



McMASTER & HEAP
VETERINARY PRACTICE

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF VET MICHELE

Last month, our super vet nurse Megan wrote about what a nurses day is like at our clinic so I thought I'd give you a little insight into one of my marathon 12 hour Tuesdays, that must start with a flat white!

I typically arrive in after 9am due to organizing our teenage lads for school in the morning and walking Lola before our big 12 hour Tuesday.

I will then assess, liaise with the hospital nurse and devise a plan for any of my sick hospital patients from the previous day. Sometimes I will pass an intensive care patient of mine onto Catherine if my day is full surgically. If there is time before consulting I will phone clients with patient updates or call them in the early afternoon when I've finished consulting.

Typically I consult seeing patients for 3-4 hours in the morning and then again another 3 hours during the evening. By the time Tuesdays rock around my consulting schedule is almost full so when distressed clients phone with a very sick pet, obviously we will see them but they have to be squeezed into an already full block of consulting. If on arrival they are in urgent need of attention, either I will see them or one of our expert nurses will triage the patient, often take bloods, place a catheter and advise me of their findings. Every patient that rings is seen that day and often we see patients from other clinics because they cant be seen that day at their own Practice.

It is common place that during my morning consults I have admitted sick patients for either blood testing, intravenous fluids, xrays or ultrasounds, dentistry, exploratory surgeries, or just observation. I will check on these patients progress, review any blood test results or findings, ring their owners if necessary and work out a treatment plan with the hospital nurse for that day.

Once the sickies are dealt with, I turn my attention to the surgical board in which all my surgeries are highlighted in green pen!

This past Tuesday was a little insane... Heres my list for that day-

1. Right Stifle surgery in a sweet 1 year old Golden Retriever called "Bonnie" to repair ruptured ACL ligaments. Bonnie blew her ACL ligaments in both stifles while out exercising with other dogs, so the left is yet to be repaired in 2 weeks depending on how she's coping after this surgery.

2. A right femoral pinning and wiring in a young cat "Simba" to repair a fractured femur probably caused by a collision with a car.

3. Full shoulder and elbow, spinal, lumbar and hip xrays in Murphy, a 12 year old chocolate Labrador with an annoying persistent right foreleg lameness.

4. A sick, lethargic Chinchilla called Pickles who needed syringe feeding through the day.

5. A Caesarian in a 2 year old Pug called "Geraldine", who gave birth to 1 live puppy, with 2 unfortunately dying.

All in all I have absolutely no time to eat, drink or get into any trouble!! All the above need to be finished with and owners rung by 4pm when I start all over again with consults.

Oh I forgot to mention that somewhere in the

day I have a board full of messages to call clients regarding their pets blood or pathology results, medications requirements, booking in surgeries, queries from other vets or just general advice inquiries.

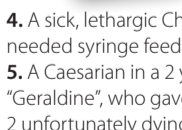
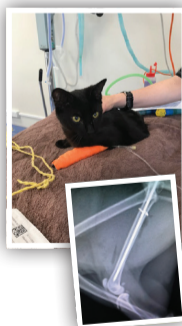
We also look after sick animals for the SPCA and Cats Protection league. We will get a call alerting us to how far away they are and what sort of patient we are seeing, whether a medical or surgical case. That can happen anytime in our day so we fit these consultations around everything else. I feel very good being able to help these less fortunate animals and hopefully give them a chance at recovery and a great life.

A day in MY LIFE is a hugely busy, fast paced one where I need to make so many important decisions in a day on the health and well being of the patients in my care. There is no time to second guess yourself, communication between my staff and my clients is key and I need to be very organized and able to prioritise all the patients in my care needing my help. We are so fortunate at McMaster & Heap to have such a highly skilled, clever and practical group of vets and nurses to be able to bounce ideas off when a difficult case needs a plan.

Honestly I LOVE my job - actually it's a privilege to be able to help animals in the way we can and do. As you can see, every day is extremely different, very challenging at times with difficult medical cases or surgeries but the buck stops with me so to speak. I leave after my 12 hour shift very tired and hungry! But with a big smile on my face knowing that I've made a difference in many animals lives that day and so have my fabulous team.



Geraldine and her one little puppy.



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