

ANIMAL MEDICAL CENTRE REFERRAL SERVICES

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OWNER INFORMATION SHEET

Thank you for entrusting the care and attention of your pet to Animal Medical Centre Referral Services (AMCRS). We sincerely hope that they can be of assistance in treating your pet. Please read the information below which explains our referral policy, and on the accompanying sheet which explains our terms and conditions.

Appointments

- Referrals are made by your normal veterinary practice for the purpose of investigating/treating specific conditions. Referred clients must return to their regular first opinion surgery once treatment by AMCRS has been completed. This is ethically correct and is essential to our success as a referral practice.
- At least one member of the nursing team is available twenty four hours a day to attend to the needs of in-patients.
- Reception is only staffed during normal working hours. Outside normal hours emergency calls are handled through a medical answering service.
- When you make your appointment please inform your vet and check whether they have already sent us a letter of referral and copies of all relevant information including results of lab tests and copies of x-rays etc.
- If not already sent, collect the letter of referral from your vet along with any x-rays and copies of laboratory results and bring these to your appointment at AMCRS.
- Please notify us ASAP if you are unable to keep an appointment. Failure to do so may lead to a cancellation fee being charged.
- Please ensure that the person/people most familiar with the management and current condition affecting the animal attend all consultations so that we can obtain precise and up to date information at each stage of treatment.

Preparing your animal for the appointment

- Please ensure your animal has had the opportunity to go to the toilet prior to arriving at AMCRS, collecting samples if these are likely to be required (Please contact us if you have not been informed of this).
- Medications: It is preferable that your pet has not received steroids or antibiotics for 1-2 weeks prior to your appointment providing this does not incur any undue risk to your pet. If in doubt, please check with your vet.
- Do not feed your pet from 9:00pm on the day before your appointment (unless advised that this would be detrimental, for example if the animals has diabetes), **but do allow access to water** to prevent dehydration.
- Investigations may be performed and completed on the same day or it may be necessary for the patient to be hospitalised for further tests and treatments. This will be discussed during the consultation. If the animal is on a specific diet or medication, please have a supply with you in case admission is necessary.

Fees

- The initial consultation fee is from £140 plus VAT depending on the medical field.
- Recommendations for further investigation and treatment and an estimate of the likely costs will be made following the initial consultation and examination of your pet. Please ask if you do not understand anything.
- The cost of diagnostic investigation varies depending on an individual case. As a guideline, the cost of initial investigation to help reach a diagnosis or assess the severity of a condition is often £500 to £1000 plus VAT.
- More involved cases may require deeper investigation. Medical and surgical investigations, CT and MRI scan are likely to cost £1000 or more each and more than one may be required to obtain a diagnosis.
- Treatment costs also vary considerably. Prolonged medical treatment and major surgery cases can run to several thousand pounds, and treatment costs may be ongoing.

Emergencies

- Due to the nature of our business, emergencies are seen frequently and have to take priority. This may lead to delays to appointments and procedures. We apologise should you be affected by such a delay.

Animal Medical Centre Referral Services

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF BUSINESS

Some aspects of these terms may not be relevant to you. If you require an explanation or clarification please ask.

REGISTRATION

Clients are asked to complete and sign a registration form (preferably before arriving) to ensure that we have their correct details for our records. Registration is only for the duration of referral. Clients must see their own vet for other matters.

ESTIMATES OF TREATMENT COSTS

After consultation we will provide written estimates of the likely costs for the indicated investigations and/or treatments. The estimate is part of the consent form you will sign before these are performed. It is not possible to foresee exact costs, further investigation and ongoing, additional or emergency treatment may be required at additional cost. Please be prepared to leave a deposit of about half the estimated fee if your animal is admitted for investigation or surgery.

FEES

All fees and charges for drugs, consumables and diets are subject to VAT at the current rate. Fee levels are determined by the time dedicated to your animal and on the amount of drugs, materials, consumables and equipment used. A written fee list is available for your perusal on request. Fully itemised invoices are provided for all consultations, investigations, medical and surgical procedures performed on your animal. If the costs turn out to be greater than estimated we will endeavour to discuss this with you promptly. Please let us know ASAP if you are unable to keep an appointment so that we can offer it to someone else, otherwise we are likely to have to charge you for the missed appointment.

PAYMENT

Accounts are due for settlement at the end of each consultation and at the time investigations, surgery or other treatments are performed. A deposit of about half the expected fee will be required when an animal is admitted for investigations and treatments. For short term treatments the balance is due at the time of collecting your animal. Accounts for ongoing and long term treatments must be paid off at intervals during the treatment. Payment in full in advance will be required for certain investigations and for orders of special drugs, diets, materials or equipment.

Accounts may be settled using:

- CASH
- CREDIT/DEBIT CARD – Maestro, Solo, Mastercard, Visa, Delta and Electron
- BANK/BUILDING SOCIETY DRAFT

Please note that we cannot accept personal or business cheques, or credit/debit cards that are not listed above.

Arrangement of direct payments to AMCRS from your insurance company may be possible providing the claim has been pre-authorised by your insurance company. Please contact one of our appointment secretaries if you wish to see if this is possible. Please note that most insurance companies require at least 72 hours notice for pre-authorisation. As insurance contracts are between owners and the insurance company we have very little control, however, you may wish to give your insurer permission to speak to us regarding this to facilitate arrangements.

SETTLEMENT TERMS

All fees are payable at the time of consultation or treatment (see notes under 'payment' above). We do not operate an accounts service. You will be liable for any administration costs, interest, court costs or collection fees incurred to enforce collection of any outstanding balance. Any payment that is not honoured and any cash tendered that is found to be counterfeit will result in the relevant sum being reinstated to the account along with interest on this sum plus further charges in respect of bank charges and administration costs.

LABORATORY AND OTHER EXTERNAL FEES

Charges made for services performed by services external to AMCRS, eg. diagnostic laboratories, also include fees for sample collection and handling, post and packing or other delivery methods, the cost of the tests, administrative costs and in some cases an interpretation fee.

PRESCRIPTIONS

Where drugs are not dispensed by AMCRS a prescription may be issued. It will then be necessary for you to find a dispensing pharmacy willing to supply the drugs. The pharmacy will charge a dispensing fee on top of the cost of the drugs. If you would prefer a prescription rather than having AMCRS dispense drugs please indicate this in advance.

OWNERSHIP OF RECORDS, RADIOGRAPHS, ETC.

Case records including radiographs, CT and MRI scans, ultrasound images, laboratory reports and similar documents are the property of and will be retained by AMCRS. These records are confidential and will not be communicated to any third party other than the referring veterinary surgeon, another veterinary surgeon to whom your animal is referred, or your animal's insurers, without written consent from both you and the referring vet.

COMPLAINTS AND MAINTENANCE OF STANDARDS

We hope that you never feel the need to complain about the standards of service from AMCRS. However, if you feel that something needs to be brought to our attention please contact one of our client care managers: Alma Mulholland or Julie Westlake RVN.