COVID-19 Recovery Plan

Strategies for Dealing with Post-COVID Clients, Finances and Production

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What is Post COVID-19?

• Jurisdictionally based

• “Shut down” may last months

• Post COVID may not be here for a year
How Has COVID Affected Veterinary Medicine

• OVMA April 15th COVID Survey
  • *Chris Doherty*

• No clients in hospital 88%
• Payment over phone 94%
• Telemedicine 76%
• MyVetStore ecommerce 41%
• Curbside Drop-off / Pick-up 89%
How Has COVID Affected Veterinary Staff

- Lost staff to child-care, self isolation: 51%
- Laid off staff: 26%
- Reduced Hours: 26%
- Split staff into separate teams: 25%
  - Recommended by Dr. Scott Weese
- Staff working remotely: 8%

Recommended by Dr. Scott Weese
How Has COVID Affected Veterinary Finances

- Down 15% or more March 2019 to March 2020
  - OVMA Dashboard: 8%
  - CD Survey: 26%
- Anticipate April Revenue down 30% or more: 46%
Strategies For Different Government Phases

• Phase 1  the Loosening

• Phase 2  the Opening

• Phase 3  the New Normal
Timeline

• Phase 1 – The Loosening

• Opening select workplaces than can modify operations to meet health guidelines (e.g., curbside pick-up or delivery)

• For veterinarians we think this means:
  • Removal of “urgent care” restriction
  • Re-introduce
    • Elective surgeries and procedures
  • Wellness
    • Social distancing required
    • Curbside recommended
    • Personal Protective Equipment required
Timeline

• Phase 2 – The Opening

• After 2 to 4 weeks of “success” with Phase 1

• For veterinarians we think this means:
  • Many pet owners back to work
  • Softer social distancing requirements
    • Entering hospital / Six feet / PPEs
Operating A Veterinary Practice in Phase 1

- Clients will have limited or no access to veterinary hospital
- BOPIS
  - Buy Online Pick Up In Store
- Curbside
- Telemedicine
BOPIS

Buy Online Pick Up In Store
- Pet food
- Parasite medication
- Pharmacy refills

Delivery Options
- MyVetStore
- Curbside
Better BOPIS

• Pet Food
  • MyVetStore
  • Set up automatic reorder
    • Free shipping with automatic reorder
    • Pick up in clinic (curbside available but less desirable during a pandemic)

• Opportunity to secure automatic reorder with all clients

• “We can save you some money and have your pet food delivered to you automatically so you never run out. You’ll find veterinary diets are less expensive than premium pet food store brands. When you sign up for automatic reorder, delivery is free and you receive a discount on the food.”

• Remember – you have to do it all
  • Set up the reorder points
  • Automate the experience
Better BOPIS

• Parasite Medication
  • MyVetStore
  • “Hi Darren, this is the veterinary hospital calling. Chewy’s parasite treatment is ready. We can take payment on our website and you can pick that up today (curbside) or we can deliver it to your door for free. What do you prefer?”

• Best Practice: “We rented a postage meter and we are mailing all our parasite medication to the client at no charge.”

• Best Practice: Staff delivering medications to client’s house
Post COVID BOPIS

• Big Yes
  • Pet food autoship has proven successful for three years
  • Medication refills – small sample of successful hospitals
  • MyVetStore, VP, OVMA, Manufacturers all have your back
Curbside Pickup and Drop off

• Ability to maintain retail sales
  • Pet food
  • Medication refills
  • Parasite Treatment

• Treating Pets Curbside
  • Half the work in twice the time
  • If this is the new normal we have to get more productive
Better Curbside Service

• Make it Easy for Clients
• Automate the experience
  • POBIS
    • Client- purchases product on line pays on line
      • Faster than over the phone or curbside POS
    • You - Email client when food / medication will be ready
      • Consumers expect it to be ready in few hours
  • Best Practice: Numbered parking spots
    • “Hi, this is Darren. I am here for Chewy’s food. I am in number 5”
    • “Great. Open your trunk and we will be right out?”
Better Curbside Service

• Make it Easy for Staff
  • Best Practice: Parking lot cameras
    • See client drive in – meet them with their food
    • “Darren, what is make and colour of your car so we can meet you when you arrive?”
  • Best Practice: Poster with car logos
  • Best Practice: Pay in advance MyVetStore
  • Best Practice: Wireless POS terminals
Better Curbside Service

• Make it Easy for Staff
  • “Dude, where’s your car?”
  • Best Practice: Clip stall number to pet at drop-off
  • Take pet back to the right car

• Best Practice: Drop off pet in pass-through kennel

• Best Practice: Leash up area outside door
Post-COVID Curbside

• Yes
• Making pet food retail and pharmacy refills easier could increase compliance in the future.
• Curbside pickup parking stall close to hospital
• Cell phones make curbside the new drive through
Telemedicine

• CVO has amended its guidance on obtaining recent and sufficient information on an animal during the Public Health Emergency, which allows veterinarians to use telemedicine to prescribe and dispense these medications.

