**EMERGENCY CARE ALLIANCE**

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\*\* IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR VETERINARY EMERGENCY SERVICES \*\*

Effective September 15, 2023

As a valued member of our veterinary hospital, we are reaching out to inform you of an upcoming change to your emergency services.

As of September 15,2023, our AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCY COVERAGE will be shared between the following practices:

**LARGE ANIMAL**

* Ripley-Huron Veterinary Clinic, Mildmay Veterinary Clinic and Walkerton-Hanover Veterinary Clinic

**SMALL ANIMAL**

* Queen Street Veterinary Services, Kincardine Veterinary Services, Ripley-Huron Veterinary Clinic, Paisley Veterinary Services, Mildmay Veterinary Clinic and Hanover Veterinary Hospital

*We are entering this emergency care alliance under a trial basis for both large and small animal.*

We are continuing our partnership with a Canadian veterinarian-led company, SmartVet.  As some of you may know, SmartVet gives you access to Registered Veterinary Technicians (RVTs) over the phone whenever our hospital is not open. These RVTs can help you to choose the level of care you require and will facilitate the best options for your pet.

Options may include:

* Transferring all large animal emergencies to the large animal veterinarian on call.
* Transferring all urgent/life-threatening emergencies to the small animal veterinarian on call for physical care at the Veterinary Hospital ON CALL. (Hanover, Mildmay, Paisley, Ripley or Kincardine locations)
* Talking through the details of your concern with the RVT to either have you contact us the next day or scheduling a virtual telemedicine appointment with one of the SmartVet licensed Ontario-based veterinarians.

*There is no cost for this initial call, or any assistance provided by the RVTs.*

**\*\*Listen to the recording to be guided through your options,  all emergencies are required to be triaged like the human health care system. If your pet is suffering from a life-threatening emergency that requires immediate attention, the RVT will contact the small animal veterinarian on call and the veterinarian will arrange your in-person visit. \*\***

If the RVT feels your pet's condition is stable and can be managed without an in-person emergency visit, they will assist you in setting up a virtual appointment with a SmartVet Ontario based veterinarian. There is a cost of $115+HST for the virtual telemedicine consultation (+an additional $30 service fee for prescribing medication).

 \*\*\*Listen to the message\*\*

1. For **LARGE ANIMAL**listen to the recording and **SELECT 3**to be directed to an RVT who will take your details and immediately contact the large animal veterinarian on call. This will either be Walkerton-Hanover Veterinary Clinic, Mildmay Veterinary Clinic or Ripley-Huron Veterinary Clinic.
2. For **SMALL ANIMA**L listen to the recording to be guided through your options.
   * If your pet is suffering from a life-threatening emergency that requires immediate attention, the RVT will contact the small animal veterinarian on call and provide you with further instructions.
   * If the RVT feels your pet's condition is stable and can be managed *without a*n in-person emergency visit, they will assist you in setting up a virtual appointment with an Ontario based veterinarian.
     + If you do not wish to book a virtual telemedicine you can wait to contact our hospital the next day to set up an appointment during normal office hours.
   * If you would like to set up a telemedicine, the RVT will aid you in setting up an account that meets the legal requirements for providing veterinary medicine in Ontario. Payment is accepted in the form of a Credit Card, Debit Card, or e-transfer. This payment is required to proceed to a telemedicine veterinary consultation. This step may take several minutes.
   * You will now be in the scheduled queue for your virtual consultation. We understand this wait can be stressful. It is important to note that if your pet experiences a new symptom or changes in condition during this wait, you can contact the RVT and your place in the queue may be reassessed. Otherwise, please be patient and know that if your pet is waiting for a consultation that is a good thing! It means their emergency has not been deemed life threatening.
   * During your virtual consultation, the veterinarian will further assess your pet. This may mean requesting a video or photos to aid in the process. The veterinarian may be able to prescribe certain medications for your pet which would allow you to avoid the unnecessary cost and for an in person visit. Your pet’s medical records and treatment will be sent to the hospital the next business day so we can proceed with any follow up for further treatment required.
   * At the end of your consultation, If the virtual veterinarian believes your pet should be seen in clinic, they will arrange a transfer to the facility most suitable to your pet's expected level of care and provide you with further instructions. When a transfer is facilitated, SmartVet will provide a reduced consultation fee.

If you do wish to book with the veterinarian on call, SmartVet will arrange that for you. **Please make sure you know which clinic you will be driving to as it may not be your regular clinic.**   During your emergency visit, payment is accepted in the form of a Credit Card, Debit Card, or cash. Payment is due at the time of service with a 50% deposit being due prior to procedures. We strongly recommend that all pet owners have pet insurance, or a credit card allocated for unexpected veterinary emergencies. We do not accept cheque's or offer payment plans for after hours emergency care.

We understand that the SmartVet triage and addition of the other Emergency Care Providers to our roster is different than in the past. As the demand for veterinary service increases, these changes allow us to continue to provide care for our patients in the most effective and timely manner for pets facing critical emergencies as well as during regular business hours.

If you have any questions or concerns about our emergency coverage, please contact the clinic. Again, we thank you for your business and appreciate your continued patience and support.

In the case of an emergency, please contact us by way of our regular clinic phone number.

Hanover Veterinary Hospital   519-364-6772

Walkerton-Hanover Veterinary Clinic   519-881-2090