



WHAT'S PREVENTING YOUR TEAM FROM ACHIEVING FULL PREVENTIVE CARE POTENTIAL?

Whether you're looking to implement a new preventive care program, revamp your pre-pandemic approach, or expand your services, the first step is a thorough review of what's currently working—and what's holding you back. Identifying and addressing current snags in your workflow can open up more time for preventive care, without overburdening your team.

Complete the following statements to learn where your team could be struggling.

- ❶ **Communication** — In our practice, preventive care conversations start during the:
- Appointment scheduling process
 - Check-in
 - Physical exam

If you're waiting until the veterinarian is in the room to discuss preventive care, you aren't maximizing your potential. Clients should first encounter your messaging when they schedule the appointment, again at check-in, and from the technician as they take the patient history.

- ❷ **Confidence** — When approaching the subject of annual blood work, team members are:
- Confident and direct
 - Reluctant and nervous to discuss cost or purpose

Constructing a culture that emphasizes preventive care can help the whole team gain confidence. Give the staff firsthand experience by encouraging them to perform preventive diagnostic testing on their own pets, and consider lower price points for healthy-pet blood work to boost client compliance and team confidence.

- ❸ **Consistent messaging** — Our team can always/cannot anticipate the veterinarian's preventive care recommendations based on the pet's age.

Consistent messaging presents a professional image and builds trust, while inconsistent recommendations can lead to confusion, frustration, longer appointments, repeated patient sampling, and misquoted costs.

- ❹ **Workflows** — Standard preventive care appointments are:
- Smoothly run from start to finish, with minimal lag time
 - Disorganized, with a lot of back and forth to and from the exam room

Efficient preventive care visits should be time savers, because of their predictable or standardized flow. If your team is struggling to collect samples, order tests, or communicate with clients, you may need to firm up your SOPs, delegate tasks, or provide additional team training.

- ❺ **Support** — True or false? We use our diagnostic partner[s]' client-friendly resources to enhance our preventive care.

From big data studies and leading-edge diagnostic equipment, to clinical support, client-friendly summaries, charts, and handouts, your diagnostic partner[s] should not only provide equipment, but also function as a team member. Is your reference lab working for you? Does your team know what's available?

Do you have the supplies you need?

- 6 **Test results** — The veterinarian/technician/assistant/CSR reports normal test results to clients by phone/email/text.

Implement workflows that help you relay important lab results to clients in the most efficient, but personal, way possible.

- Capture email addresses from clients and send normal healthy-pet test results with a templated email.
- Send emails directly through your practice management software or via messaging in your hospital app.
- Delegate normal results reporting to veterinary technicians, assistants, or CSRs.
- When appropriate, veterinarians may consider discussing mild changes by email to reduce phone calls.

- 7 **Client education** — We always/seldom/never provide the client with test results, X-rays, or informational materials specific to their pet's diagnosis. We always/seldom/never discuss the reasons we recommend preventive care services, and their impact on lifelong health.

Clients will be more likely to see the value of preventive care if they understand how it can help their pet live a longer, healthier life.

- Use real-life data to support the pet's clinical status, or to back up the story of a similar patient to bring home the power of preventive care.
- When appropriate, supply clients with tangible results (e.g., X-ray images, test results) to reinforce the importance of diagnostic testing.

- 8 **Recommendations** — Select the truer statement:

- We make comprehensive preventive care easy by making clear pet-specific recommendations and/or offering tailored care plans or bundled services.
- Our preventive care recommendations require a lot of explanation and decision-making for the client, because they can pick and choose what they want.

Narrowing down care options prevents analysis-paralysis, or service postponement because of cost or lack of clarity. Bundled services or wellness plans can remove cost barriers, and help pets get the care they deserve.