

CAT FRIENDLY PRACTICE

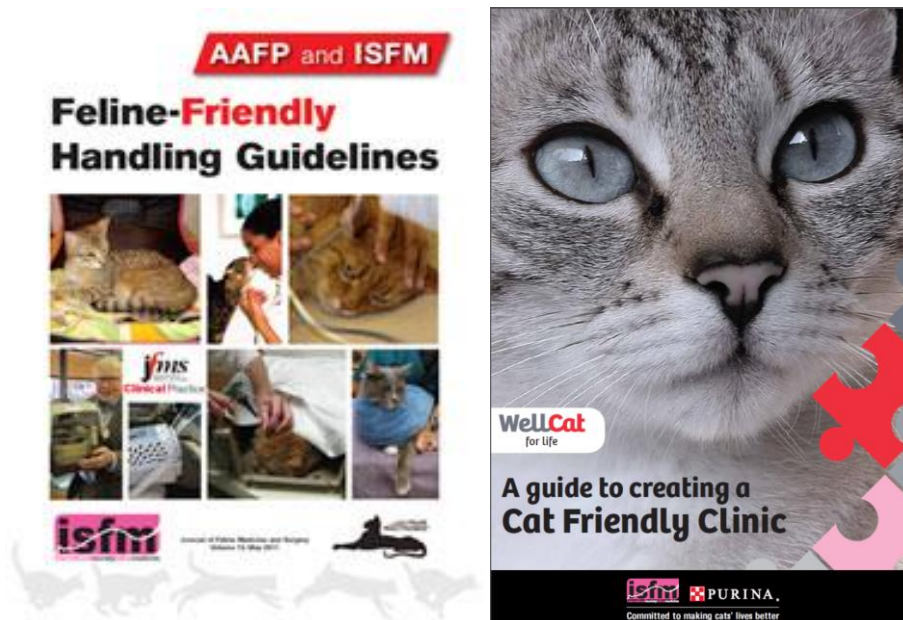
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University of Edinburgh

- Initiative launched in UK April 2006 by the Feline Advisory Bureau
UK competition – bronze, silver + gold practices identified

www.fabcats.org/catfriendlypractice/vets.html



- Similar initiatives now running in several other European countries



Why think ‘cat friendly’?

- A less stressful visit for the cat is a less stressful experience for the owner
- Gratitude and appreciation for a caring and cat-friendly approach
- More likely to trust you and follow your recommendations

From the cat’s perspective:

- Cats are very susceptible to stress
- *Acute response:*

Sympathetic nervous system stimulated (adrenaline, noradrenaline): ‘fight or flight’ response

- *Chronic stress:*

Hypothalamic pituitary adrenal axis stimulated: glucocorticoid secretion

Recognition of stress

Four F’s:

- Flight: run away
- Fight
- Freeze
- Faff / fiddle about: displacement activity eg over-grooming

But stress in cats is not always easy to recognise!

Stress has serious consequences:

- Clinical exam is difficult
- Clinical parameters are altered
 - Heart rate
 - Respiratory rate
 - Blood pressure
 - Temperature
- Lab parameters are altered
 - Blood glucose - ‘Stress hyperglycaemia’ that may even result in glycosuria
 - Haematology profile - ‘Stress leukogram’
- Response to drugs is altered
- Less likely to eat, groom etc in hospital – anorexia and depression
- Slower healing and recovery
-

A calmer and happier cat:

- Will be easier to examine
- Will give more accurate clinical + laboratory results
- So a correct diagnosis is made sooner + appropriate treatment instituted
- More rapid recovery from illness

What can we do to be more cat friendly?

