Sample standards to get you started

Your standards should be clear, concise protocols—like the ones listed below—for what you believe is the best care for the pets you see.

Standards of care give you a solid foundation for a high-quality care program, says Karyn Gavzer, CVPM, MBA, a veterinary business consultant with KG Marketing & Training Inc. in Springboro, Ohio. She recommends that you start by developing standards of care for regular preventive care items, like the ones listed below.

"Practices should also have standards for puppies and kittens, spaying and neutering, and other high-volume, routine preventive health-care services," Gavzer says. And your standards may vary from these samples, because you'll take into account your clients, your team, and your area. For example, says Gavzer, in certain parts of the country Lyme vaccinations are important, but not in other parts. "These are just suggestions to use as a starting point to develop more formal standards of care at your practice."

Vaccinations

> Canine DHPP—100 percent will be vaccinated, unless ill or immune compromised
> Canine rabies—100 percent will be vaccinated, unless ill or immune compromised
> Feline FVRCP—100 percent will be vaccinated, unless ill or immune compromised
> Feline rabies—100 percent will be vaccinated, unless ill or immune compromised

Heartworm

> Heartworm testing (dogs only)—100 percent tested annually
> Canine heartworm preventive—100 percent 12-month protection
> Feline heartworm protection—100 percent of cats

Dental prophy

> 100 percent recommended for Grade 2 dental disease or worse

Pre-anesthetic screen

> 100 percent recommended

Therapeutic diets

> 100 percent recommended for pets that could benefit from nutritional intervention and support

Senior pets

> 100 percent recommendation to screen dogs and cats age 7 and older/age 5 for giant breed dogs
> 100 percent recommendation for twice-a-year exams

Parasite control

> Annual fecal test for adult dogs and cats
> If test results return positive, re-test until two negative results
> Flea preventive for all at-risk dogs and cats

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