

## What to Expect when Visiting the OVC Companion Animal Hospital

Thank you for choosing the Ontario Veterinary College Health Sciences Centre (OVC HSC). Our team of veterinary specialists and technicians are committed to providing excellent care for your animal companion. We understand that you face challenging decisions when you come to our specialty hospital. Our team will work with you on all of the options for patient's care and will be happy to answer your questions.

By this time, someone from OVC HSC will have contacted you via your preferred contact method with your scheduled appointment. If there are any concerns with your scheduled appointment, please call Companion Animal Reception at [519-823-8830](tel:519-823-8830), **option 3**. For additional information please visit our website at <https://www.ovchsc.ca/>.

## Client Conduct Expectations

The University of Guelph and the Ontario Veterinary College Health Sciences Centre are committed to the care of its patients and to providing excellent client service within an environment of mutual respect.

Abusive language and disrespectful behaviour will not be tolerated and may result in the discontinuation of services.

## Before Leaving Home

We recognize that many clients travel quite a distance to get to OVC. Therefore, it is important to ensure that you have everything that you need for your appointment before you get on the road. The following checklist may be helpful as you prepare for your appointment:

1. If applicable, bring all your insurance documentation so that we can ensure you have everything you need to file a claim.
2. Any personal items can be left at home. If your animal companion will be staying in the hospital, we will ensure they have everything they need. This includes dishes and somewhere comfortable to rest.
3. Information on patient's access to water or food on the day of your appointment can be obtained from your family veterinarian or by contacting Client Services, ([519-823-8830](tel:519-823-8830), **option 3**).

## University Closure

In the event of inclement weather or other untoward event, the University of Guelph may close with the OVC HSC cancelling elective appointments. Please check your email

regularly as if the University closes, we will contact you via email to cancel your appointment. Appointments will be rescheduled as soon as possible.

During a University closure, the OVC HSC continues to care for hospitalized patients and accept emergency and/or urgent referrals.

### **Address and Map**

The OVC Companion Animal Hospital is located at 28 College Avenue West, Guelph, ON N1G 2W1.

The Animal Cancer Centre is located at 36 College Avenue West Guelph ON N1G 2W1.

**\*Note that the Companion Animal Hospital and the Animal Cancer Centre each have separate reception areas. Please be sure to check in at the appropriate location. Also, please note that the Companion Animal Hospital and the Animal Cancer Centre are separate from the Smith Lane Animal Hospital which is located around the corner on Smith Lane.**

**Please look for one of the entrances pictured below directly off College Avenue to ensure that you are at the correct place.**



### **Parking**

FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY, a free 1 hour parking spot is available for emergency clients/patients in front of the Companion Animal Hospital. Cars must be moved once the initial admission process is completed.

Parking is at University of Guelph designated visitor parking areas only with payment required during weekdays from 08:00-17:00. Parking can be paid for on-line via the link below or via the [HONK app](#)

Please visit the following link for parking

information: <https://www.parking.uoguelph.ca/find-parking/ovc-client-parking>

## **University of Guelph Smoking and Tobacco and Scent-Free Policies**

Please note that the University of Guelph is a smoke- and tobacco-free campus. The policy prohibits the smoking and vaping of tobacco and cannabis and, the use of smokeless tobacco, (e.g., chewing tobacco) on campus.

The full smoke- and tobacco-free policy is available at <https://www.uoguelph.ca/smokefree>

The University's "Share the Air" policy encourages consideration of those with allergies or sensitivities to fragrance by using scented products sparingly or, avoid using them if possible.

The "Share the Air" policy is available at <https://news.uoguelph.ca/2015/09/scent-awareness-policy-encourages-u-of-g-community-to-share-the-air/>

## **Check-In**

Please make sure to give yourself a few extra minutes in advance of your appointment time to complete some necessary paperwork. If you have insurance, please ensure that you bring your documentation with you when you check in. When you arrive, we will have you complete our Patient Registration form.

For the safety of all, please ensure patient is in a carrier or on a leash.

We strive to see you and patient at your scheduled appointment time but please be aware that emergencies may delay your appointment. We will do our best to keep you apprised of any delays.

## **Your Veterinary Care Team**

At the OVC HSC, patient may interact with a veterinary care team comprised of a senior veterinary specialist (faculty/Veterinarian), veterinary specialists in training (residents and interns), final year veterinary students, veterinary technicians, animal housing attendants, and our client services team. While a combination of these individuals may provide service for patient, all cases are supervised either directly or indirectly by a senior veterinary specialist or a senior resident (veterinarian in their last year of a specialty training program) who works closely with and as part of your veterinary care team.

