

# *We're Referring You to a Specialty Practice*

## **What is a referral practice?**

A referral practice is one that specializes in one or more specific areas of veterinary medicine. An AAHA-accredited referral practice is required to have a board-certified veterinary specialist on staff. In addition to graduating from veterinary school, a board-certified specialist has completed several additional years in an internship and residency program and passed rigorous training and testing.

## **Typical areas of board certification in veterinary medicine include:**

- Anesthesiology
- Behavior
- Cardiology
- Dermatology
- Dentistry
- Emergency & Critical Care
- Internal Medicine
- Neurology
- Nutrition
- Oncology
- Ophthalmology
- Radiology
- Surgery
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## **Why am I being referred to a specialist?**

We believe that a team approach to your pet's health care is in their best interest because it allows for state-of-the-art veterinary care. You, your veterinarian and the specialist veterinarian work together to ensure that your pet receives the very best medical treatment and care possible.

A referral has been suggested because your pet needs specialized procedures, treatments or tests, or because your pet needs care or diagnoses that are not available at your regular hospital.

When a referral is appropriate, the best medicine is delivered through collaboration between your AAHA-accredited hospital's team and board-certified specialists. You can trust that your AAHA-accredited hospital will refer you to someone who will care for your pet and provide quality health care options that meet the same high standards of care they stand for.

## **Can the referral hospital be my regular veterinary care provider?**

Referral hospitals are not a substitute for your regular veterinarian and usually do not offer many of the important and crucial services your regular veterinarian provides. It's very important to have your pet regularly examined by a veterinarian who knows your pet and can assess the need for specialty services.

Patients are most often accepted only through a referral process, and your regular veterinarian's input is critical to the diagnosis and treatment of your pet. Referral practices are an extension of general practices and maintain a close relationship with your regular veterinarian. The veterinarians work together and provide regular reports to you and to each other about your pet's condition.

## **What should I expect during the referral process?**

- Your veterinarian will provide you with the name and contact information of the referral hospital so you can schedule an appointment/consultation
- Your veterinarian will provide a referral form and the medical records requested by the referral hospital
- Understand that there may be a need for different or additional diagnostics
- The specialist may need to repeat tests, or may make a different assessment of your pet's condition and it may take time to work up the case
- Depending on the medical condition, your pet may not have diagnostic procedures or surgery performed the same day as your initial visit

As your health care team, we are committed to keeping you updated on your pet's condition. Collaboration among you, your veterinarian and the specialist is essential to ensure the most comprehensive care possible for your pet.



The Standard of  
Veterinary Excellence

We embrace AAHA's Referral Guidelines in an effort to facilitate:

- The highest quality care for patients
- Education and outstanding service for clients
- Teamwork among veterinary professionals

**You will be seeing a board certified specialist in the area of:**

\_\_\_\_\_

## **REFERRAL HOSPITAL CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Veterinarian: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_