

# **Blake Veterinary Group**

## **Terms and Conditions of Business**

Thank you for entrusting the care and attention of your pet to Blake Veterinary Group. Please ask if you would like further explanation or clarification on any point contained in the following Terms and Conditions of Business.

### **Supply of Services and Goods**

Blake Veterinary Group provides services and goods for which a fee is charged and which is subject to VAT. Fee levels are determined by the time spent on each case and a list of current fees are available on request. The services include professional opinion, in clinic diagnostics, certification, medical care, treatment and surgery. Goods include prescription medication and other products intended to enhance the care of your pet.

Once an owner has requested the opinion of a member of the professional staff a fee may be charged. Blake Veterinary Group hold consent to treatment as informed and authorised by the owners once they have read and signed a Blake Veterinary Group consent form. You will receive a detailed fee note for every consultation, surgical procedure or transaction with us.

Blake Veterinary Group is legally obliged to inform you of the costs of supplying prescription only medicines prior to administration. This is obviously a very time consuming task which will only lengthen your consultation time and consequently the cost of that consultation. Also, during surgery or in an emergency, it may not be feasible to do so. We therefore advise that in accepting these terms, you accept that you have been made aware of your right to request information, and that unless you specifically ask the veterinary surgeon, we will not automatically discuss the drug costs further. You will always be given a detailed invoice when you settle any account. This mutual understanding will remain in force whilst you are registered with Blake Veterinary Group. Your acceptance may be revoked at any time by advising us in writing.

### **Repeat Prescriptions**

The Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2005 make it illegal for a veterinary surgeon to prescribe a POM-V medicine without first carrying out a clinical assessment of the animal. It also states that it is an offence to prescribe more than the minimum amount required for the treatment. A written prescription is valid for a maximum of six months, or less if specified.

As a result of these regulations, Blake veterinary Group will require to reassess your animal's health and condition every six months (or less, dependant on the condition). The amount of medicine dispensed should be sufficient for a maximum of one month, or less depending on the condition. A charge will be made for any consultations required to reassess your animal.

We request that you give us 24 hours notice of any repeat prescription required.

If requested we will supply a prescription which can be dispensed by a third party (e.g. a local chemist). As with prescriptions dispensed by ourselves we will require at least 24 hours notice. We will only issue prescriptions on our own letterhead and these can be collected in person after 5pm the following day.

Any person may request price information on any prescription only medicine that we stock. It is our policy that this request is made in writing. We will endeavour to respond to you request with a written reply within two working days of receipt of your request.

### **Estimates of Treatment Costs**

Written estimates of expected costs can also be provided. Please bear in mind that any estimate can only be approximate, because a pet's illness may not follow a predictable course.

## **Methods of Payment**

Payment for services and goods is at the time of provision (e.g. end of consultation, discharge of your pet, or upon collection of drugs/other goods). Payment can be made with:

- Cash
- Cheque with current Banker card
- Credit/Debit Card, (Visa, Mastercard, Switch, Delta)

Variation of this timescale is only possible under exceptional circumstances. The owner or agent presenting or consenting to treatment of the patient must pay for all goods and services provided. This person must be over 18 years.

## **Settlement Terms**

Should an outstanding amount remain unpaid within 14 days, a reminder will be sent with an additional accounting fee in respect of administrative costs incurred. Should it be necessary to send further reminders, further charges will be incurred. After due notice, outstanding debts will be referred to our Debt Collecting Agency and further charges will be levied in respect of costs incurred in collecting the debt: such as production of reports, correspondence, court fees, attendance at court, phone calls etc. Once referred to our Debt Collecting Agency we will no longer treat your animals. You will be given at least seven days notice of this action being taken, giving you adequate time to either settle your debt or register with another veterinary surgery. Any Cheque returned by our Bank as unpaid, any Credit card payment not honoured and any Cash tendered that is counterfeit will result in the original debt being restored to the original sum with further charges added in respect of 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 agreed, we ask you to raise the matter as soon as possible with a member of staff so that a Partner or the Practice Manager can discuss terms for settlement.

## **Opening Hours**

Blake Veterinary Group normal working hours and appointment times are as published and vary from time to time. Outside these hours an emergency service operates in line with Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons guidelines. Additional fees are chargeable for the provision of this exceptional service and estimates of these costs can be given at the time of contacting the service.

## **External Agencies**

From time to time the use of external agencies, e.g. Diagnostic labs, second opinion and referral centres, may be recommended by Blake Veterinary Group. Disbursements made by Blake Veterinary Group on behalf of owners to cover the charges made by these agencies will be detailed on the owner's invoice. Professional opinion including reporting, interpretation and variation of treatment based on these reports will be charged as a separate fee.

## **Ownership of Radiographs and Similar Records**

Reports, clinical notes, radiographs or any images resulting from examinations or procedures remain the property of Blake Veterinary Group. Copies with a summary of the history will be passed on request to another veterinary surgeon taking over a case.

Professional opinion including reporting, interpretation and variation of treatment based on these reports will be charged as a separate fee.

## **Client Confidentiality**

All information relating to both client and patient is held in confidence and in line with the provisions of the Data Protection Act(s) (DPA) and will not be disclosed except under the following circumstances:

- Where a client provides a confirmed request.  
This will be done according to DPA procedure and with the charges detailed in the DPA
- Where another vet requests this in order to continue the patient's care.
- When a request is received from a client's insurance company.
- To a Court or agent of Blake Veterinary Group as part of a legal process.
- Where Blake Veterinary Group outsource reminder services for healthcare programmes, treatment, vaccination or medication.

## **Pet Health Insurance**

Blake Veterinary Group strongly supports the principle of insuring your pet against unexpected illness or accidents. We can provide details of some insurance schemes should you require them. Blake Veterinary Group is an approved representative of Petplan Ltd and as such can be used as your first line of communication with them. Where an owner has elected to obtain insurance from an alternative insurance company, to assist in the payment of veterinary bills, special conditions apply:

- Blake Veterinary Group will have no knowledge of the basis, terms and conditions of provision of insurance for a pet. Clients must therefore take care to know and understand these clearly through discussion as required with their chosen insurance company.
- No contractual obligation exists between Blake Veterinary Group and any insurance company. Blake Veterinary Group complies with RCVS guidelines in respect of completing claims forms. Any disputes arising from slow settlement of claims should be expressly directed to the client's chosen insurance company.
- In any matter where an insurance company requests information in respect of claims settlement, Blake Veterinary Group reserves the right to charge the owner accordingly and on each occasion.

Please be aware that it remains your responsibility to settle our account with us even if you have insurance. Your insurer will pay you, not us.

## **Safety Policy**

Blake Veterinary Group staff are required at all times to work in such a manner as to ensure their own, their colleagues and owners safety and freedom from hazard, threat or injury. In order to comply with this they may make recommendations for the location of examination and treatment, patient restraint and owner conduct. The staff will of course consider patient welfare at these times and make a professional judgment as to appropriate action under the prevailing circumstances.

## **Abusive and Aggressive Behaviour**

We operate a zero-tolerance policy against aggressive or abusive behaviour towards our staff or other clients. Any such behaviour will result in your immediate removal from our client list.

## **Complaints**

We hope you will never have recourse to complain about the standards of service from Blake Veterinary Group. However, if you feel there is something you wish to complain about, please direct your comments in writing to the Partners or the Practice Manager.