## **What is the role of the veterinary student?**

As the sole veterinary college for the province, OVC HSC ensures that graduates enter the workforce with the direct experiences that they need to hit the ground running. Through practical experience, veterinary students can use hands-on learning to become skilled in evaluating and treating the types of problems that they will

encounter from the first day they enter practice. Our senior veterinary students in training work closely with the veterinary care team to ensure that patient receives the best care possible.

### **What is an intern/resident?**

Like other veterinarians, interns and residents are graduates of a veterinary college and are licensed veterinarians who are pursuing advanced training. Interns are pursuing an additional year of training to apply for specialty residency positions or to advance their skills before returning to regular practice. Residents have completed one or more internships and are pursuing specialization and board certification in a particular specialty of interest. For specific information on our specialists and services, please visit: <https://www.ovchsc.ca/>

### **Appointment Process**

Your appointment will typically take 1 to 3 hours but may take longer depending on the complexity of the problems and the current health status of patient.

At your appointment, an intern, a senior veterinary student, and/or a resident will greet you and will begin the appointment by taking a detailed history and performing a complete physical exam of patient. Although your family veterinarian will have provided us with Patient's history, we want to ensure that we obtain the most up to date information. After gathering this information, the student or doctor may excuse themselves from the examination room so that our entire team can discuss all of the information available from your pet (including information from your referring veterinarian). Sometimes it is helpful for us to include patient in this meeting, to check parts of the physical examination while discussing relevant medical details. Following consultation with the supervising veterinarian, a member of your veterinary care team will return to you to clarify any important history and to discuss examination findings/recommendations for further diagnostic testing and/or treatment. Typically, these tests require that patient be admitted into the hospital overnight or re-admitted on another day. Wherever possible, we will try our best to complete same day testing and diagnostics, but we cannot guarantee this. Please note that procedures requiring general anesthetic may not occur on the day of patient's appointment. Our veterinary care team will confirm the procedure date during your appointment.

### **Following your Appointment**

When patient leaves our care, we will communicate with your family veterinarian to ensure that they have all the information that they need to continue to care for patient. If at any time you or your family veterinarian has any questions, please feel free to contact us. Please note, that the name display on telephone calls from us may display as "OVC HSC" or as "Private Caller" or "Unknown Caller".

## Veterinary Social Work Service

As a client of the OVC HSC, you can connect with the Veterinary Social Work (“VSW”) Service anytime during Patient’s treatment. This service is available to all Companion Animal Hospital & Large Animal Hospital clients and is free of charge. The veterinary social worker is a registered social worker who is an active member of the veterinary healthcare team and can provide the following support:

- Providing emotional and decision-making support regarding medical treatments
- Conversations about your animal’s quality-of-life and end-of-life planning
- Attending care appointments and euthanasia appointments as requested
- Short term grief counselling for companion animal loss
- Provision of mental health and community support resources

As the OVC HSC is a teaching hospital, the VSW Service has social work interns from September to April. The interns are Master’s level social work students, supervised directly by the VSW. They may be the person clients meet with or they may shadow the veterinary social worker.

The VSW Service also offers confidential grief counseling support for those who have experienced pet loss. OVC HSC clients are allotted 2 free-of-charge counseling sessions, per person. Clients are welcome to participate in these sessions as a couple, family, or individually. Each session can last up to 60 minutes.

The VSW Service will reach out to clients who have experienced a loss to offer this service. If you prefer not to be contacted, please notify [vswinfo@uoguelph.ca](mailto:vswinfo@uoguelph.ca).

Please note that the VSW hours are Monday through Friday, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Appointments are scheduled within this timeframe. If you have any questions or want to connect with the Service, please contact [vswinfo@uoguelph.ca](mailto:vswinfo@uoguelph.ca) or [226-924-5764](tel:226-924-5764).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How does payment work? Is a deposit required?

A member of your veterinary care team will discuss all recommended diagnostics and treatments with you and will provide you with an estimate for Patient's care. This estimate will cover a range as certain elements of Patient’s stay may vary, such as the treatment and length of hospitalization.

### Hospital Payment Policy:

Upon patient admittance to the OVC Health Sciences Centre, a deposit is required. The deposit is calculated based on the **high end** of the estimate as follows:

- **50%** for estimates under \$10,000 (Ontario residents)
- **75%** for estimates over \$10,000 (Ontario residents)

- **100%** of the estimate is required for **out-of-province clients**

The remaining balance of the invoice is due in full at the time of discharge. Following discharge, all invoices are reviewed, and a final invoice will be issued to your attention. Please note that this final invoice may reflect adjustments for any additional care or services provided during hospitalization.

We accept payment by cash, debit, Visa, and Mastercard. If you wish to make a payment by phone, please contact the front desk [519-823-8830](tel:519-823-8830).

