

The Animal Behaviour Clinic

University of Lincoln

Thank you for contacting the clinic about your pet's behaviour. Please take a few minutes to read these notes before completing the enclosed questionnaires.

Behaviour problems are remarkably common, although many owners feel quite isolated by their predicament. Do not worry, you are not alone and we hope to be able to help you to resolve your current dilemma as efficiently and effectively as possible.

What is the behaviour clinic?

The behaviour clinic is a specialty veterinary service run by the university under the direction of Professor Daniel Mills BVSc PhD CBiol MIBiol ILTM MRCVS. It is the longest established behaviour clinic within a U.K. University run by a permanent member of staff, and we are pleased to be one of the world's leading centres of research into companion animal behaviour problems. Our aim is to provide a professional service at all times and if you have any questions or comments, please contact me on 01522 895356 at any time.

The notes below refer to some frequently asked questions and are designed to ensure that you get the most out of your appointment. Please take a few minutes to read these notes carefully and *keep this letter in a safe place for future reference.*

What happens now?

You will find with this letter (or on the website) two types of forms. A pet behaviour questionnaire and referral form. The person who spends most time with your pet should complete the behaviour questionnaire in consultation with the rest of the family. The referral form must be completed by your vet and both returned to the behaviour clinic at the following

address:

Attn: Professor Daniel Mills BVSc PhD CBiol MIBiol ILTM MRCVS

Dr. Emily D. Levine BSc DVM

University of Lincoln,

Riseholme Park,

Lincoln

LN2 2LG

When both of these forms have been received we will contact you within 1 week to arrange an appointment. Please note cases are normally seen on Fridays during normal office hours. If you have any video footage or photographs which help to illustrate the problem, then these can be extremely helpful. It is preferred if they can be sent with your forms, so that we can preview them before your appointment; but you may also bring them with you at the time of consultation if you do not have them to hand at present. Please only attempt to obtain pictures if it is safe to do so.

Do I need to bring anything with me to the appointment?

It helps if as many people from the home and involved with the pet can attend the consultation, as all are likely to be involved in the treatment plan.

Together with your pet, please bring a selection of his/her favourite toys and food treats and do not feed him/her for four hours before the scheduled appointment time.

What should I expect to happen at the consultation?

Behaviour problems are frequently complex and may involve an interaction of medical, learned and genetic factors. Therefore many initial consultations may take around two hours. During this time, we will explore your pet's behaviour and home environment further. This may involve some quite personal questions, but you can be assured that all information is kept

in the strictest confidence.

We may also undertake further clinical examinations, in order to assess the involvement of specific medical conditions.

We will then discuss the best way forward. This might involve further tests to be done here, at

your own vet's or another specialist facility. Treatment options will be discussed and certain training techniques may be demonstrated for you. Treatment programmes are tailored to the individual case but will usually involve a degree of change in your own behaviour and routine. However, we understand that any treatment plan must fit in with your own personal requirements and so it is important that you bring to our attention any potential problems that you can foresee. In these cases it may be that an alternative programme is preferable.

Inevitably there is likely to be a lot of new ideas and information presented to you during the consultation. Please do not feel daunted or overwhelmed by this. If you have any questions or do not understand any aspect of our discussion, then please bring these to our attention. It is important that when you leave the clinic, that you feel you have a better understanding of your pet's behaviour and appreciate the commitment involved in any treatment plan.

As a teaching clinic, we frequently allow students to sit in on cases and consultations may be videoed. Whilst we can assure you that your confidentiality is not compromised by this, we

will understand if you have any objection to either of these procedures. If this is the case please inform us ahead of the appointment and we will make appropriate arrangements. We can assure you that this will not prejudice the service you receive in any way.

As an active research institution, we may also ask you assist us in ongoing studies. Again, if you do not wish to get involved in this, it will not prejudice the service you receive.

What will happen after the consultation?

You will normally be sent a letter summarising the salient points of the consultation within a week of your visit. This will include details of proposed follow up procedure. In many cases further visits are not required, telephone support is available free of charge and so we normally ask clients to phone us around the date indicated, rather than us phone you. You may of course ring at any time for support though.

A copy of the letter will also go to your vet as well for his records as the referring practice. In order to insure consistency, any drugs or other treatments will normally be dispensed through the referring practice and not the behaviour clinic. These are charged separately to the consultation.

It may be that we recommend that you work closely with a local trainer and again you will need to agree on the fees due separately. We are always happy to speak to brief trainers further on the recommended treatment plan.

An invoice is sent by the university after the consultation and you will not be expected to pay anything on the day of appointment. Fees vary according to the case. The use of a cases in teaching and research allows us to subsidise the cost by around 50%. Therefore, the cost for a canine behavioural consult is 95£ + VAT and feline consultations are 60£ + VAT. If your pet is insured, this may be covered,

but please check your policy carefully as some specifically exclude behaviour problems.

However, if there is a medical component, you may in fact be covered for at least some of the costs.

If you have any comments about our service or suggestions, please contact me at the address above.

We look forward to being of assistance,

Yours faithfully,

Professor Daniel Mills BVSc PhD CBiol MIBiol ILTM MRCVS
RCVS Recognised Specialist in Veterinary Behavioural Medicine
Dr. Emily D. Levine BSc DVM MRCVS
Veterinary animal behaviourist