient. In the event of the client moving practices or going to a referral consultation, x-ray images and other documentation may be forwarded direct to that practice where it is felt appropriate.

## House visits

In certain circumstances we will try and comply with owners requests for a house visit. However due to the time away from the surgery that a domiciliary visit requires it may not always be possible. House visits are undertaken at the discretion of the Veterinary Surgeon and are not available outside practice opening hours.

## Complaints and Standards

At all times it is our intention to try and ensure client satisfaction with the service that is provided, and we hope that you never have cause for complaint. In the event that you are unhappy with any aspect of our service, please raise it with a member of staff. If the proposed resolution is not to your satisfaction, then an appointment can be made with either Caroline Blundell or Martha Cannon, the veterinary partners, to discuss the matter further. Alternatively you may write to them to the address above if you prefer. Should we be unable to resolve a dispute we would present the case to our governing body The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

The practice reserves the right to terminate the service it provides to a client and his/her animals. This will be done in writing and allow 7 day period to permit the client to register with another veterinary practice. We will fax patient records on request of the new practice. In the event of verbal or physical abuse to any member of practice staff, the practice reserves the right to provide no further treatment to the animals of the client, and the client will be banned from the practice premises and environs with immediate effect. The practice reserves the right to involve the police where it feels it appropriate.

*Any addition or variation to these conditions will be displayed in reception for a period of at least 3 months but we regret we are unable to notify clients individually*