

The Veterinary Nurse's Role in Pet Wellness

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In this presentation...

- Customer trends
- The missing piece of the jigsaw
- Wellness: where did it go?
- The nurse's role
- Practical ways of introducing wellness care into your clinic

Worrying Trends

- 20% of pet owners use two vets or more
- 11% of bonded clients use two vets or more
- 25% of pet owners never visit a vet
- Decrease in regular vet visits
- Many people now choosing not to have a pet

Where is the problem?

- Increasingly seen as fire-brigade service
- Looking elsewhere for 'commodity' items



How much emphasis do we place
on wellness and preventative
medicine?

Is it any wonder....?

- Limited opportunities
- Once yearly booster, little else
- In/out catch up appointment
- Booster/fleas/worms/weight/food (if lucky!)
in 10 minutes



Is it any wonder....?

The screenshot shows the Pets at Home website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Signin, My Account, Store locator, Click & Collect, FAQ, Pets at Home TV, Contact Us, Privacy & Cookies, and Join Our VIP Club. The main header features the Pets at Home logo, the tagline "where pets come first", a search bar with a "GO" button, and a shopping basket icon showing "0 item(s) €0.00" with a "Checkout" button. Below the header is a "Shop for:" section with buttons for Dog, Cat, Puppy, Kitten, Small Pet, Fish, Reptile, Bird, Wildlife, and Gifts. A green breadcrumb trail reads "You are here: Home » Nutrition Centre".

Browse nutrition

- Cat nutrition**
 - Choosing the right food
 - The range
 - Jargon Buster
 - Lifestages: Kitten
 - Lifestages: Adult
 - Lifestages: Senior
 - Glossary
- Dog nutrition**
 - Choosing the right food
 - The range
 - Jargon Buster

Nutrition Centre
The best food for your best friend

Nutrition Centre Foods
A collection of complete foods that we class as the best in cat and dog nutrition.

- Premium quality ingredients
- High protein content guaranteed
- No artificial additives

Ask us about...
FREE Nutrition Consultations
Click here for more information

What do the owners say....?

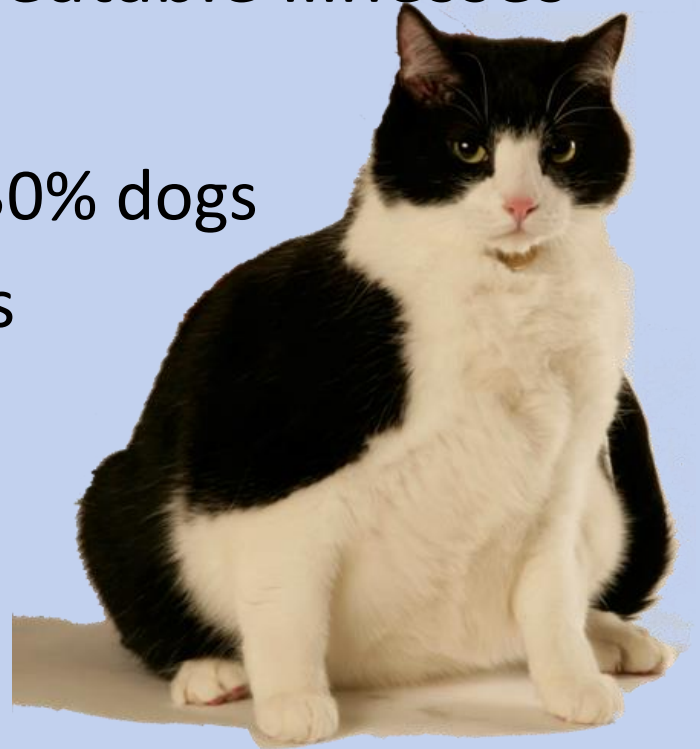
- There was a lack of effective recommendation
 - “I didn’t know’
 - Too much information at once
 - Messages were conflicting
- Need or benefit was not explained
- Lack of reinforcement by veterinary healthcare team

Once a year is not enough....

- Ill-educated owners: no clear guidance
- Need not satisfied
- Decrease in regular vet visits

Poor health outcomes

- Up to 50% adult dogs and cats not up to date with vaccines
- Increase in preventable and treatable illnesses
 - Diabetes +16% cats +32% dogs
 - Internal parasites +13% cats +30% dogs
 - Dental disease affects 80% dogs and 70% cats over 3yo
 - Obesity –latest US figures 53%



Wellness education is key

Use of a web-based questionnaire to explore cat owners' attitudes towards vaccination in cats

G. Habacher, T. Gruffydd-Jones, J. Murray

This study aimed to develop a better understanding of factors involved in cat owners' decisions related to vaccination and to explore their views and knowledge of vaccination. Data were collected using a web-based 'Cat Health Questionnaire'. A total of 3204 respondents participated in the survey, each answering questions with only one cat in mind. Forty-one questionnaires were not included; of the remaining 3163 cats, 69 per cent were reported to have been vaccinated in the last 12 months. Vaccination as a kitten was the strongest predictor of up-to-date vaccination status, followed by the intention to take the cat to a cattery or cat show in the next year. The owners' perception of the importance of stress on the cat, the age of the cat or the cost of vaccination was associated with the cat's current vaccination status. Owners who perceived the severity of infectious diseases or veterinary advice as very important were more likely to vaccinate their cats than owners who perceived these factors as less important. The owners' perceptions of the risk and their previous experiences of side effects in a cat were not associated with a decreased likelihood of vaccination.

