



**VET-CLIENT  
COMMUNICATION**  
*why it matters*

**AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF SUCCESSFUL PET CARE** is the quality of communication between veterinarians and their clients. Open, honest dialogue builds trust, understanding and mutual respect, fostering a collaborative approach to decisions about the patient's care and treatment. Through effective communication, both parties play a role in creating a partnership that enhances patient care and can improve outcomes.

**FOR VETERINARIANS**, effective animal care involves more than medical expertise and clinical skills. It requires a relationship-centered approach that strengthens the vet-client partnership and builds a foundation of trust, understanding and respect. This approach relies on key communication skills, such as:

- **Asking thoughtful, open-ended questions** that encourage clients to share more information leads to greater understanding and insight.
- **Listening carefully and attentively** to client concerns, and responding appropriately, builds trust and respect.
- **Paying attention to non-verbal cues** like tone, posture, and facial expressions conveys sincerity and empathy
- **Providing clear, uncomplicated information** and multiple care options helps clients feel confident about following treatment recommendations.

**FOR CLIENTS**, the role of effective communication is just as important. Clients should speak honestly and openly with their vet, providing details that give a more complete picture of the patient's health. They should ask questions if something is unclear, and feel comfortable expressing emotional or financial concerns about treatment plans. This type of meaningful communication strengthens the vet-client partnership by:

- **Building trust and understanding** (e.g. sharing details, asking questions and expressing emotional or financial concerns)
- **Avoiding misunderstandings and mistakes** (e.g. reviewing dosage directions, potential side effects and care instructions)
- **Supporting emotional and financial transparency** (e.g. being honest about emotional and financial limits so the vet can offer alternative options)
- **Collaborating for preventive care** (e.g. discussing nutrition, exercise, dental care and parasite control before illnesses occur)

In the end, good quality animal care depends on a partnership between veterinarians and their clients, and communication is the bridge that connects them. The more effective the communication, the better equipped both parties will be to care for an animal's well being and potentially improve the outcome. By establishing a bond of understanding, trust and compassion, communication benefits not only the patient but everyone involved.

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**VETERINARY LITIGATION CONSULTANTS is a team of highly experienced veterinarians serving as expert witnesses in veterinary malpractice cases. We offer professional opinions based on years of clinical practice, education, and adherence to industry standards.**