

# Fitzpatrick Referrals Ltd

## Terms and conditions of business

Thank you for entrusting the care and attention of your pet to Fitzpatrick Referrals. This document details our practice terms and conditions. Some aspects may not be relevant to you and we request that you ask for further clarification or explanation if required.

**FEES:** All fees, diets and drugs charges are subject to VAT at the current rate. Fee levels are determined by the time spent on a case and according to the drugs, materials, consumables and diets used.

**METHODS OF PAYMENT:** Itemised bills will be provided with every transaction. Accounts are due for settlement at the end of the consultation, the discharge of your pet or upon collection of drugs/diets. In the event of surgery and/or hospitalisation, a down payment of 50% of the estimated cost is required prior to admission. You may settle your account using electronic bank transfer or credit/debit card. We do not accept cash payments.

**ESTIMATES OF TREATMENT COSTS:** We will happily provide a written estimate as to the probable costs of a course of treatment. Please bear in mind that any estimate given can only be approximate – often a pet's illness will not follow a conventional course. We will provide the details of the price of any medicine stocked or sold on request.

**SETTLEMENT TERMS:** Should an account not be settled within 7 days, a reminder will be sent. After due notice to you, the client, overdue accounts will be subject to our debt collection procedure and further charges may be levied in respect of costs incurred in collecting the debt: such as court fees, correspondence, court attendance, phone calls, etc. Any cheque returned by our bank as unpaid, any card payment not honoured, and cash tendered found to be counterfeit will result in the original account being returned 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, we ask you to discuss the matter as soon as possible with a member of staff. Please note that instalments or part payments of any account may ONLY be sanctioned with the express permission of a director or senior finance officer.

**PET HEALTH INSURANCE:** Fitzpatrick Referrals strongly supports the principle of insuring your pet against unexpected illness or accidents. Please be aware that it is your responsibility to settle your account and then reclaim fees from your insurance company. It is possible for us to accept direct claims from most insurance companies under the specific terms of our standard operating procedure for direct claims, available on request.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** We require 48hrs notice for cancellation of an appointment, if you cancel two appointments without giving this notice then we may ask for full payment in advance of any future appointments prior to booking.

**MEDIA:** The relationship Fitzpatrick Referrals has with its clients is highly valued and founded on trust, with all parties acting in good faith at all times. In the past we have unwittingly been drawn into patient discussions and fundraising debates which are not helpful nor in the best interests of either party or the patient. As a result, Fitzpatrick Referrals has felt it necessary to reiterate the formal understanding that neither party should disclose any information about the other or the patient to the media, without prior written approval. All clients are required to follow our media policy.

**FUNDRAISING:** We understand it may be necessary to fundraise some or all of the funds for your treatment. Fundraising clients are required to agree to our media and fundraising policy, which asks that no names related to Fitzpatrick Referrals are referenced in your campaign, and to notify us.

**CONSENT:** Written signed consent for procedures is required in all cases of admission to the hospital and any alterations will be agreed prior to action being taken. Consent is also required for the use of medications in species for which they were not licensed e.g. rabbits. In this case a consent form will be provided to allow this to be done without asking for specific permission in each and every separate case. This is required as the majority of veterinary drugs are not licensed for use in small mammals, reptiles, birds, fish, amphibians and invertebrates. We must then use drugs which have a proven activity and efficacy despite this lack of licence.

**PRESCRIPTIONS:** You may request written prescriptions for your pet's medication and these will be issued subject to a fee. However, you will be responsible for sourcing such medication from a suitable supplier and should bear in mind that delay in the start of treatment may not be in the best interest of the welfare of your pet. In circumstances where it is essential to begin treatment immediately then prescriptions will not be offered. This is most likely to be in the case of injectable medication where a delay would be unacceptable. Prescriptions will not be issued for similar drugs used in anaesthesia or emergency situations.

**COMPLAINTS AND STANDARDS:** Fitzpatrick Referrals aims to provide the highest standard of care for you and your animal companions, and we hope that you never have cause to complain. However, if you wish to make a complaint please direct your comments in writing in the first instance to [clientcare@fitzpatrickreferrals.co.uk](mailto:clientcare@fitzpatrickreferrals.co.uk)

**CLINICAL RECORDS:** Your pet's clinical records, including radiographs, ultrasound, MRI and CT scan records and laboratory test reports remain the property of Fitzpatrick Referrals and will be kept under the terms of the Data Protection Act (1998 & 2018). You are entitled to see the records on request and if necessary an appropriate appointment to view them will be made. Your pet's records will be sent to another veterinary surgeon on request from them.

**OWNERSHIP OF RADIOGRAPHS AND SIMILAR RECORDS:** The care given to your pet may involve making some specific investigations, for example taking radiographs or performing MRI, CT or ultrasound scans. Whilst we make a charge for carrying out these examinations and interpreting their results, ownership of the resulting record (for example a radiograph) remains with the practice.

**RETURN OF UNUSED DRUGS:** We are happy to accept unused medication back into the practice for disposal only. However, as drugs which have left the premises are no longer fit for resale, no refund can be given. Drugs purchased from any other supplier will not be accepted for disposal.

**REPEAT EXAMINATIONS:** It is necessary both for the welfare of your pet and to meet legal obligations, for this practice to re-examine animals receiving long term medication. The interval will vary with the condition and the medication but will be no longer than every 6 months. The prevailing examination fee will be charged for that consultation.

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** If you wish to take photographs on our premises, we kindly ask that you seek permission from other clients or staff who may appear in the shot. Patient photographs may on occasion be used for educational or marketing purposes and we will seek your permission to use them in this way. Please let us know if you would prefer photos not to be taken.

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