

SPECIMEN FORM OF CONSENT FOR ANAESTHESIA, CLINICAL AND SURGICAL PROCEDURES

Owner's Name _____

Address _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____

Mobile _____

NB: Please complete the section below if you have authority to act on behalf of the owner

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____

Mobile _____

Species and Breed _____

Name _____ Colour _____

Age _____ Sex M _____ F _____

Neutered M _____ Neutered F _____

Microchip/Tattoo/Brand _____

Details of the Operation/Procedure _____

- I hereby give permission for the administration of an anaesthetic to the above animal and to the surgical or other procedures detailed on this form together with any other procedures which may prove necessary.
- The nature of these procedures and of other such procedures as might prove necessary has been explained to me.
- I understand that there are some risks involved in all anaesthetic techniques and surgical procedures.
- I accept that the likely cost will be as detailed on the [attached] estimate and that in the event of further treatment being required or of complications occurring which will give rise to additional costs, I shall be contacted as soon as practicable so that my consent to such additional treatment and costs may be obtained.
- In the event that the veterinary surgeon is unable to contact me on the numbers provided, I understand the veterinary surgeon will act in the best interests of my animal.
- In order to protect the welfare of my animal, in the unlikely event of an emergency, or where additional pain relief or sedation may be required, I understand the veterinary surgeon may decide to use medicines that are not authorised for use in [state species].'

Notes and Instructions: _____

The cost of the procedures described above (tick as appropriate)

- will be: £_____ OR
- will be within the range: £_____ to £_____

Inclusive of: VAT _____

- If you are NOT the owner, please tick the box to confirm you have the authority to act on behalf of the owner of the animal described above
- Please tick the box if you are UNDER the age of 18

*Signature _____

Date of Signature _____

*A copy of the form should be provided to the person signing and the original retained by the practice

Explanatory notes:

The purpose of the consent form is to record the client's agreement to treatment based on knowledge of what is involved and the likely consequences.

The client may be the owner of the animal, someone acting with the authority of the owner, or someone with statutory or other appropriate authority. Care should be taken when consent is given by a client who is not the owner of the animal. Practice staff should ensure they are satisfied that the person providing consent has both the authority and capacity to provide consent. For example, if the person providing consent is not the owner and has not confirmed his/her authority of the owner to act, only in exceptional circumstances, for example if the request is by the police, should the procedure be carried out.

Before being asked to sign a consent form, the person should be able to understand and retain the information provided and use it to come to a decision. The form should be seen as the culmination of discussions that have gone on before. If the practice uses standard information sheets, clients should be provided with an opportunity to read and ask questions before being asked to consent to the procedure/treatment.

A person may be mentally competent to sign but for reasons of physical disability is unable to provide a signature. An independent witness may be asked to confirm the client has given consent orally. If this is not practicable, then a professional colleague may be asked to confirm this.

A copy of the form should be provided to the person signing the form unless the circumstances render this impractical. Subsequent amendments to the form should be made in ink, initialled and dated. Where additional consent is required, a note of the conversation should be recorded on the clinical records.

Consent: *Veterinary surgeons must obtain the client's consent to treatment unless delay would adversely affect the animal's welfare (to give informed consent, clients must be aware of the risks)* Chapter 11 of the Supporting guidance to the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct on Communication and consent (paragraph 11.2 (i))

A person's understanding of the issues may be affected by a number of factors, such as impaired hearing or sight; mental incapacity; learning difficulties; difficulties with reading or language.

Age: Persons under the age of 18 are generally considered to lack the capacity to make binding contracts. They should not be made liable for any veterinary or associated fees. Persons under the age of 16 should not be asked to sign a consent form. Where they have provided a signature, parents or guardians should be asked to countersign. Where the person seeking veterinary services is 16 or 17, veterinary surgeons should, depending on the extent of the treatment, the likely costs involved and the welfare implications for the animal, consider whether consent should be sought from parents or guardians before the work is undertaken.

Has the client understood what has been said? Veterinary surgeons should consider their clients' language and communication needs. Clinical or technical terminology may need to be explained and clients may not wish to admit to a lack of understanding. Where there

are language barriers, it may be helpful to arrange for a family member or friend to accompany the client. Additional time may be needed to ensure the client has understood everything and had an opportunity to ask questions. Veterinary surgeons should be alert to the possibility of misunderstandings concerning terminology used by the practice (eg 'euthanasia' and 'put to sleep').

Mental incapacity: The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (England and Wales) states: '*A person lacks capacity in relation to a matter if at the material time he is unable to make a decision for himself in relation to the matter because of an impairment of, or a disturbance in the functioning of, the mind or brain. It does not matter whether the impairment or disturbance is permanent or temporary. ...*'.

See Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000

[There is no primary legislation dealing with mental incapacity in Northern Ireland as yet]

Where it appears a client lacks mental capacity to consent, veterinary surgeons should try to determine whether someone is legally entitled to act on that person's behalf, such as someone who may act under an enduring power of attorney. If not, veterinary surgeons should act in the best interests of the animal and seek to obtain consent from someone close to the client, such as a family member who is willing to provide consent on behalf of the person.

Fee estimates/Escalation of fees: *Veterinary surgeons should give realistic fee estimates based on treatment options and keep the client informed of progress, and of any escalation in costs once treatment has started (Chapter 11 of the Supporting guidance to the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct on Communication and Consent (paragraph 11.2 (g & i))*