### **What happens once Patient is admitted?**

Once patient is admitted to hospital, she will be placed in a large kennel, run, or cage and will be provided with bedding, food, water, and lots of attention! Cats are given a litter box and dogs are walked frequently. The senior student veterinarians will work closely with patient and they will call you with regular updates. You will also receive frequent updates from the primary clinician (intern or resident) responsible for Patient's care. If Patient needs to stay with us for treatment, we ask that you take home all leashes, collars, and personal items. We do not want those valued items to be misplaced while Patient is in our care. Should an item inadvertently stay with your pet while hospitalized, items will be held at OVC for approximately one week with unclaimed belongings donated to a charitable organization. Note, we can provide information on local hotels and restaurants if you need to stay in town.

### **If I'm bringing Patient to a teaching hospital, does this mean they will be receiving their care from students?**

Students are a valued part of the veterinary care team and can provide patient with a high level of personalized attention as they monitor their progress and ensure that they receive all of their medications. All care provided by students is supervised by licensed veterinarians.

### **May I visit Patient if she is hospitalized?**

Yes, most pets can be visited. However, there may be some situations where this is not possible. Please work with your veterinary care team to schedule visits as appropriate. The number and length of visits are based on Patient's health status.

### **Will my regular veterinarian be informed of the results of the tests performed?**

Yes, we work closely with your family veterinarian to ensure the best possible care for patient. Your family veterinarian will be updated by phone with preliminary test results and treatment plans. They will also receive a discharge summary, which is a summary of your animal's history, tests, diagnosis, treatments, and recommendations for further treatment.

### **My pet is going to require recheck appointments; what does this involve?**

Depending on patient's condition, recheck visit(s) may be necessary and, depending on the nature of the condition, may be performed either at the OVC HSC or with your family veterinarian. The schedule of rechecks, as well as any cost estimates for rechecks performed at the OVC HSC, will be discussed prior to Patient being discharged from the hospital. After Patient has been discharged, members of the OVC HSC will be



available to discuss any test results with you and/or your regular veterinarian to ensure continuity of care.

### **Will my pet receive sedation?**

Sedation may be used to ensure the safety of our patients and personnel. It is standard of care to administer sedative agents during diagnostic and therapeutic procedures such as radiographs, ultrasound, and intravenous and urinary catheter placements. The decision to administer sedation is at the discretion of the attending veterinarian(s) and is done with the patient's best interests in mind. In most cases the use of sedation will be discussed with you in advance to outline the reasons for administering the sedation and to discuss any side effects of the medication used. Although all reasonable precautions are taken, in some rare instances, unpredictable and mild adverse effects of sedation may occur. Pets receiving sedation will be monitored closely and not discharged until the attending veterinarian feels they have sufficiently recovered, and that it is safe to send them home.

### **What are the after-care options for my animal?**

In the unfortunate event that your animal dies or is euthanized we will discuss the following after-care options with you.

1. Communal aftercare arranged by OVC HSC (no charge)
2. Private cremation via [Gateway Pet Memorial](#) or another government regulated collector
3. Composting via [Barn Angels](#) or another government regulated collector
4. Pet cemetery company burial
5. Owner burial excluding animals that have had a post-mortem (owners are responsible for adherence to applicable burial regulations)

### **Medication Refills**

OVC HSC can provide medication refills only at the time of your appointment. Requests for refills outside of an appointment must be filled by your primary veterinarian or pharmacy of choice.

### **Prescription Requests**

A fee applies for prescriptions to external pharmacies requested outside of OVC HSC appointments. To request a prescription to an external pharmacy please contact Client Services a minimum of 2 working days prior to requiring the refill: Companion Animal Hospital [519-823-8830](tel:519-823-8830).

Please note that we cannot provide prescriptions to be completed at a different veterinary institution.

If you require a prescription renewal outside of our regular business hours, (Monday to Friday 08:00-17:00) please contact your family veterinarian or local emergency hospital

or contact us for an after-hours emergency visit. Note that an emergency visit admission fee will apply.

## **US Dog Importation Regulations**

The US has announced an update to its dog importation regulations and changes to its import requirements for dogs entering the US. These changes take effect August 1, 2024 and will impact dogs travelling from Canada to the US for any reason. This includes dogs from the US that temporarily visit Canada for veterinary care.

Please refer to the website information below to ensure you have the correct documentation to enable your dog to return to the US.

Government of Canada <https://inspection.canada.ca/en/animal-health/terrestrial-animals/exports/pets/united-states-america>

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/importation/bringing-an-animal-into-the-united-states/dogs-entering-us-after-august-1.html>

## **Privacy Policy**

Client information is collected under the authority of the Veterinarians Act and the University of Guelph Act (1964) for patient care. For further information, please contact OVC HSC Administration at [ovchsc@uoguelph.ca](mailto:ovchsc@uoguelph.ca).

*Thank you for entrusting us with the care of Patient. We will do our very best to ensure that you and Patient have a positive experience at the Ontario Veterinary College Health Sciences Centre.*