

Learning how to speak “pet owner” enhances the value of regular care

According to a new language-focused research study spearheaded by the AVMA, what you say to your clients—right down to specific words and phrases—matters. A lot.

A new nationwide study, *Language That Works: Changing the Way We Talk About Veterinary Care*, shows that a fundamental shift in the way veterinary teams communicate can significantly influence pet owner perceptions about the value and importance of regular veterinary care. Study results are now available in a new ebook, the first in an AVMA library of Language of Veterinary Care resources, made possible in part by educational funding from CareCredit and Pets Best Pet Health Insurance.

What pet owners want to hear

The study revealed pet owners may say they rely on veterinary medicine to keep up with their pet’s care, but they also admit they don’t always bring their pets in for regular checkups.

When asked what they value from their veterinarian, three main things topped the list:

- Expertise
- A strong relationship
- Personalized recommendations

Of anything a veterinarian could offer, personalized recommendations stood out as the most valuable to pet owners. This quality differentiates vets from sources that provide generic support. Pet owners also say that when their veterinarian first takes the time to get to know them and their pet, it makes recommendations seem more personal and credible.

Which word works best?

41% of pet owners chose “checkups” as the best way to talk about wellness visits.¹

- 41% Checkups
- 31% Wellness visits
- 24% Visits
- 4% Appointments

Start with language that’s reassuring

Pet owners know that preventive care is good for their pets’ long-term health but they don’t want to be told it’s their responsibility. (This kind of talk just makes them feel criticized.) **They prefer to focus on the relationship they have with their pets.** A good place to start is to simply tell them that regular checkups are a great way for you to learn more about them and their pet. Routine exams can also help identify (even avoid) problems early. And, according to the study, this is the time to assure your clients they can always turn to you and your team for recommendations tailored to their pet.

Talk about the elephant in the room

What’s the first thing pet owners associate with veterinary care? The answer is “money.” The research revealed pet owners typically don’t budget for



veterinary care and may not be aware of payment options. They also appreciate it when their veterinarian shows empathy about the cost of care and provides options to help them pay. It makes them feel like the vet is on their side.

Mention solutions that can help

If clients have concerns about cost, one way to respond is to tell them you have options to help make payment easier for the care you’re recommending.

One leading option is the CareCredit credit card, a flexible financing solution that’s accepted at more than 25,000 veterinary locations. With CareCredit, clients have a way to fit pet care into their budget and pay over time.*

CareCredit can also be used with Pets Best Pet Health Insurance to help clients be financially prepared for the care you recommend at every stage of a pet’s life.

Most valuable thing a vet offers?

More than half of respondents said “personalized recommendations.”¹

- 53% Recommendations
- 33% Advice
- 13% Guidance
- 13% Answers
- 7% Insight

Call 844-812-8111 to enroll with CareCredit. The one-time fee is only \$59 if you apply to enroll by Oct. 31, 2022.

Already enrolled? For more information about the Language of Care, visit avma.org/languageofcare.

For more details about CareCredit or Pets Best, visit carecredit.com/vetinsights.



¹Language That Works: Changing The Way We Talk About Veterinary Care, AVMA. Made possible in part by educational funding from partners CareCredit & Pets Best. *Subject to credit approval. See carecredit.com for details.

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