

Patient Experience

At CARES we understand that having a pet in the hospital can be a difficult time, and we would like to do whatever we can to help you and your pet.

We hope this page will help you know what you can expect while your pet is with us. If you have additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to let us know.

We provide for the needs of your pet's medical care 24/7. There is always a doctor on duty, overseeing the care of your pet. Our nursing staff also works around the clock to provide patient monitoring, administration of treatments and medications, and TLC. We are always here if and when you need us.

APPOINTMENTS & REFERRALS

You do not need an appointment to be seen by our emergency doctors. Please note that emergency cases are seen according to the severity of the illness and there may be a wait. An appointment is needed to see a specialist, unless your pet is hospitalized by the Emergency Service as it may then be transferred to a specialist's care.

You do not need a referral to have your pet seen through our emergency service. If you feel your pet is experiencing an emergency, we recommend you come in immediately. For non-emergency concerns, many owners seek guidance from their primary veterinarian, and we are always here if you need us. You may be referred to one of our specialists, but a referral is not necessary to make an appointment. Your pet's complete medical record is shared with your primary care veterinarian to keep them fully informed.

EMERGENCY VISITS

When you bring your pet in during an emergency, they will initially be triaged by a nurse. If your pet is thought to be too unstable to wait, the nurse will ask to take your pet to the treatment area for immediate evaluation and treatment by a veterinarian.

Unfortunately, we often cannot allow owners to immediately come to the treatment area with their pet. This is a critical time, and our staff needs to be able to work efficiently to assess your pet. We will make every effort to allow you to be with your pet as soon as possible and to communicate what to expect.

ATTENDING CLINICIAN

Your attending clinician is the veterinarian at CARES who is primarily in charge of your pet's medical care. This will be the veterinarian with whom you primarily communicate. At those times that your pet's attending clinician is not available, another veterinarian will assume the role. Please note that you will be contacted by the veterinarian on duty at any time of day or night if there are changes in your pet's condition.

VISITATION

Visitation is an important aspect of your pet's stay. We welcome visitation with your pet and feel that it can often be helpful in a number of ways. It allows you to spend time with your pet, communicate with our staff, and better understand your pet's progress in the hospital. Most patient visits occur in exam rooms, while others may require cage side visits. There is no "set" time for visiting hours, however 5-8pm at night is one of the busiest times in the hospital so we recommend visiting outside of these hours, and encourage you to phone ahead to avoid a long wait if the hospital is particularly busy.

PATIENT UPDATES

Patient updates are given by both our veterinarians and our veterinary technicians. You will be kept updated on a daily basis by the attending clinician via phone or during your visit. Please ensure that we have the appropriate number(s) to contact you. We find that the more we communicate, the better! You should also always feel free to call to check in for general patient updates from our veterinary technicians. If you would like, we also have the ability to send photos via text on a daily basis.

Your primary care veterinarian will receive a daily update via fax or email detailing your pet's progress. At discharge, they will automatically receive the complete medical record, which will contain all relevant information from your pet's stay. We also often speak to your veterinarian by phone, and they are always welcome to call to speak to our doctors. Our goal is to serve as an extension of your primary care veterinarian, and we believe keeping them updated helps ensure the best care for your pet.

OVERNIGHT CARE

While hospitalized, your pet is cared for by a dedicated group of certified veterinary nurses, as well as the attending daytime specialist or Emergency Service veterinarian. A doctor is present in the hospital at all times to oversee the care of our patients. A doctor will update you directly should there be any significant concerns regarding your pet's condition at any time.

PATIENT DISCHARGE

Patient discharge can be accommodated at any time. However, we do encourage discharges to be arranged during the hours that the attending service is present. Our emergency service can perform discharges after-hours and can answer general questions at discharge, but the attending service (neurology, medicine, surgery, etc) is best able to answer more specific questions regarding the patient's care. Please keep this in mind when deciding on a discharge time. However, please note that you can always contact the attending clinician the following business day with any outstanding questions.