



HYDROTHERAPIST CHARTER

INTRODUCTION

- ❖ *Improve canine hydrotherapists and trading standards*
- ❖ *Develop staff training programmes*
- ❖ *Promote a better understanding between customer, veterinary surgeon, insurance companies and hydrotherapists*
- ❖ *Ensure the welfare and safety of dogs visiting hydrotherapy centres*
- ❖ *Promote responsible pet ownership*
- ❖ *Simplify complaints procedures*
- ❖ *Provide a conciliation service when complaints cannot be easily resolved*

VETERINARY APPROVAL

- It is advisable that all dogs receiving veterinary treatments should have written veterinary approval prior to treatment.
- For long term chronic cases, veterinary approval should be obtained twice a year or if the health status of the dog changes.
- The hydrotherapist should liaise with the dog's veterinary surgeon during treatment.

PREMISES AND BUILDINGS

- Any buildings used must be suitable in respect of space and environment (heating, lighting, ventilation etc.) for the numbers and species of animals that are housed there.
- All buildings should be secure with adequate levels of security in place at all times to detect intruders. Alarms and other monitoring equipment should be in place to detect

fire and system failure.

- Appropriate measures should be in place to prevent feral rodents or other vermin.

WELFARE AND GENERAL CARE

- Hydrotherapists must show a duty of care to the dogs in their care and devise treatment programs according to the dogs, breed, age and health status.
- Treatments must be in the interests of the animal's welfare at all times.
- It is advised that all dogs undergoing treatments are fully vaccinated.
- Hydrotherapists should not swim any dog that is showing signs of contagious disease, or bitches in season.

RECORDS

- Hydrotherapists should keep comprehensive records which should include:
 - ❖ Individual treatment records
 - ❖ Veterinary approval forms
 - ❖ Incident summary forms
 - ❖ Water quality testing

STAFF TRAINING

- There should be a training programme in place, for employers and employees, with refresher courses as part of an ongoing programme of professional development.
- All staff should be competent in the technical aspects of hydrotherapy. Staff should know the limits of their training and responsibility, and report to supervisor when necessary.
- The hydrotherapist should hold a recognised qualification in:
 - ❖ Canine first aid

The hydrotherapist should ideally hold a recognised qualification, (either accredited by an awarding body, or approved by the Pet Care Trust) or have successfully passed units within a broader accredited qualification, or can prove competence by experience in the following:

- ❖ Water management
- ❖ Canine infectious and contagious diseases

- ❖ Canine muscular skeletal disorders
- ❖ Canine anatomy and physiotherapy
- A trained canine first aider should be present during all hydrotherapy sessions.
- If operators and owner's swim with their dogs, a trained human first aider should be in attendance.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Employers should conform to the Health and Safety at Work Act and all other current legislation relevant to their employees.
- Premises should be well maintained providing a healthy and safe place to work. Potential risks should be identified and appropriate action taken.
- Premises should have adequate insurance to cover employees, visitors and animals.
- There should be written emergency procedures, displayed in a prominent position. All staff should be familiar with these procedures.
- Specialist manufactured equipment should be used in all cases, when using buoyancy aids, hoists and harnesses.
- Electrical equipment should be used and maintained in accordance with regulations.
- Non slip surfaces should be used in all wet areas.

Water Quality

- Hydrotherapy centres are encouraged to keep their water quality to the highest standard possible in relation to bacteria, fungi and other micro-organisms.
- Pools where operators and owners swim with the dogs should be in accordance with the BSI code of practice PAS39:2003. Where dogs swim alone every effort should be made to achieve this standard of water quality.
- Water should be tested at least twice daily, for chemical and pH levels.
- The level of chemicals used as sanitization should be kept to an acceptable level and not cause adverse effects to those using the facilities.
- Water should be filtered on a continuous basis.
- Water temperature should be in accordance with accepted levels for hydrotherapy

pools: 25 – 30 C and spas 35 – 40 C..

- Water samples must be available for testing at any time on request by the Pet Care Trust.

Complaints Procedure

- All Hydrotherapists will make every effort to resolve any dispute between the salon and the customer.
- All staff must be suitably trained to deal with complaints but should difficulties arise the matter should be referred to a senior member of staff.
- At all times the person dealing with the complaint should adopt a courteous manner, act with tact and handle the problem sympathetically.
- The problem should be settled speedily if at all possible.
- If the complaint cannot be resolved the following procedures are available:-

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally the following procedures are available:-

Dispute Resolution Service

Pet Care Trust can be asked to offer a dispute resolution service. Details of the complaint should be sent to the Pet Care Trust's office for consideration by the Pet Care Trust Dispute Resolution Panel. There is no charge for this service.

Local Advice

Both the member and the customer have the right to contact the Trading Standards Department or the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Alternatively the customer may seek redress in County Court, or Sheriff Court in Scotland.

- PROFESSIONAL HYDROTHERAPISTS CHARTER -

*We subscribe to the Code of Practice
established by the
Pet Care Trust
of which we are members.*

*We undertake to provide services of a high standard.
We undertake to deal with any complaint speedily and
sympathetically.*

*If any complaint cannot be resolved
to the satisfaction of the customer,
we offer to refer the problem for dispute resolution by:-*

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