

How to achieve contextualised care: Insights from the veterinary sector and pet owners

Appendix: Survey for dog and/or cat owners

Note: For most questions, only one answer could be selected. Where respondents were allowed or requested to select more than one answer, that is noted in brackets. An asterisk (*) after a question indicates that an answer was required. If there is no asterisk, the question was optional.

Introduction

Thank you for showing an interest in this survey.

The charity RCVS Knowledge has commissioned Kaleidoscope Health and Care, a research and evaluation agency, to conduct research to better understand how veterinary care can be delivered in a way that is adapted to the individual circumstances of each animal and their owner.

As part of this research, we are gathering perspectives from dog/cat owners (like yourself) and veterinary professionals.

Your answers to this survey will help us to better understand what matters most to dog/cat owners about veterinary care, what helps (or hinders) dog/cat owners' relationships with their veterinary care providers, and how veterinary professionals can support owners in making decisions about their dogs'/cats' health. This will be used to develop recommendations that help the veterinary sector and dog/cat owners to improve care.

We are committed to protecting your privacy. All survey data will be anonymised before analysis, securely stored by Kaleidoscope Health and Care, and destroyed within four months of completion of the project. Your individual answers will not be linked to any identifying information. For more details on our privacy policy and how your data is used and stored, or if you have any questions about this survey or the wider research, please contact Sarah Moir (email).

We estimate the survey will take between 10 and 15 minutes to complete. While most questions are mandatory, there are also a few optional free-text questions. Please note that once you begin the survey, it is not possible to withdraw your consent as data will be collected as you progress.

As a thank you for taking the survey, there is the chance to enter a prize draw on completion.

Please note that the survey can only be completed once by each respondent. If you are a veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse in clinical practice, please complete the survey for veterinary professionals instead. More information is available at <https://rcvsknowledge.org/contextualisedcare>

1) Your participation is entirely voluntary. Are you happy to participate?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2) I confirm that I currently own one or more dog(s) and/or cat(s).

☐ Yes

☐ No

3) I confirm that I have visited a veterinary practice within the last three years.

☐ Yes

☐ No

4) I confirm that I am over 18 years of age.

☐ Yes

☐ No

5) I confirm that I am a UK resident.

☐ Yes

☐ No

History and context

[If Q1-Q5 were all answered 'yes', participants moved to Q6. If any of these were answered 'no', participants were notified that they did not qualify for the survey, thanked for their time, and provided with contact details in case of any questions.]

6) Which of these statements best describes your experience as a dog/cat owner?*

☐ New dog/cat owner: I became a dog/cat owner for the first time in the past three years.

☐ Have some experience: I have owned dog(s)/cat(s) for more than three years.

☐ Experienced dog/cat owner: I have had dog(s)/cat(s) for more than six years.

☐ Breeder: I am a breeder of dogs or cats.

7) Over the past three years, please state the number of times you have visited a veterinary practice with your dog(s)/cat(s), including routine and emergency/out-of-hours care? (If you have more than one dog/cat, please consider the total for all of your pets put together.)*

☐ Less than once a year

☐ Once a year

☐ 2 or 3 times a year

☐ 4–6 times a year

☐ More than 7 times a year

8) Over the last three years, what type of veterinary care have you accessed for your dog(s)/cat(s)? (Select all that apply.)*

- ☐ Preventive healthcare (e.g. vaccinations, flea and worm treatment)
- ☐ Routine appointments – well pet (e.g. nail clipping, weight clinics)
- ☐ Consultations for ill pet
- ☐ Consultations for ongoing chronic conditions
- ☐ Elective surgery – e.g. neutering
- ☐ Inpatient investigations
- ☐ Emergency care (daytime)
- ☐ Referral to a specialist
- ☐ Out-of-hours care at your usual practice
- ☐ Out-of-hours care at a different practice (out-of-hours care provider)

9) Do you have pet insurance?*

- ☐ Yes, for all my dogs and cats.
- ☐ Yes, for some but not all of my dogs and cats.
- ☐ No, I don't have pet insurance.

[If Q9 was answered 'Yes, for all my dogs and cats' or 'Yes, for some but not all of my dogs and cats', participants moved to Q10. If Q9 was answered 'No, I don't have pet insurance', participants were moved directly to Q11.]

10) Please select the answer that best describes your level of pet insurance cover*

- ☐ My pet insurance provides me with sufficient cover to choose the level of care I want for my dog(s)/cat(s).
- ☐ Although I have pet insurance it has not always given me the cover to choose the level of care I want for my dog(s)/cat(s).
- ☐ Although I have pet insurance it has exclusions/excesses which mean it does not give me the cover I expected.
- ☐ I have pet insurance but I don't feel confident that I understand what is covered/not covered.
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Priorities and experience

11) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

In a non-emergency situation...*

I would like the vet to tell me what they think is the best option first.

- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

I would like the vet to give me information on a range of options so that I can choose myself the diagnostic tests and treatments I want for my dog(s)/cat(s).

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

I would like the vet to explain a range of options so that we can decide together the diagnostic tests and treatments that are best for me and my dog(s)/cat(s).

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

12) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

In an emergency situation...*

I would like the vet to tell me what they think is the best option first.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

I would like the vet to give me information on a range of options so that I can choose myself the diagnostic tests and treatments I want for my dog(s)/cat(s).

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

I would like the vet to explain a range of options so that we can decide together the diagnostic tests and treatments that are best for me and my dog(s)/cat(s).

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

13) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

I have the knowledge to make informed choices about diagnostic tests for my dog(s)/cat(s).

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

I have the knowledge to make informed choices about treatments for my dog(s)/cat(s).

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

I would like there to be more reliable online information about different diagnosis and treatment options for my dog/cat.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

It is important to me to see the same vet team members when I visit the practice.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

14) When making choices about diagnosis or treatment options that your vet recommends for your dog(s)/cat(s), how often do you consider the following factors?*

Cost of diagnostic tests

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

Cost of treatment

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

How much of the costs will/won't be covered by pet insurance (if you do not have pet insurance, please select 'Never')

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

Evidence of effectiveness of different diagnosis/treatment options

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

Quality of life for my dog/cat during treatment

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

Quality of life for my dog/cat after treatment

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

What level of aftercare (e.g. cage rest or giving medication) I will need to provide for my dog/cat at home.

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

The broader impact of diagnosis or treatment options – e.g. responsible use of antibiotics to reduce antimicrobial resistance.

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

15) Are there any other factors not listed above that you think are important to consider when making choices about diagnosis or treatment options for your pet(s)? [Optional – 357 responses]

16) Thinking about the times you have visited the vet over the past three years, on average how satisfied are you that:*

The veterinary team values your input and perspective

☐ Mostly very dissatisfied ☐ Mostly not satisfied ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied ☐ Mostly satisfied ☐ Mostly very satisfied

The veterinary team considers your financial situation when making recommendations

☐ Mostly very dissatisfied ☐ Mostly not satisfied ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied ☐ Mostly satisfied ☐ Mostly very satisfied

The veterinary team considers other aspects of your situation (e.g. transport, ability to give medication) when making recommendations

☐ Mostly very dissatisfied ☐ Mostly not satisfied ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied ☐ Mostly satisfied ☐ Mostly very satisfied

The vet gives you a range of options for treatment or diagnosis and explains what they mean for you and your dog/cat

☐ Mostly very dissatisfied ☐ Mostly not satisfied ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied ☐ Mostly satisfied ☐ Mostly very satisfied

You feel fully informed of costs before making a decision about diagnostic tests or treatments

☐ Mostly very dissatisfied ☐ Mostly not satisfied ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied ☐ Mostly satisfied ☐ Mostly very satisfied

You have enough information before deciding on diagnostic tests or treatments

☐ Mostly very dissatisfied ☐ Mostly not satisfied ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied ☐ Mostly satisfied ☐ Mostly very satisfied

You have enough time to make decisions.

☐ Mostly very dissatisfied ☐ Mostly not satisfied ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied ☐ Mostly satisfied ☐ Mostly very satisfied

Contextualised care

17) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

Applying this kind of approach in veterinary practices across the UK is likely to improve the quality of veterinary care.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

Applying this kind of approach is likely to improve trust between dog/cat owners and their veterinary teams.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

Applying this kind of approach is likely to reduce rehoming of pets to charities due to costs of veterinary care.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

18) From the list below, please choose up to 3 statements that best reflect your biggest barriers to receiving care that has been personalised to you and your dog/cat: [select up to three]*

☐ I feel uncomfortable talking about money with the vet team.

☐ I find it difficult to understand the advice that the veterinary team are giving me.

☐ I can't remember all the information my veterinary team have given me.

☐ I find it difficult to make decisions about the veterinary care of my dog/cat.

☐ I don't know what information to give to the vet team about our individual needs or when to give it.

☐ I sometimes feel very emotional when my cat/dog is unwell.

☐ I sometimes feel guilty if I cannot afford all the treatment options on offer.

☐ I find it difficult to have a discussion about my religious beliefs in relation to the care of my cat/dog.

☐ I do not experience any barriers to receiving care that has been personalised to me and my dog/cat.

19) If you have encountered any other barriers to receiving care that has been personalised to you and your cat/dog, not listed above, please enter them here. [optional – 209 responses]

20) Which statement best describes the way you would like your vet to let you know about the potential costs of treatment?*

☐ I would like the vet to give me the full range of options – including the most advanced and expensive care – so that I can make a choice.