- **Building design**
 - Ideally, a feline-only practice
 - Feline-only waiting room, wards etc, sited in quiet areas of the building – away from dogs, phones + heavy human traffic

- **Feline-only clinics**
 Different times of day to dog clinics
 Different admission times for surgical operations
 Understanding for very anxious cats + owners
 Book appointments at quieter times of the day
 Request dog owners respect feline patients
- **Awareness of feline issues:**
 eg sensitive to noise, smell
 Often dislike dogs, other cats
 Kennels should not face each other
 Potentially stressful procedures should not be done in the ward
 Infectious diseases are common
- **Staff attitude**
 A genuine cat-friendly attitude:
ALL staff
 Staff education + training
 Understanding + flexibility with anxious cats
- **Waiting room displays**
 Feline friendly credentials, sources of further information
 Advice on boarding catteries etc
 Owner education
 Owner support
 And so much more!

The feline consult

Try + go at the cat's pace

- Let the cat settle
- Examine it where it is comfortable + feels more secure
- Try to think 'cat'
- Quiet + gentle
- Consider underlying pain

Cat handling + restraint:

- A 'less is more' approach works best
- Don't rush - calm + gentle
- Use of Feliway

Get an accurate weight

Use appropriate cat-sized and cat-friendly tools

Hospitalising cats

- **Collect information before hospitalising the cat**
 Food, litter + bedding preferences, bring a toy
- **Cat only ward**

- **If shared with dogs**
Use of DAP to ↓ canine reactivity
Cat + dog procedures at different times
- **Kennel design, nursing care**
- **Location of the cat ward**
- **Bedding** - allow cats to hide
- **Key resources** - food, water, litter box, resting places, hiding places
- **Correct disinfection is important**

Text from Dr Andy Sparkes BVetMed PhD DipECVIM MRCVS
Then Veterinary Director, ISFM

Cats and veterinarians

- Initiative launched in UK April 2006 by the Feline Advisory Bureau
UK competition – bronze, silver + gold practices identified
- Cats are challenging!
 - Even for owners
 - Semi-domesticated, emotional, stressed, difficult!
- Problems compounded
 - When vet care needed
 - ‘Masters of disguise’
 - Disease, pain, stress
 - Difficult for owners
 - Getting cat to clinic, reception at clinic
 - Difficult for vet team
 - Handling, hospitalization, diagnosis, treatment

The challenge of the cat

- Masters of disguise
 - Hide signs of disease
 - Defense mechanism
 - Solitary hunter
 - Signs may be subtle/hidden
 - Common signs
 - Lethargy, inappetence, weight loss
- Lifestyle may mask
 - Especially outdoor cat
 - Diarrhoea/vomiting?
 - Change in thirst?
 - Constipation?
 - Appetite?

Veterinary care for cats

- Demand is there
 - But there are obstacles

- Some around 'value' of cat
 - Willingness to spend
- More about challenges
 - Catching / transporting cat
 - Attitude of the clinic
 - Stress of cat in the clinic
 - Waiting room full of dogs
 - Empathy
 - Communication
 - Understanding
- Taking dog to a vet is easy
 - Taking a cat poses problems

Veterinary cat care

- Cat Friendly Clinics
 - Huge need for vet clinics
 - Need to consider
 - Cat owners as clients and cats as patients
 - Understand
 - What is different, what is needed and how to change
- Many vets ...
 - May only get one chance
 - To get it right!
 - Vitally important
 - Bond owner & cat
 - Deliver lifelong healthcare

Why WellCat for life?

- The time is right for the ISFM WellCat for life programme
- A unique and innovative opportunity to ...
 - Build the cat credentials of your veterinary clinic
 - Build strong long-term relationships with clients
 - Provide for the life-long health care of your feline patients
- Cat owners want cat friendly vets!

Cat Friendly Clinic ... why?

Twenty-seven per cent of the cat owners (754 of 2785) stated that stress to the cat during a visit to the vet was a very important factor when deciding whether to vaccinate

- Consider the cat coming into the clinic
- Strange basket, car, smells, people, dogs, handling ... stress!!!