• “Manage by telemedicine when possible.”
  • Dr. Scott Weese
    • Telemedicine VCPR for flea / tick medications
    • Telemedicine for management of chronic conditions / illness
    • Documentation of verbal consent instead of signature
Telemedicine in Phase 1 (non-urgent care)

• Use for wellness exams

• Best Practice: Charge for telemedicine exam

  • “How do I go from giving away advice over the phone my whole life to charging the same clients for the same service?”

  • Rebrand your free advice to a conspicuous examination in an environment that conveys value
Establishing Value to Telemedicine

- Formalize the process
  - Schedule an appointment in advance with the client
    - Date, time, duration
  - Let the client choose the platform
    - Phone or video
  - Offer a recording of the telemedicine consult to the client
  - Make the client aware of the fee when you schedule the appointment
Branding Help With Telemedicine App

• Smart.Vet telemedicine application
  • Attaches to your existing website
    • Client can access you through your website
  • Schedules telemedicine appointments
    • Client can schedule or you can schedule
  • Smart.Vet bridges your phone with clients phone and conceals your phone number
    • Technician or receptionist can call from home
    • Technician can use telemedicine to get history in advance of appointment with veterinarian
  • E-Commerce solution
    • Client can pay for appointment when they schedule (before exam)

• Best Practice: Getting the app to ask the client for money
Telemedicine Cost to Veterinary Hospital

- **Smart.Vet**
  - $199 per month plus 6% procession fee
  - or $50 per employee for first 2 employees

- **MyVetStore**
  - Flat fee based on activity ~ 2%
Better Telemedicine Service

• Charge full exam fee for telemedicine consult
  • $375 / hour - average revenue per DVM
  • $206 / hour – average revenue from examinations

• Exam fees are gateway to other procedures
  • Diagnostics
  • Surgery
  • Treatment
  • Nutrition
  • Preventive Care

• Telemedicine allows for dispensing during Public Health Emergency
  • If telemedicine survives post COVID it has to be financially viable

• Best Practice: Get your telemedicine app to charge client full exam fee
Curbside Telemedicine During Phase 1

• Book wellness exams with client
  • Drop off pet 15 minutes before appointment
• Telemedicine consult – prior to or during curbside
  • History done with tech during schedule booking
  • Client drops off pet curbside
    • Drops off fecal and urine
  • Telemedicine exam done by veterinarian while client sits curbside
    • Examination, vaccines, blood draw, medications and procedures
  • Client pays through telemedicine app
  • Pet returned to car
Curbside Telemedicine Team

- Receptionist – booking calls
- Animal Care Attendant – curbside pickup and drop off
- Technician and DVM
  - Examine animal
  - Blood draw
  - Procedures as required

- Best Practice: Dedicated teams to reduce intra-staff exposure
Curbside Telemedicine Benefits

- Physical examination goes faster without client bothering you
  - Examine animal and then call client to discuss findings
  - Can complete records during telemedicine consult
  - No need to stay late to complete records
  - Technician can do pre-exam telemedicine consult
    - Many clients are home so two telemedicine consults may hold more value
Curbside Telemedicine Productivity

• Extend hours and spread out teams
  • Two, single veterinarian teams in six hour shifts better than 2 veterinarians sharing resources
  • Reduced intra-staff exposure
  • Shorter shifts easier on staff

• Schedule drop offs for pet owners back to work in Phase 1
  • Drop your pet off before work and pick them up on the way home
  • Telemedicine appointment scheduled during the day
Scheduling Telemedicine Consultations

• Priority
  • Clients who have asked to see veterinarian and postponed due to pandemic
  • Clients who have received flea / tick / heartworm medication
    • Curbside blood draw
  • Clients with pets overdue for vaccines

• Scheduling
  • Offer curbside time or morning drop off and evening pickup
Phase 2 – Allowing Clients Into Hospital

... continued practice of physical distancing

• Can we achieve phase 2?
• Do we want phase 2?
• Existing PPE’s
  • Plus shields
  • Plus 6 foot barriers
Cost of Phase 2

• Social distancing in waiting room?
  • How many clients and pets can you fit in your waiting room if they have to be 6 feet apart?
  • How many clients with beagles can you fit in your waiting room if they have to be six feet apart?

• Acrylic desk shield for receptionist $500
• Hanging shields in waiting room $1,500 each
• Acrylic shields in staff cafeteria ???
Preparing for Phase 2

• Alternatives to social distancing in waiting room
  • Maintain curbside telemedicine for most cases
  • Close waiting room and bring clients directly into exam room
    • Point of sale terminals in every exam room
  • Better scheduling to keep waiting room empty
    • “Darren, you are early. Please wait in your car and we will call you when we have a room available.”
Prioritizing Phase 2 Changes

• Protect Your Staff
  • Reception desk shield

• Set up waiting room to accommodate social distancing
  • Remove chairs to achieve 6 foot separation
  • Tape on floors

• Set up staff room / common areas to accommodate social distancing

• Smaller hospitals may require acrylic shields to separate clients / staff
Conclusion

• Protect yourself and your staff
  • Dedicated teams to prevent intra-staff exposure

• Protect your clients and their pets
  • Make BOPIS, curbside and telehealth easier for clients
  • Make auto-ship the new normal for food and preventive medications
  • Let Smart.Vet ask the client for money so you don’t have to
  • Charge top dollar for your telehealth exams

• Start preparing your clinic for Phase 2 (the opening)
Questions?

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