



## Northside Veterinary Centre

2/51 Mort Street

Braddon ACT 2612

Call (02) 6247 8651

Email [info@northsidevet.com.au](mailto:info@northsidevet.com.au)

[www.northsidevet.com.au](http://www.northsidevet.com.au)



## Fear Free Philosophy



Fear free philosophy is an approach to veterinary practice that aims to prevent and alleviate fear, anxiety and stress in pets during their veterinary visits. Northside Vet Centre embraces this philosophy and has designed the new clinic carefully with these principles in mind. Many of the staff have their Fear Free Certification. These are some of the steps we have taken to try to reduce stress and fear in our patients.

- 1) **Clinic colours** - we have avoided white in our colour palette, as this appears to dogs and cats like fluorescent yellow, and raises anxiety.
- 2) **Visual barriers** – our planter boxes in the waiting room are designed to allow animals to hide a little from each other and unfamiliar people.
- 3) **Separate dog and cat areas** – dogs and cats are provided with separate waiting areas and separate wards. All hospital cages are designed to avoid animals facing another animal, which can increase anxiety.
- 4) **Pheromone use** – pheromones are smells that can change emotional states. We use the products Adaptil<sup>®</sup>, a canine pheromone that promotes a relaxed state, and Feliway<sup>®</sup>, a feline pheromone that promotes a relaxed and happy state. Diffusers are placed in the consult rooms and animal wards. Removal of pheromones emitted by distressed animals are cleaned and removed with specific pheromone removal cleaning agents.
- 5) **Music** – calming music is played in the dog and cat wards for our patients. This music can often turn barking distressed dogs into calm quiet dogs. Similar music is used in children's hospitals to reduce anxiety.
- 6) **Non-slip surfaces** – we try to provide non slip surfaces, especially on examination tables.



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- 7) **Treats** – are a fantastic way to encourage our pets to view their veterinary visits as a fun and enjoyable experience. We use a wide range of treats from liver treats, to duck and lamb chews. Even some of our feline patients will now take a treat during their examination.
- 8) **Gentle restraint** – all our staff are familiar with a wide range of gentle restraint techniques. Towel wraps, being held gently on a nurse's knee, and chin/ ear rubs are gentle techniques to avoid wrestling and causing distress.
- 9) **Local anaesthesia and sedation** – where a procedure is causing distress, we use local anaesthesia and/or sedation to reduce discomfort and distress.
- 10) **Puppy socialisation classes** – are held in the clinic. This allows pups to become familiar with the clinic and regard it as a fun and safe environment.
- 11) **Basket muzzles** – occasionally dogs may need to be muzzled for the safety of staff and owners. We now use basket muzzles. These allow dogs to pant and eat treats and are much better tolerated than the traditional cloth muzzles that prevent dogs from panting. We always aim to minimise the time any dog wears a muzzle.
- 12) **Behavioural consultations** – are available for both cats and dogs to assess any behavioural concerns. These appointments require a detailed questionnaire to be completed and returned prior to a long consultation. In some cases, referral is recommended to vets who have gained their Memberships in Veterinary Behaviour.
- 13) **Emotional record system** – we record information on our patients personal preferences, to help us use the best methods for your pet. This can include preferred treats, restraint methods, rooms or staff.
- 14) **Topical anaesthesia** – we commonly apply topical anaesthesia prior to blood collection and intravenous cannula placement.