Cat Friendly staff

- Engagement of the whole healthcare team

- Understanding cats, their needs and their owners

Good communication

- Vital for all of us!
 - Crucial for vet care team
 - Difficult area
 - Perhaps even more important
 - With cats and cat owners
 - High stress
 - Empathy vital
 - Clinic needs to show they *understand* cats, and
 - *Understand* needs of cat and owner

Cat Friendly Clinic ... why?

- Owners like vets, and
 - Owners trust vets
 - There is no credibility gap!
 - But clinics are not 'Cat Friendly'
 - Or nowhere near as 'Cat Friendly' as they should be!
- The question is ...
 - What are we going to do about it?

WellCat for life

- Two part programme from ISFM

- Supported in Europe by Nestlé Purina
- Part 1 – Launch 2012
 - Creating a Cat Friendly Clinic
 - Aimed at veterinary clinics
 - Awareness campaign for owners also
- Part 2 – To follow
 - Life-long Partnership of Care
 - Preventive care for cats
 - Aimed at veterinary clinics and owners
- The ISFM WellCat for life programme is a two-phase programme, brought to you by the International Society of Feline Medicine in partnership with Nestlé Purina
- It provides a unique and innovative opportunity to ...
 - Build the cat credentials of your veterinary clinic
 - Build strong long-term relationships with clients
 - Provide for the life-long health care of your feline patients

Cat Friendly Clinic

- Specifically designed for clinics to:
 - Think differently about cats as patients
 - Help create ‘Cat Friendly Clinics’
 - Help improve care for feline patients
 - Realise the feline potential of the clinic
 - The value of treating cats & clients differently
 - Increasing the number of loyal cat clients
- How does the scheme work?

Step 1: Initial application

- Introductory Brochure
 - ‘Would cat clients choose **your** clinic’
 - Brief overview of scheme
 - Request form
- Clinic applies for the Cat Friendly Clinic Pack
 - Distributed by Purina or ISFM across Europe

Step 2: CFC Info Pack

- A practical guide to creating a Cat Friendly Clinic
- AAFP/ISFM Feline-Friendly Handling Guidelines
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Cat Friendly Clinic application form

Accreditation: Practical steps

- Appoint a ‘Cat Advocate’
 - Needed for the scheme
 - Focus to drive standards
 - Focal point for clients
 - Nurse, vet, technician, assistant, receptionist ...

- Organise a meeting for the whole clinic
 - Critical that *everyone* understands and agrees
 - Why
 - How
 - Who
 - When
- Spend time ...
 - Go through the 'Guide to creating a Cat Friendly Clinic' carefully
 - Read this alongside the 'Cat Friendly Clinic Standard'
- Decide to apply for ...
 - Silver (Essential) Standard
 - Achievable by almost every clinic ... with some thought, planning and imagination
 - Gold (Advanced) Standard
 - A higher level, not necessarily achievable by all

Cat Friendly Clinic

- Certification at 2 levels
 - Silver (Essential) award
 - Gold (Advanced) award
- ISFM worked with RCVS
 - To develop the standard
 - Based on UK Practice Standard Scheme
- Criteria must be achieved
 - Staff training & CPD
 - Cat handling
 - Client communications
 - Premises
 - Waiting room, Consult room
 - Hospitalisation, theatre
 - Diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia
 - Laboratory facilities
 - Clinical records, etc.
- Achievable by *most* clinics

Accreditation: Practical steps

- Accreditation scheme
 - Based on the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Practice Standards Scheme (RCVS PSS) in the UK
 - Builds 'Cat Friendly' elements into that scheme
 - RCVS PSS has different levels
 - Core level - requirements that all clinics should meet, and also in ISFM CFC Standard
 - In the UK, clinics *must have* RCVS PSS Core Standard accreditation *before* they can enter the CFC scheme
- Go through the CFC Standard carefully

- Do it *with* the guide
 - Don't be put off
- Make a list
 - What criteria are being met
 - What can easily be met
 - What needs work ...
- And then ...
 - Think creatively!
 - Think how things can be changed within your clinic

