



NVS + NEVS COVID-19 Contactless Consultation and Admissions Policy

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Date: 24.03.2020

OVERVIEW

Due to the highly contagious nature of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, NVS and NEVS have moved to a contactless consultation and admission system. The aim of this is to reduce unnecessary exposure and adhere to social distancing guidelines as advised by health authorities.

CLIENT PROCEDURE

Prior to Arrival

When a client calls to make an appointment, please politely enquire as to the following:

- Have they arrived from overseas or been on a cruise ship in the past 14 days
- Have they been in contact with a person confirmed or suspected (awaiting results) to have a diagnosis of Covid-19
- Are they experiencing any of the following symptoms – fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat

If any of the above apply, please ask them to remain at home and have someone else bring their pet to the hospital. If this is not possible they may attend, however the following will apply:

- Our staff will need to wear full PPE while handling (gloves, mask, gown)
- If their pet is being admitted to hospital it will need to be bathed

All clients should be advised that we are conducting contactless consultations, for the health and safety of all involved. If the appointment is being made in advance, an email will be sent detailing the procedure. A link to a client registration form will also be sent to allow a file to be created prior to the appointment. Clients who are proceeding directly to the hospital must be advised to remain in their vehicle, and to call the hospital on 9452 2933 to advise our staff of their arrival.

When a Client Arrives

If a client arrives without having called ahead, or has forgotten the procedure, do not open the reception door. Explain that they will need to return to their vehicles and call reception.

Obtain full client and patient details over the phone and register them in RxWorks. Please check regular vets, client phone numbers and email addresses carefully as usual.

Instruct the client to place their pet in the black “patient transfer run” located outside the

back door. Ask the client to place our lead (located in the run) on their dog and tether it to the attached caribee clip before removing their lead and exiting the run. Cats and wildlife should remain in their carriers/boxes.

Once the client has cleared the area, a member of staff will enter the run from the opposite door, wearing full PPE. Cat and wildlife boxes must be disinfected before bringing them into the hospital. Wipe over, do not spray the boxes with pets inside.

Please advise the client that their pet will be taken through to the hospital, examined, and then the veterinarian will call them. Ask the client to please remain on site until they speak to the veterinarian to ensure proper consent is obtained.

The patient should be handled with gloves wherever possible as pets can act as fomites and potentially carry coronavirus, although the risk is low. The patient will be assessed in the treatment or consultation room by the team and the client contacted via telephone by the attending veterinarian.

Verbal consent with estimates can be given over the phone, witnessed by two people and recorded in the patient history (along with who witnessed the consent). For standard (non-emergency) admissions, an SMS or email consent form should be sent in addition to verbal consent, to obtain a signature.

Payments

All payments should be made over the phone by credit card. Please avoid cash payments wherever possible. If a client must pay by cash, ask them to leave it outside the front door and leave the building. Ensure a staff member is able to witness this through the door. The employee must wear gloves when counting the cash. Change is given in the same manner, observe through the window to ensure the correct client takes the money. Handling cash is high risk, please ensure you wear gloves, wipe over the cash with alcohol before placing in the till. Wash your hands thoroughly afterwards.

Referring Vet Patient Transfers

Follow the steps as above. Referring vets have been asked to call us prior to transferring patients. While you have referring vets on the phone please ensure you get patient details and client contact numbers. Occasionally medical records can be sent without this information. All medical records should be emailed through prior to transfer, and we have asked that no fluid bags or medications are sent with the patient.

On arrival IV catheters should be checked and wiped over with alcohol, the bandage should be replaced with our stock.

Critical Patients

If a patient is 'dying', staff must be in FULL PPE before they go outside. This is not negotiable under any circumstance. Ideally, the clients can be instructed to leave the pet by the front door and leave immediately.

Discharges

- All discharge instructions to be emailed to clients.
- Payment must be taken prior to discharge.
- Ask the client to call when they arrive at the hospital.
- Physical discharge is performed in reverse order as for admissions, with the pet being placed in the outside run for collection.