

CONNECT FOR CARE

FAQs for Veterinary Professionals

Q What is Connect for Care?

A Connect for Care is a unique CVMA member benefit program designed to unify veterinarians, shelters, and pet owners all around the same common goal: Ensuring adopted shelter pets receive the lifelong health care they deserve.

Q How does the program work?

A The program works by asking adopters to choose a participating veterinarian at the time of adoption for a complimentary post-adoption initial exam. If needed, the veterinarian will also provide up to \$250 worth of care for designated post-adoption medical needs for up to 14 calendar days post-adoption. For veterinary practices, Connect for Care is a powerful client acquisition tool.

Q Who can participate in the program?

A Any practice with a CVMA member small animal veterinarian in the following counties may participate: Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, Jefferson.

Access to the Connect for Care program is an exclusive benefit for CVMA members; **at least one veterinarian at each participating practice must be a CVMA member**. Participating shelters must be PACFA licensed and a member of the Metro Denver Animal Welfare Alliance (MDAWA).

Q Who determines which practice the adopter selects?

A The adopter makes the choice. Adopters are shown a map of participating practices and are asked to select a conveniently located practice. The adopter may opt out if they have a current veterinary relationship with a non-participating practice; additionally, adopters are not required to participate in the program and may decide not to participate at all.

Q What is expected of my practice?

A Participating practices are expected to:

- Complete a complimentary post-adoption initial exam for a pet within 14 calendar days of adoption, whether the pet is healthy or ill. Remember, the first visit is the most important one in the life of a client!

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- **If any of the designated medical needs below are identified at the exam or within 14 calendar days of the adoption, you agree to provide up to \$250 of care (including diagnostics, treatment, or medications for these conditions), at no charge to the adopter or the shelter.** Clients are responsible for charges over \$250. Many practices create a discount code called “Connect for Care” for ease of record keeping.
- Communicate any serious health problems or concerns to CVMA (who will communicate to the referring shelter) within 24 hours.
- Track those new clients! It is highly recommended that your practice run monthly or quarterly reports. We recommend you track the following metrics:
 - Number of new CFC clients
 - Amount of discounted care given away by your practice
 - Amount of revenue generated by these CFC clients, 1 year later

Q What type of post-adoption medical needs are covered under Connect for Care?

A Practices are expected to provide up to \$250 worth of treatment for common post-adoption medical needs within the first 14 days, such as:

- Upper respiratory infections
- Kennel cough
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (**Including** intestinal parasites found on fecal tests and **excluding** parvovirus)
- Initial treatments of skin, eye, and ear infections (including those caused by ear mites)
- Treatment of complications from sterilization procedures performed by the shelter if general anesthesia is not required

The following medical needs and services are excluded from your Connect for Care commitment (the client is responsible for paying 100%):

- Preventive care
- Vaccinations
- Microchip
- Heartworm test
- Parasite preventives
- Dental care
- Grooming
- Accident or injury
- Infectious diseases (e.g. distemper, hepatitis, parvovirus, influenza, ringworm, FIP, FeLV and FIV)
- Congenital or inherited diseases
- Chronic conditions such as, but not limited to, cancer, diabetes, and kidney disease
- Tumors, swellings, or growths unrelated to shelter care
- Complications from surgical procedures performed at the shelter that require general anesthesia
- Care for other pets in the household that may become infected by the new pet

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Q What is expected of the shelter?

A Participating shelters are expected to:

- Refer adopters to participating clinics.
- Provide materials and messaging that promote the program to adopters.
- Maintain their high standards of medical care as part of their normal process of ensuring pets are healthy and ready to be adopted.

Q What happens if the client doesn't return to my practice again?

A While we all hope that every new client becomes a forever client the moment they walk in our door, we know that some relationships just aren't meant to be. Connect for Care strives to unite clients and patients with their forever veterinarians; however, it is possible some clients may not return for future care.

Q What happens if I already have a veterinary relationship with the adopter?

A If a veterinary relationship already exists between you and the adopter (for example, the owner has another pet that your practice cares for) we ask that you honor the Connect for Care program for the new pet. Remember, welcoming a new member of the family further strengthens the relationship with your practice.

Q Sounds like my kind of program. How can I sign up?

A To enroll, visit colovma.org/connect-for-care. A participation fee of \$125 is required to enroll.

Q Who can I contact if I have questions?

A Ashley Larson, CVMA Connect for Care program director: ashleylarson@colovma.org or 303-539-7646. Ashley is also available to come visit your clinic (or Zoom in!) to discuss the program with you and your team!

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Talking Points

For use in client conversations about Connect for Care

As a participating Connect for Care veterinarian, you may encounter a variety of situations with adopters participating in the Connect for Care program. We encourage you to review the program and these talking points during a staff meeting to ensure all team members are prepared to handle client discussions about the program.

Remember, a **positive, welcoming experience** on the phone and at the first appointment is the foundation for lifelong care!

- Q** I'm just here for the \$250 in free veterinary care.
- A** We're so glad you and your pet are here with us! The \$250 covers a specific list of designated medical needs that I can share with you if you'd like. If we find your pet has any of those medical needs during the initial exam, we'll be happy to cover them up to \$250.
- Q** I already have a veterinarian I go to.
- A** That's great news – veterinary care is very important for your pet. We hope you will consider us in the future if you are ever looking for a new veterinary practice, or if you have friends and family looking for a new veterinarian.
- Q** I thought the shelter was supposed to have made sure my pet was healthy before he/she came home with me?
- A** Shelters work hard to keep their animals healthy, and it's inevitable that some animals may pick up illnesses due to close proximity to other animals. As veterinarians, we're glad we can partner with shelters to make sure adopted pets get a healthy start.