



VRS services and procedures during COVID Level 4

Dear Colleagues,

18th August 2021

Yes, we are still here to support you wherever possible.

Urgent AND non-urgent cases can still be referred to VRS via the usual systems (see details below). Please comment on your referral form/submission, email or phone if you consider the case to be urgent. If you are unsure, then we will be happy to review the file and conduct an initial telephonic consultation with the owner to assess the welfare aspects of each case.

- **Urgent cases:**
 - **These would be considered cases where a delay in diagnosis or management of the case would result in irreversible harm to the patient, OR where the patient is suffering unreasonable and unmanageable pain.** If you are unsure then we will be happy to discuss the case with you, and if needed conduct an initial telephonic consultation with the owner to assess the welfare aspects of each case.
 - Will be given the first available appointment in order of need (this may require for you to hold and stabilise the patient for a period before the owners can transfer them to VRS). We are happy to help establish an initial stabilisation protocol with you if required.
 - I will conduct an initial telephone consultation with the clients after reviewing your history and diagnostics, if indicated we will arrange transfer of the animal from the owner to our clinic in our car park area.
 - Please ensure we have the **correct client contact details** (especially contact numbers and **email address**) in the information you send.
 - Please check and inform VRS if any of your clients have COVID19 or have been in close contact, so we can ensure appropriate management practices.
- **Non-urgent cases:**
 - We will contact your client promptly and organise a future appointment (and continue to keep them informed of any required appointment moves pending COVID 19 Level).
 - Your client will be offered a potential telephonic consultation (please ensure I have your full clinical notes and any relevant diagnostics for review before the consultation). A video consultation may be arranged if visual examination of the patient is deemed necessary.
 - Admin staff will contact the clients and arrange on-line payment of a consultation fee (\$145) before the consultation.
 - If prescription medicines are required, then VRS will contact your clinic to ask that the initial consulting veterinarian dispense any medications to the client.

Currently we will be 'in clinic' on the 2 day rotation roster, however the **VRS Team will continue to deal with bookings, enquiries, case reviews EVERY day of the week.**

We hope that this ongoing support for colleagues and pet owners helps to manage some of the potential anxiety issues, which have become evident to us all recently.

VRS Contact details:

- For bookings, enquiries please use the VRS web site
- www.vetreferral.co.nz
Direct link: <https://vetreferral.co.nz/veterinary-referral-services-submission-form/>
Otherwise please:
Email admin@vetreferral.co.nz
OR call directly on **07 849 0707**
(Alternately Hamilton Small Animal Veterinary Services reception on 078492963 may be able to redirect your enquiry)
- For any urgent direct veterinarian to veterinarian call please call me directly on **0221838733** (0221VETREF)
OR for less urgent cases I can be emailed directly on DrMillward@vetreferral.co.nz

Other useful information:

New Zealand Veterinary Council:
<https://www.vetcouncil.org.nz/>
Phone: 044739600
vet@vetcouncil.org.nz

New Zealand Veterinary Association:
<https://www.nzva.org.nz/>
Phone: 04 471 0484

All veterinarians in New Zealand can get free, confidential counselling (up to three fully funded face-to-face sessions with a trained psychologist) and a 24-hour phone service that's open seven days a week.

This is offered through Vitae and is funded by the NZVA and the Veterinary Council of New Zealand.

<http://www.vitae.co.nz/contact/counselling-form/>
Phone: 0508 664 981

The Mental Health Foundation:
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/>
Phone: 0800 611 116
Text a counsellor on 1737

Lifeline
<https://www.lifeline.org.nz/>
Phone 0800 543 354 or (09) 522 2999
Text 4357 (HELP)

Stay safe and kia kaha,

Dr Ian R Millward and the VRS Team