



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Thank you for entrusting the care of your pet to our Practice. This letter details our Practice Terms & Conditions. Some aspects of the Terms may not be relevant to you. If anything is unclear, please ask for further explanation or clarification.

OUR PRACTICE

Southern Counties Veterinary Specialists is a group of people dedicated to providing a cutting edge service for your pets. We encourage all members of the Practice to fulfil this through extensive further education, and constant consideration of their client and their pets; our facilities and equipment are updated and maintained to the highest standards.

The Practice consist of two partnerships: Southern Counties Veterinary Specialists LLP and, for those who use the Cardio-respiratory service, SCVS (Cardiology) LLP.

OUR STAFF

We undertake to provide veterinary care of the highest standards for your pet . Our veterinary surgeons are all members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, the British Veterinary Association and the British Small Animal Veterinary Association. They also have additional qualifications and specialise in different areas of veterinary medicine and surgery. They are all covered by Professional Liability Insurance and the Practice is covered for Public Liability.

OPENING HOURS & EMERGENCIES

Our normal opening hours for consultations are 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturday. These times may change from time to time. All animals, except emergencies, are seen by appointment only, and all are seen by referral from your usual veterinary surgeon only. We run an emergency veterinary service out of normal hours, which is available 24 hours a day for 365 days of the year, but animals are only seen after referral from your usual veterinary surgeon. Therefore, in emergency, your own veterinary surgeon should be called first, and they should contact us if necessary.

Please leave routine enquiries for normal office hours.

Our fees out of hours will be higher than normal to reflect the appreciable extra costs incurred in providing this service.

REFERRAL

We only see animals by referral from their usual veterinary surgeon. We will expect to see all relevant clinical history and results of diagnostic tests, and will freely share our clinical notes and test results with your veterinary surgeon. We will be responsible for passing the relevant information back to them. Our aim is to work closely with them to achieve a favourable outcome for you and your pet. We will not become your new vet, but we will assist your usual vet.

Follow-up checks will usually be necessary with us, although we will try to ensure that, for your convenience, your vet carries out as much of the treatment as possible. Please note there is always a charge for follow-up consultations.

HOSPITALISATION

All animals which need to be kept on our premises overnight are cared for by a qualified Veterinary Nurse at all times of the day and night. He or she is up and working all night, and is available to give medication, check intravenous drips, and monitor all in-patients at all times. A veterinary surgeon is available at short notice at all times.

For security reasons, the nurses are not allowed to open the doors out of hours, unless a vet is also present. The Hospital is protected by alarm.

FEES

A sample of our fees is available in our Client packs, on our website or on request. Please ask if you would like to know the cost of anything else.

We would encourage you to discuss costs of procedures in advance with our vets. They are used to doing this, and are happy to provide estimates of costs at any time. Please bear in mind that estimates can only be approximate. Pet's illnesses will often not follow a conventional course. However we do undertake to attempt to discuss any changes in costs before continuing, unless treatment is essential for your pet's welfare.

All fees are due for settlement at the end of the consultation, the discharge of your pet after hospitalisation or upon collection of drugs and diets. You may settle your account using cash, cheque with current banker card, or most Credit and Debit cards. We do not take American Express.

SETTLEMENT TERMS

Should an account not be settled, an administrative cost of 1% of the total will be added after 30 days & a reminder will be sent. Should it be necessary for further reminders to be sent, administrative charges will be added at a rate of 1% per month.

After due notice to you the client, overdue accounts will be referred to our Debt Collection Agency, and an Administration charge of £25 will be charged immediately. In addition, any costs incurred by us in collection of the debt will be passed on to you. These will include the commission charged by the Debt Collection Agency, as well as any fees charged by the Court, and costs to us of correspondence, attendance at Court, phone calls, and home visits.

Any cheque that is 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 added in respect of bank charges and administrative costs.

INABILITY TO PAY

If, for any reason, you are unable to settle your account as specified above, we ask you to discuss the matter as soon as possible with a member of staff. Please note that instalments or part-payments can only be sanctioned with the express permission of a Partner or the Practice Manager.

PET HEALTH INSURANCE

We strongly support the principle of insuring your pet against unexpected illness or accidents. We are happy to complete Pet Insurance claim forms. You should expect to pay for all treatments at the time, and then claim the fees back from your insurance company.

We do not normally make direct claims, but will try to do so if you would prefer. Most policies have an excess which you have to pay and we will ask for this as a deposit at the beginning of treatment. We undertake to complete all claim forms within a few days to ensure that your payment is not delayed.

Please remember that the contract is between you the client and the insurance company, and we cannot be held responsible for any matters which result in a claim being refused, and in these cases you will be responsible for settling our account in full.

USE OF YOUR DETAILS

Southern Counties Veterinary Specialists LLP is registered under the Data Protection Act. Your details will not be passed on to any third party. However, we may from time to time contact you for follow-up on your pet's progress.

TELEPHONE CALLS

Telephone calls may be monitored for the purpose of staff training.

OWNERSHIP OF RECORDS

Case records are the property of, and will be retained by Southern Counties Veterinary Specialists LLP. Copies will be passed on request to your usual veterinary surgeon, or to the client following written request.

Ownership of radiographs, ultrasound scans and similar data will remain with the Practice. Any fee which has been paid will be for the preparation of these images and their interpretation only and does not imply your ownership. However, we will provide clients with copies of these images. A small charge may be made to cover our costs.

COMPLAINTS AND STANDARDS

We hope that you never have recourse to complain about the standards of service received at any of our surgeries. However, if there is something which you are not happy about, we would encourage you to let us know, so that we can take appropriate action. Please contact the Practice manager in the first instance. We will reply to all instances promptly.

REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS

Your usual veterinary surgeon will usually arrange for repeat prescriptions for your pet. They may occasionally ask us to do so if, for example, they do not normally stock a particular medicine.

We are happy to provide a Prescription for you to have medications dispensed elsewhere – we do charge a fee for Prescription writing. Please note we cannot take responsibility for medications purchased elsewhere that have been stored incorrectly or have incorrect labels. Please also note that it is a criminal offence to use medications that do not have a UK Licence (e.g. from some foreign internet sites).

RETURN OF MEDICINES

Although we will try to be helpful, we can only give a refund on medicines or products if we are able to re-sell them. They must be in original packing. Only tablets or capsules in blister packs can be refunded. There must be sufficient time before the sell-by date for us to re-sell them. If the medicine needs special storage conditions, e.g. refrigeration, then we cannot refund them. In all cases, we will also apply a 10% charge to cover the administration of the refund & correction to our stock control system.

July 2011