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THE COLLEGE OF  
VETERINARIANS  
OF ONTARIO

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# INFORMATION SHEET

## *Fees for Drugs and Services*

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Veterinarians demonstrate professionalism by being accountable and transparent in relation to the services they provide. Clients have a right to consent to the services provided to their animal(s). They also have a right to request an itemized account of the services provided and the fees charged. This may also include charges for services that are provided by third parties and invoiced by the practice, such as external laboratories, itinerant veterinarian fees, cremation services, etc.

Current data within the Accreditation Program at the College indicates that facilities are often not itemizing costs of drugs and services clearly or consistently. This can lead to real or perceived gaps in transparency.

One of the minimum standards for medical records for veterinary facilities is *“fees and charges, showing separately those for drugs and those for advice or other services.”*

This is also found in Ontario Regulation 1093 Section 22: *“The fees and charges, showing separately those for drugs and those for advice or other services.”*

To be compliant with this requirement, it should be clear in the medical record that fees for drugs are distinct from the fees for services. This information is most often recorded on invoices as an itemized list of drugs and services that were provided. Other areas in the record where this information is found are on treatment estimates or in the progress notes.

### **Guidance:**

The following guidance is provided to assist with satisfying this requirement.

- When a drug is dispensed to the client, the name of the drug and its associated fee should be documented on the invoice.

- When a drug is administered by the veterinarian, it is sufficient to document the category of the drug that was administered on the invoice and its associated fee, such as “pain medication”, or “antibiotic”. Alternatively, the name of the drug can be documented.
- Where the category of drug is on the invoice, the name of the drug is required to be documented elsewhere in the record.
- Consider avoiding terms that may suggest the combining of services and drugs, such as “anesthetic induction”. To some, this may refer to the drug and the administration of the drug to induce anesthesia.
- If including multiple services and drugs into one fee on the invoice, an itemized list of services and drugs and their associated fees that are included should be documented separately (such as a protocol) and available if the client requests it.
- When a client is charged a fee related to a third-party service, such as the fee of an itinerant veterinarian, the fee cannot be marked up. The practice may charge the client reasonable administrative fees associated with providing that service (e.g., facility space, staff time, etc.) and these should appear as separate invoice items.

**Invoice Examples:**

<b>A: This invoice demonstrates documenting the category of the drug administered and documenting the name of the drug dispensed.</b>	
Hospitalization ½ day	###
Pre-anesthetic blood work	###
IV fluids during anesthesia – LRS	###
Surgical time per X minutes	###
Anesthetic monitoring	###
Sedation	###
Pre-anesthetic agent*	INCL
Anesthetic induction	###
Anesthetic induction agent*	INCL
Anesthetic maintenance	###
Anesthetic maintenance agent*	INCL
Injection - subcutaneous	###
Postoperative pain medication*	INCL
Meloxicam oral medication	###

Dispensing fee	INCL
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$Total Cost</b>

\*Note that the name of the drug that was used must be documented elsewhere in the patient's record.

<b>B: This invoice demonstrates documenting the name of the drug administered and the name of the drug dispensed.</b>	
Hospitalization ½ day	###
Pre-anesthetic blood work	###
IV fluids during anesthesia– LRS	###
Surgical time per X minutes	###
Anesthetic monitoring	###
Sedation	###
Butorphanol/Acepromazine/Glycopyrrolate	INCL
Anesthetic induction	###
Propofol	INCL
Anesthetic maintenance	###
Isoflurane gas anesthetic	INCL
Injection - subcutaneous	###
Meloxicam injectable medication	INCL
Meloxicam oral medication	###
Dispensing fee	INCL
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$Total Cost</b>

**C: This invoice demonstrates documenting multiple services and drugs into one fee on the invoice with reference to a separate document that itemizes the fees. The client may ask for this itemized list. Additional items not included in the fee are added as appropriate, such as medication dispensed.**

Spay procedure – canine  Includes: hospitalization, pre-anesthetic blood work, IV fluids, anesthesia, and pain relief  Itemized list of fees for drugs and services available on request (OR attached)	###
Meloxicam oral medication	###
Dispensing fee	INCL
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$Total Cost</b>

When using Invoice C above, the practice has the following document that is kept at the practice for reference that they can attach to the invoice or the client may request:

<b>Itemized list of fees for services and drugs for Spay – Canine (date)</b>	
Spay – surgical time per X minutes	###
Hospitalization ½ day	###
Pre-anesthetic blood work (includes blood collection and interpretation)	###
IV fluids during anesthesia (type of fluids)	###
Anesthetic monitoring	###
Sedation (includes pre-anesthetic agents) *	###
Anesthetic induction (includes induction agent) *	###
Anesthetic maintenance (includes gas anesthetic) *	###
Pain relief injection (includes pain medication) *	###
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$Total Cost</b>

\*Note that the name of the drug that was used must be documented elsewhere in the patient's record.

## References

*Veterinarians Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. V.3  
R.R.O 1990, Reg. 1093: General, as made under the *Veterinarians Act*  
*Minimum Standards for Veterinary Facilities in Ontario*

## Resources

The following can be found at the College's website at [cvo.org](http://cvo.org):

*Professional Practice Standard: Medical Records*  
*Guide to the Professional Practice Standard: Medical Records*

If you have questions, please contact the College's Practice Advisory Service at [practiceadvice@cvo.org](mailto:practiceadvice@cvo.org) or 519-824-5600 ext. 2401.

College publications contain practice parameters and standards which should be considered by all Ontario veterinarians in the care of their patients and in the practice of the profession. College publications are developed in consultation with the profession and describe current professional expectations. It is important to note that these College publications may be used by the College or other bodies in determining whether appropriate standards of practice and professional responsibilities have been maintained. The College encourages you to refer to the website ([www.cvo.org](http://www.cvo.org)) to ensure you are referring to the most recent version of any document.