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Covid-19 Veterinary Essential Services Update, March 2020

Dear Clients,

The College of Veterinarians of BC (CVBC) and the Canadian Veterinary Medical (CVMA), our governing bodies, have issued guidelines about which patients we should see during the current COVID-19 Pandemic. The restrictions in services are designed to maximize social distancing and minimize the risks of COVID-19 transmission. Our Animal Care Hospital team is following the CVBC's and the CVMA's recommendations to the fullest extent for ***your protection and ours. We must all do our part to "plank the curve"***.

Please know that the decision to reduce our veterinary services was extremely difficult and yet extremely easy to make due to our heart felt responsibility to our team, our patients, and our clients. It was an extremely difficult decision as we understand the concern this will cause for our clients and the financial toll such a reduction places on our entire team, and we feel the weight of this decision. At the same time, this decision was extremely easy because the science is sound – social distancing, frequent and proper handwashing and disinfecting, and staying home stops the rampant spread of this virus and will ultimately reduce the toll on our health care system and reduce the number deaths in our community and our country.

To increase physical distancing of our team and to help ensure that we are able to continue to provide service, our hospital team is now divided into 3 cohorts with minimal physical contact between teams. If one team is quarantined, we can continue to do our best to provide essential service to our clients and our patients. Consequently, your understanding as we work with much smaller teams is very appreciated and necessary.

Patients we can see during the COVID-19 restrictions:

While elective surgeries, such as spays and neuters, vaccination/preventative care visits, and boarding are postponed, please be assured that our veterinarians and team will continue as long as possible to provide the following:

- urgent care for sick animals and animals in pain
- urgent care for other situations such as obstetrics for large and small animals
- medication refills – for pets that have an on-going prescription which would normally require a visit, provided there are no complicating factors
- post exposure rabies vaccines & rabies vaccines for high risk patients (i.e. working dogs)
- vaccinations series for kittens and puppies and first annual boosters
- prescription diets sales (please call ahead to give us maximum notice as deliveries of food are intermittent at present as medical supplies are prioritized)

- support for our farmers and ranchers to maintain herd vaccination protocols (please call ahead and give maximum notice)
- compassionate end-of-life consultations and humane euthanasia services
- Some things, such as skin issues and lumps may be able to be managed by a combination of photographs, skype, and telephone conversations. Please call if you have concern as our veterinarians are making these decisions on a case-by-case basis.

Please note the important changes to hospital visits:

- Please do **not** come to the hospital without calling and making arrangements first.
- When you arrive at the hospital, please remain in your vehicle and call Reception to let us know you are here.
- If it is absolutely necessary for you to come into the hospital, you will be required to **bring and wear your own mask** and to sanitize your hands as you enter. **If you have your own hand sanitizer, please bring it as well as our supplies are limited.** We are sanitizing surfaces and door handles continuously, but please try not to touch anything in the hospital.
- If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, or even a mild cold or cough, **please let us know and do not enter the hospital.** Call us from your vehicle, and let us bring you whatever you need. If your pet is needing urgent care in this situation, we will take a history from you while you remain in the vehicle and then bring the patient into the hospital for examination to minimize the risk and stress to our staff and other clients.
- If you are self isolating as a result of travel outside of Canada and your pet has a medical emergency, please have someone else bring your pet to the hospital (**and inform us that you are self isolating**). If this is not possible, **alert us in advance, stay in your car when you arrive at the hospital, and we will handle your pet with isolation protocols in place.**
- To help further reduce risk, we ask that whenever possible, please have only **one, healthy** family member accompany your pet to the hospital.

We care deeply about the health of our patients, our clients, and our community, and we thank you very much for your patience and understanding as we do our part to overcome this challenging situation. Let's all work together to not just "flatten the curve" but instead "plank the curve," protect our loved ones, our community, and our country.

Stay safe, stay well, and look out for one another,

Dr. Doug Magnowski & Family