- ☐ I would like the vet to give me a recommendation about what is best for my dog/cat regardless of cost.
- ☐ I would like the vet to ask me how much I can afford first, so that I'm not presented with options that are unaffordable to me.
- ☐ I would like to have an early conversation about what I am willing to spend.
- ☐ I would like to have an early conversation about what my pet insurance does/doesn't cover.
- ☐ I would like to be given the choice to spend more time to consider and research the different options, after a consultation, before I make a financial decision

21) Is there anything else vets could do to help with conversations around the costs of different diagnosis and treatment options? [Optional – 253 responses]

Euthanasia

22) Are you happy to answer questions on euthanasia?*

- ☐ Yes, I am happy to answer questions around euthanasia.
- ☐ No, I would like to skip questions on euthanasia.

[If Q22 was answered 'Yes, I am happy to answer questions around euthanasia', participants were taken to Q23-Q25. If Q22 was answered 'No, I would like to skip questions on euthanasia', participants were taken directly to Q26.]

23) Have you had any of your dog(s)/cat(s) 'put to sleep' (euthanised) by a vet? [692 responses]

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

24) Which statement best describes when you would prefer the conversation about euthanasia to start? [692 responses]

- ☐ I would like to have an early conversation about whether euthanasia is appropriate for my dog/cat so that I understand all the options.
 - ☐ I would like to be the one who raises the possibility of euthanasia.
 - ☐ I would like the vet to be the one to raise the possibility of euthanasia as one of the options if my dog/cat is very unwell or their quality of life starts to deteriorate.
 - ☐ I only want my vet to raise the possibility of euthanasia when we have explored all other treatment options.
 - ☐ Other (please specify):
-

25) How do you think vets can best raise with dog/cat owners that euthanasia is something they might consider for their dog/cat? [Optional – 449 responses]

Overall reflections

26) What single positive change do you think would make the biggest difference in your and your dog/cat's experience of veterinary care? [Optional – 582 responses]

About you

27) Are you happy to complete the demographic questions?*

- ☐ Continue to optional demographic questions
- ☐ Skip demographic questions

[If Q28 was answered 'Continue to optional demographic questions', participants were taken to Q28–Q32. If Q28 was answered 'Skip demographic questions', participants were taken directly to Q33.]

28) In which region do you live? [Optional – 589 responses]

- ☐ East of England
- ☐ East Midlands
- ☐ Greater London
- ☐ North East England
- ☐ North West England
- ☐ Northern Ireland
- ☐ Scotland
- ☐ South East England
- ☐ South West England
- ☐ Wales
- ☐ West Midlands
- ☐ Yorkshire and the Humber

29) What is your age bracket? [Optional – 568 responses]

- ☐ 18–24 yrs
- ☐ 25–34 yrs
- ☐ 35–44 yrs
- ☐ 45–54 yrs
- ☐ 55–64 yrs
- ☐ 65 yrs or older
- ☐ Prefer not to say

30) Which of the following best describes your gender? [Optional – 567 responses]

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe (please specify): _____
- ☐ Prefer not to say

31) Which of the following best describes your ethnicity? [Optional – 568 responses]

- ☐ Asian or Asian British – Indian
- ☐ Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
- ☐ Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
- ☐ Asian or Asian British – Chinese
- ☐ Asian or Asian British – Any other Asian background
- ☐ Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African – Caribbean
- ☐ Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African – African
- ☐ Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African – Any other Black, Black British, or Caribbean background
- ☐ White – English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, or British
- ☐ White – Irish
- ☐ White – Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- ☐ White – Roma
- ☐ White – Any other White background
- ☐ Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups – White and Black Caribbean
- ☐ Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups – White and Black African
- ☐ Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups – White and Asian
- ☐ Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups – Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background
- ☐ Other ethnic group – Arab
- ☐ Other ethnic group – Any other ethnic group
- ☐ Prefer not to say

32) What is the highest level of education you have completed? [Optional – 560 responses]

- ☐ GCSEs or equivalent
- ☐ A-Levels or equivalent
- ☐ Vocational qualifications (e.g. NVQ, BTEC)
- ☐ Undergraduate degree (e.g. BA, BSc)
- ☐ Postgraduate degree (e.g. MA, MSc, PhD)

() Other (please specify): _____

() Prefer not to say

Focus group opportunity

33) Are you happy to be contacted by someone from Kaleidoscope Health and Care about participating in a 60-minute focus group about your experiences as a pet owner in relation to your pet's care? [Optional – 100 responses]

() Yes, I am happy to be contacted. I have included my email address here:

() No, I do not wish to be contacted.

Prize draw!

34) Please enter your email address if you would like to be entered into the prize draw for a pet food voucher to the value of £100. [Optional]

Thank you!

Thank you for completing this survey! Your feedback is crucial in helping us improve the way veterinary care is delivered. If you have any questions about this survey or the wider research, please contact [name, email address].



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This appendix relates to the following report:

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