Veterinary Record | July 24, 2010

Owners who perceived the severity of infectious diseases or veterinary advice as very important were more likely to vaccinate their cats

Wellness drives bonded clients

Wellness



= Relationships & Trust

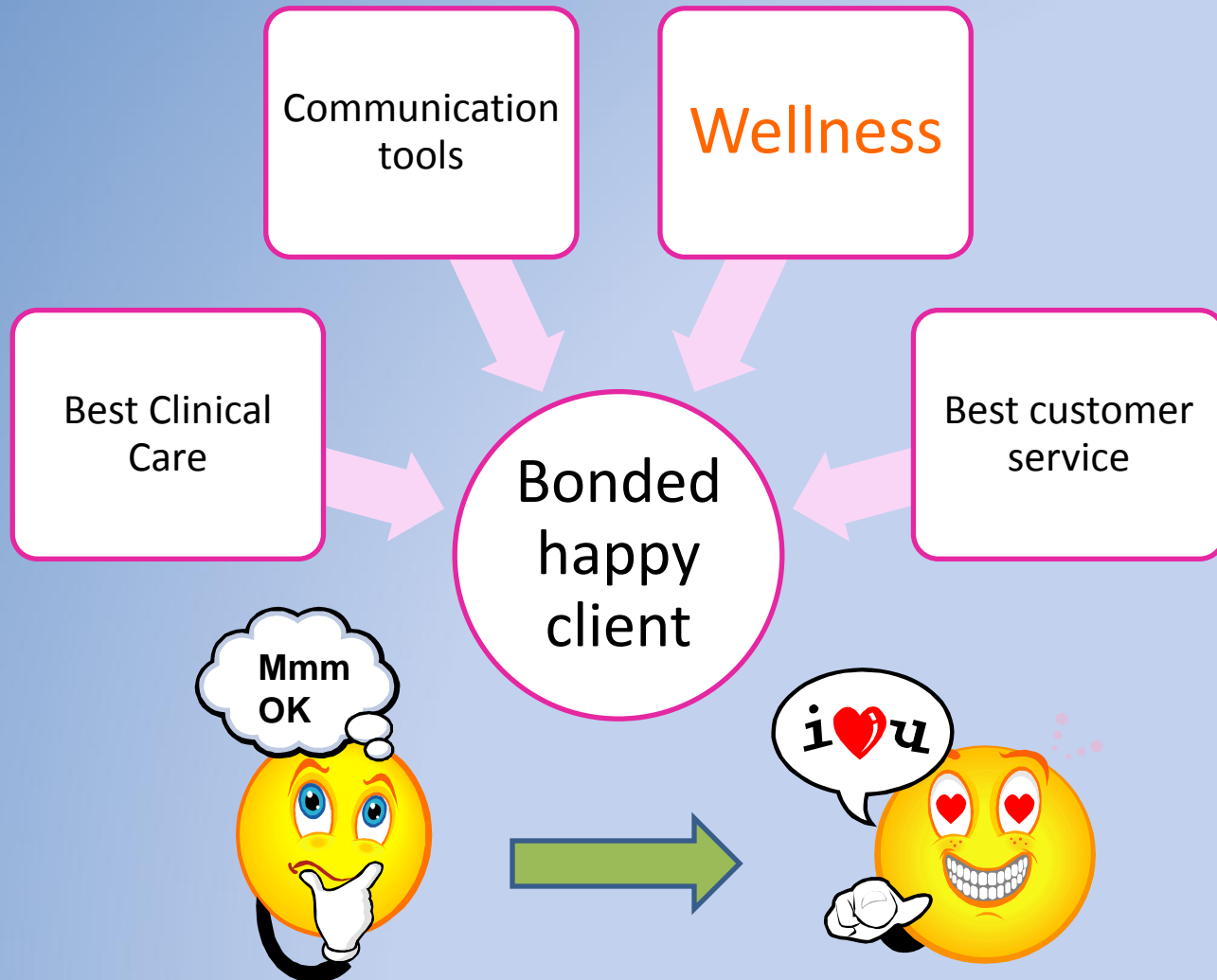
= Active bonded clients

The opportunity of wellness: bonded clients

- A client who keeps their pet vaccination up-to-date
- Has an annual health check
- Attend the clinic almost 10 times more frequently than casual clients
- Spend 67% more
- Less likely to need OOH services
- Those less likely to complain



Part of the four pillars



How can we incorporate wellness?

