

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF BUSINESS

Thank you for entrusting the care and attention of your pet to The Goddard Veterinary Group. This document details our Practice Terms and Conditions. Should you require any clarification of any aspect of the terms then please ask.

FEES

All fees, diets and drug charges are available on request and are subject to VAT at the current rate. Fee levels are determined by the level of expertise and time spent on a case and according to drugs, consumables and materials used. A member of staff will be happy to discuss any queries you may have. You will be presented an itemised fee invoice for every consultation, surgical procedure or transaction with us at the time of payment.

OWNERSHIP OF RECORDS

The care given to your pet may involve undertaking some specific investigations, for example taking radiographs. The ownership of the resulting radiographs and all other records will remain at all times with the practice as part of your complete and comprehensive records. Charges made for x-rays are for the interpretation of them. If required, we can arrange to have copies of x-rays made but this would be at your expense.

Radiographs and copies of all laboratory results, with a summary of the history will be passed on, by request, to another Veterinary Surgeon should the need arise. You may view your pet's clinical notes on request by appointment only. Please note it is your responsibility to provide us with accurate contact details.

SETTLEMENT TERMS

Payment is due at the time of treatment or discharge unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in advance; should an account not be settled a reminder will be sent. Should it be necessary for further reminders to be sent, administration charges may be incurred. After due notice unpaid accounts will be referred to our debt collection agency and further charges, such as for the production of reports, correspondence, court fees, attendance at court and phone calls will be levied in respect of costs incurred in collecting the debt. Any cheque or credit/debit card transaction not honoured or any cash tendered that is found to be counterfeit will result in the account being restored to the original sum with further charges added to cover bank charges and administrative costs together with interest on the principal sum.

INABILITY TO PAY

If for any reason you are unable to settle your account as specified, we ask you to discuss the matter with a member of staff as soon as possible and before treatment takes place. Please note that instalments or part payment of any account may only be sanctioned with the express permission of a senior member of staff and must be agreed before treatment takes place. Emergency treatment to alleviate suffering will always be given irrespective of ability to pay.

METHODS OF PAYMENT

Accounts are due for settlement at the end of the consultation, the discharge of your pet or upon collection of drugs and/or diets. You may settle your accounts using cash, credit/debit cards or cheque up to the value on the card. The accounts of hospitalised cases should be paid up to date when the balance reaches £500.

ESTIMATES OF TREATMENT COSTS

We will provide you a written estimate as to the probable cost of a course of treatment or surgical procedure. Please bear in mind that any estimate given can only be approximate and additional costs which cannot be predicted at the outset may occur as treatment progresses. We will make every effort to discuss any such additional costs whenever possible.

PET HEALTH INSURANCE

The Goddard Veterinary Group strongly supports the principle of insuring your pet against unexpected illness and accidents. Under the regulations of the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) we are authorised to promote and administer the claims of the insurance company PetPlan, exclusively: the practice does not receive commission for this. Please ask for details of Petplan insurance from any member of staff but be aware though that with any insurance company it is your responsibility to determine your level of cover and to then reclaim any fees you have paid the practice. It is also your responsibility to pay any excess that may be set according to your policy and to have knowledge of any condition exclusions. In certain instances when clients do not have the funds to make payment in full, arrangements can be made for your insurer to make their payment directly to us but this only applies to particular insurance companies and even then when sums involved are high enough. Please ask for details if you would like to be considered for this facility.

COMPLAINTS AND STANDARDS

We hope to ensure you never have reason to complain about the standards of service received from us. However, if you feel that there is something you wish to raise, please direct your comments, preferably in writing, to the Regional or Hospital Manager with responsibility for the staff member or service in question. Should you be dissatisfied with the outcome then you should contact the General Manager. At each stage an acknowledgement will be sent by return and then a period will elapse while the case is investigated and reports collated from those staff involved. A reply in writing will follow, usually within 14 days although the period may be longer if the Manager or staff involved are temporarily unavailable or delayed.

MONITORING TELEPHONE CALLS AND EMAILS

Telephone calls and emails to and from the practice may be recorded or monitored. By using such communication methods you are consenting to the recording or monitoring of the same.

PHARMACEUTICALS

Prescriptions are available from this practice.

The current charge for a written prescription is displayed in our reception areas or you may ask a member of staff for this information.

You may obtain Prescription Only Medicines, Category V, (POM Vs) from your veterinary surgeon or ask for a prescription and obtain these medicines from another veterinary surgeon or a pharmacy.

Your veterinary surgeon may prescribe POM Vs only for animals under his or her care.

A prescription may not be appropriate if your animal is an in-patient or immediate treatment is necessary.

You will be informed, on request, of the price of any medicine that may be prescribed for your animal.

The policy of this practice is to re-assess an animal requiring repeat prescriptions every three months, but this may vary with individual circumstances. The charge for this re-examination is our standard ongoing consultation.

Flea and worm treatments can however be dispensed without examination as part of a health plan agreed at the annual health assessment.

Clients are requested to give 24 hours advance notice for repeat prescriptions.

In accordance with the Medicines Act we will always use a veterinary licensed product if possible. Should this not be the case we will then use veterinary products licensed for use in other species and failing that a human medical product. Any use of off-licence medication will be based upon our knowledge of its use in animals and an assessment made of the risks and benefits involved. This is particularly common in species other than dogs and cats for which few licensed products are available. Please speak to a veterinary surgeon if you have any concerns about this issue.

We will supply a written prescription as an alternative to the Goddard Veterinary Group dispensing drugs.

EMERGENCY COVER AND HOME VISITS

The Goddard Veterinary Group provides 24 hour emergency cover at each of its three hospitals. There is a surcharge made for this service over and above the normal consultation fee.

Home visits are available at certain parts of the Practice, if booked in advance, at an extra charge. In an emergency it is usually in the best interests of your pet to be seen at a surgery where facilities and a full range of drugs are available. It is not normally possible to carry out home visits outside normal working hours.

HEALTHCARE REMINDERS

The Goddard Veterinary Group will contact you either by letter, email, phone or SMS in order to advise you of your pet's upcoming healthcare treatments including annual vaccinations.

Whilst we make every effort to send out reminders for your pet's healthcare, these are provided as a complimentary service and the responsibility to keep them up to date remains with you. In particular, please be aware that PETS passports require rabies vaccination boosters so please keep a personal record of when this is due. The Goddard Veterinary Group accepts no liability for any loss, damages or costs which may result from the failure of a client receiving any reminder.

No addition or variation of these conditions will bind the practice unless it is specifically agreed in writing and signed by the General Manager. No agent or person employed by, or under contract with, the company has the authority to alter or vary these conditions.