



TRAINING VETERINARY STAFF IN COMPASSIONATE PHONE COMMUNICATION AND PRE-PLANNING FOR

PET EUTHANASIA

COMPASSIONATE PHONE COMMUNICATION

Effective and compassionate phone communication is crucial when discussing pet euthanasia with pet owners. Staff should be trained to approach these conversations with utmost sensitivity and empathy as well as what the office process is so they can communicate and set proper expectations.

Beginning the conversation with a warm greeting and acknowledging the emotional nature of the discussion can immediately set a supportive tone. Encourage staff to actively listen to the pet parent's feelings and concerns, without interrupting or rushing. Empathetic responses such as "I understand how difficult this decision is for you" or "I'm here to guide you through this process with care" can provide much-needed reassurance. Remember to use clear and gentle language to explain the euthanasia process, avoiding jargon or technical terms that might cause confusion or anxiety. It may be helpful to consider providing a phone script.

CONCLUSION

Compassionate phone communication plays a significant role in guiding pet owners through the difficult process of pet euthanasia. By offering pre-planning options and thoughtfully considering various steps in the process like the timing of invoice delivery, veterinary staff can support pet parents with empathy and care during these emotionally challenging times. Prioritizing sensitivity and understanding ensures that pet owners feel heard, supported, and guided through the process of saying goodbye to their beloved companions.

PRE-PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING

To alleviate stress during the difficult time of euthanasia, encourage staff to offer pre-planning options. When scheduling the appointment, gently inquire if the pet parent wishes to keep the leash, have a paw print, or select an urn and recording their preferences. By addressing these decisions ahead of time, it allows pet owners to make thoughtful choices without feeling rushed or overwhelmed during the euthanasia procedure.

INVOICE DELIVERY WITH SENSITIVITY

Sending invoices for euthanasia services requires special consideration to be sensitive to the emotional state of the pet owner. Consider having payments ahead of time so when the day comes it is already taken care of. If invoice needs to be sent post, instead of sending the invoice in the middle of the workday, which can be jarring and unexpected, advise staff to schedule it for a time when the pet parent is more likely to be emotionally prepared. Consider sending the invoice later in the evening or on weekends. Moreover, it's essential to accompany the invoice with a heartfelt message expressing condolences and support. This small gesture can show compassion and understanding, reaffirming that the veterinary practice is there to support them during their time of grief.