**Preparing your Team**

As small businesses across the globe brace for the potential impacts of COVID-19, iVET360 wants to ensure you and your team are as prepared as possible.

We know that your employees are asking many questions, many of which you likely do not have the answers to yet. One question we absolutely do have the answer to is: how to best clean, disinfect, and protect ourselves from COVID-19.

We have seen an uptick in the amount of claims regarding OSHA 11- C retaliation claims, OSHA complaints around lack of training, OSHA complaints around lack of access to appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and more.

We are advising all Veterinary Facilities to hold a staff meeting to cover this very important topic to ensure:

1. Your employees feel trained and equipped to prevent the spread of infection.
2. You are not setting your business up for any litigation due to lack of training and preparation.

**What should we discuss?**

We are advising that you cover four key subjects: Increased Sanitation Protocols, Cleaning vs. Disinfecting, PPE and How to Use it, and Inventory Management.

Let’s dive in!

*Increased Sanitation Protocols*

Very likely, you have already told your team to, “Kick the cleaning list into overdrive!”. For that, we commend you. However, now more than ever, it is imperative that you outline exactly what this means to your staff.

You should discuss:

* How frequently each area of the hospital should be cleaned
	+ Take employees to each section and SHOW them how to properly clean the area
* Walk employees through the clinic to identify areas of high risk that should be cleaned immediately after use
* Ensure the entire staff knows where to locate ALL cleaning supplies and refills to said supplies

*Cleaning versus Disinfecting*

We have all been there. It’s the end of the day, you walk past a technician who has been “cleaning” the same square foot of exam table until their shift is complete. Those days are over.

We must ensure that the staff understands the difference between “cleaning” and “disinfecting”. Per the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control:

* Cleaning - refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. Cleaning does not kill germs but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.
* Disinfecting - refers to using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface *after* cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

We suggest that you physically show the staff how to first CLEAN an area and then how to properly DISINFECT an area. Repeat the same process for laundry, ensuring that you have the entire staff watch you properly load laundry into the washer and the dryer.

*Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*

PPE is only as effective as it is properly utilized. Most facilities have rigid SOPs in regard to when and how to wear PPE; are your staff up to date on these policies? Regardless of whether or not it may seem like common sense, if a staff member feels under trained on how to use PPE, you can be held accountable.

You should discuss:

* The entire SOP regarding WHEN to use PPE
* The entire SOP regarding HOW to use PPE
* Highlight, star, bolden, how these SOPs have been adjusted in response to COVID-19
* Demonstrate proper usage of PPE
* Show the staff where all PPE is located and where to restock from

*Inventory Management*

By this point, you have outlined how we are going to utilize all resources within the hospital. Now, we must explain how to achieve these new standards of minimally acceptable sanitation without wasting valuable and, potentially, finite resources.

You should discuss:

* Expected allocation of resources to each cleaning event
* Highlight the inability to predict how hard it will be to restock cleaning materials and PPE
* Increasing inventory counts to twice weekly

As stated above, we are establishing a minimally acceptable standard of sanitation. We do not want employees to waste resources, but, we also do not want them to restrict themselves to the above cleaning guidelines. If you are able to allocate additional resources, we highly encourage staff to clean beyond what is outlined above.

**How do I hold the team accountable?**

We are glad you have asked! Using the most current information supplied from the CDC and EPA, we have crafted a “Hospital Cleaning and Inventory Management” acknowledgement for you to have each employee sign at the end of your meeting. The document outlines all information above and has an acknowledgment page for both the employee and their manager to sign.