ISFM CFC Standard

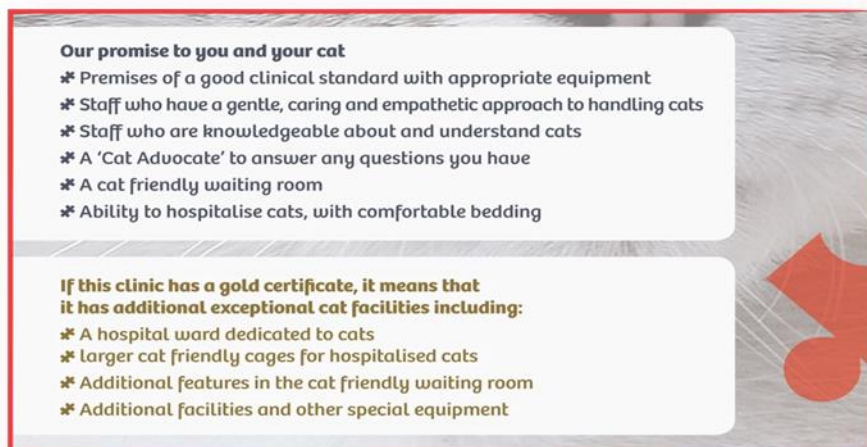
- Training, CPD, Clinical governance
- Handling cats & clients
- Client communications
- Clinic premises
- Waiting and reception area
- Consult rooms and area
- Clinical records
- Hospitalisation
- Operating theatre and anaesthesia
- Surgical equipment
- Diagnostic imaging
- Laboratory equipment
- Medicinal products
- Comply with all legal requirements
- Provide additional details
 - Size of cages
 - Daily hospitalisation sheets
 - Equipment
 - Waiting room
 - Communication with clients
- Photographs of:
 - Cat friendly waiting area
 - Cat ward
 - Cages
 - Hospitalised cats
 - Isolation facilities
 - Operating theatre
- Complete the Application Form and Declaration
 - Clinic details on web site
 - ISFM membership
 - CFC Charter
 - Cat Advocate
 - Implement Feline Friendly Handling Guidelines
- Sign and submit to ISFM
- Take time ...

- There's a lot to go through
- Go through it thoroughly
 - See what needs to change
- The CFC Standard
 - ... has a lot to do with facilities, equipment, and protocols
 - ... but **attitude** is just as important, and critical that the whole team is involved and engaged

Accredited CFC clinics receive:

- Gold Certificate or
- Silver Certificate
 - For the waiting room
 - Window sticker
- Entry on CFC web site
- Re-accreditation every 2 years
- Clinic charter
 - Owner information
 - Owner brochure
 - What is a Cat Friendly Clinic
 - Certification scheme
 - Visiting the vet
 - At the clinic
 - Coming home
 - Medicating your cat

Cat Friendly Clinic



Charter

- ISFM CFC Accreditation WellCat *for life* & Cat Friendly Clinic
 - A Quality Mark for clinics that will last
 - A Quality Mark where we will build PR
 - A Quality Mark that will be meaningful

Cat Friendly Clinic

- Information will be available on the ISFM website
 - www.isfm.net
- Information for clients will also be available
 - www.wellcat.org
- Web site will be developed for ISFM Cat Friendly Clinics
 - www.catfriendlyclinic.org
- Public awareness campaign

Acknowledgement

- ISFM has been delighted to work in partnership with the *Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS)* in developing our new Cat Friendly Clinic (CFC) Standard.
- The RCVS has run a highly successful Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) in the UK for many years. The CFC Standards add some additional feline-specific requirements on top of existing small animal practice standards covered by the RCVS.
- In the UK, clinics who enter the ISFM CFC Scheme will be required to have RCVS PSS Core Standard or above
- *"ISFM and PSS working to improve standards of veterinary care."*