1. Proactive client education and advice on all aspects of preventative healthcare (nurse consults/clinics)
2. Make it every-day: seize opportunities
3. Health plans



Full utilisation of the nursing team

Proactive: Nurse consultations

- Pre-vacc puppy & kitten checks
- Involvement in puppy & kitten vaccs
- Behaviour & training
- Wellness checks
 - Weight, diet, teeth, coat, parasites, worming, microchipping
- Senior check-ups



Other topics



- Life-stages: inc end-of-life
- Dental care
- Coat care
- Diabetic care
- Urinary care
- Travel preparation
- Stress reduction in cats
- Pain management
- Exercise
- Behavioural problems
- Furry husbandry



Benefits of nurse consultations

- Improve perception of value
- Improve client understanding
- Improve compliance with preventative health
- Increase bonding
- Drive recommendation by clients and word-of-mouth
- Free up vet time for paid consults
- Increase revenue
- Boost morale and motivation in nurse team

Remember

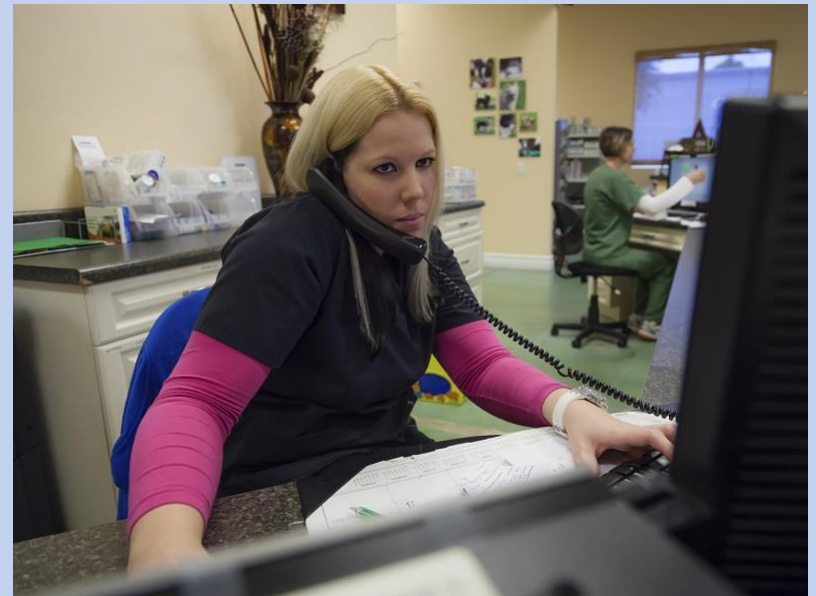
- Keep it simple: start with just one or two and get it right
- Work on the flow: internal referral – commitment – how?
- Remember to talk about it!
- Make appointments convenient
- Be prepared: training, tools needed, support materials

Incoming opportunities!

Think about the touchpoints

Reception

- Telephone calls
 - Opportunity to talk about prev care
- Check-in
- Check-out
 - Effective recommendations



Think about the touchpoints

Pre/post vet consults

- Offer nurse wellness appt
 - Book in for/ after vet appt or for separate nurse appt
- Itchy dog consult – *‘Would you like to see the nurse for a skincare consultation afterwards?’*

Think about the touchpoints

Internal vet referrals

A cohesive team approach

Think about the touchpoints

Discharges

- If routine op offer f/up wellness appt
 - Wellness check in 6 months

- If non-routine, can it feed into nurse clinics e.g. dental ?
 - Dental clinic in 6 months

Think about the touchpoints



Follow-up calls

- Telephone calls
 - Post op
 - Pre op
 - Post consult/
check-up
- Telephone nurse consultations

Health plans

- Aim is to increase the trust, bond and relationship with the client
- Regular income
- Reassurance for owner: education
- Bespoke or off-the-peg

Consistency

- To owner means: it's important!
- Drives compliance

$$C = R + A + FT$$

- Can build this into protocols for certain wellness aspects



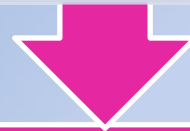
Every Pet Every time protocol

Check-in

Client fills out nutritional history form

Pet is weighed by receptionist

Receptionist inputs nutritional history form into patients records



Consult room

Nurse records history with form as a guideline to ask questions and initiate discussion

Vet performs physical exam and nutritional assessment

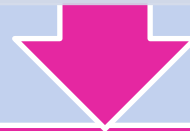
Vet makes nutritional recommendation and notes this in records

Vet fills out the patient's log book including the recommendation or gives printed output

Nurse asks client if there are any questions and reinforces the recommendation

Nurse dispenses food & tools

Nurse sends patient home with information pack even if food isn't purchased



Check out

Receptionist asks client if there any questions

Receptionist reinforces recommendation

Receptionist schedules phone back in 2-5 days

Receptionist enters reminder code into PMS for re-purchase of food 2 weeks before it will run out.

Summary

- Importance of a Proactive Approach to Wellness
- Wellness = Relationships & Trust
= Active bonded clients
- Try to talk about wellness in every visit
- Focus on wellness means better patient care and improves outcomes
- Utilises your nursing team's skills
- Drives job satisfaction & motivation (career development)



Thank-you!

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