



## host checklist

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Spay/neuter is crucial to animal welfare in our communities. Access to care is a nationwide issue, creating a significant backlog in spay/neuter services for shelter pets and owned pets alike. BISSELL Pet Foundation's Fix the Future® program aims to help fill this gap by funding high-quality, high-volume veterinarians where they are needed the most.

If you are considering hosting a high-volume veterinarian in your shelter or clinic, there are many considerations. Please review the checklist carefully before reaching out to the Fix the Future team.

### ☐ **transportation of pets**

**If you are planning for community or rescue pets, the pets will need to be transported to your facility.**

- Proper confinement of pets and secure enclosures
- Means of verifying the identity of patients and matching with corresponding medical records
- Good air quality and comfortable temperatures. Is there an adequate heating and cooling system?
- Are pets being held in a transport vehicle before or after surgery? Is there a staff person monitoring them?
- Pets monitored during transport before and after surgery

### ☐ **recordkeeping**

**Good recordkeeping is vital for state compliance and safety of the pets you touch in your program.**

- Recordkeeping must comply with state federal and local laws and regulations
- Every pet should have a medical record that includes exam results, body weight, drugs prescribed surgical procedure performed and any other pertinent information

### ☐ **vaccinations**

**In some cases, your clinic may be the only opportunity for pets to receive vaccinations. The Fix the Future program requires that pets receive needed core vaccines.**

- Each pet will be provided with rabies and core vaccines

## ❑ patient handling and housing

**Care and comfort of pets is paramount and should fall above all other priorities.**

- Plan is in place to decrease patient fear and stress while promoting patient comfort
- Cage marking system in place to identify patients
- Housing must allow for adequate temperature control and ventilation
- Cats and dogs are separated as much as possible
- Noise, music, barking, unnecessary foot traffic and other loud stressors limited
- Housing must be cleaned and disinfected between patients
- Housing allows for good visibility by staff
- Feral animals should be housed in traps or enclosures that allow for administration of anesthetics without extensive handling
- Patient comfort should be continuously addressed by ensuring proper thermoregulation and managing stress and pain

## ❑ disease control

**With overcrowding in shelters and limited access to care in the community, disease control must be managed steadfastly.**

- Between each patient, all equipment with direct patient contact should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected with agents known to destroy common veterinary pathogens including some unenveloped viruses which are resistant to some disinfectants (parvo, calicivirus, etc.)
- Anesthetic equipment should be inspected, cleaned and maintained on a schedule commensurate with surgery volume
- Staff should wash or sanitize their hands and change gloves between patients and litters
- Pets scheduled for surgery are clear of infectious disease
- Are strategies in place to limit cross-contamination of patients from multiple sources?
- Surgical cap and mask should be worn by veterinarians and technicians while performing surgery.

## ❑ emergencies

**Be prepared. Emergencies will happen at most clinics.**

- A veterinarian must be present on spay/neuter days to triage and address complications that may occur during anesthesia, surgery, or immediate postoperative period and remain on clinic premises until every patient is extubated, sternal, and responsive
- Enough staff must be available to provide high-quality veterinary medical care in accordance with these guidelines
- All clinic staff should be trained to recognize emergencies
- At least one staff member should be trained on cardiopulmonary resuscitation
- Standard emergency equipment such as source of oxygen and means of ventilation, emergency drugs and reversal agent must be readily available.
- Emergency drug charts containing volumes of drugs to be administered by body weight should be readily accessible to facilitate rapid preparation of doses

## ❑ follow up emergency care

**Have a plan in place for patients in the event they need assistance after hours. A written follow-up plan should be provided to all pet owners, whether shelter, clinic or MASH style event.**

- Have written policies for managing complications
- Provide each pet owner with instructions on what to do in the event of an emergency or issue after surgery

## ❑ anesthetic procedures

**Spay/neuter programs require safe and efficient protocols for anesthesia. This should be discussed at length with the veterinarian performing surgery.**

- Body temperature must be monitored and regulated from time of admission to discharge
- In a high-volume setting, equipment is used differently, and special consideration should be given to the maintenance of equipment
- Ability to provide oxygen supplementation when medically indicated is required for all spay neuter programs
- Sufficient staff for patient to be monitored carefully from the time of administration to pre-medications and continuing to the conclusion of the recovery period

## ❑ anesthetic protocols

**There are many factors to be considered in selecting anesthetic protocols. This should be discussed with the veterinarian performing surgery in advance.**

- Consider each patient's temperature, weight and health status
- Staff must pay care attention to labeled concentration of each drug
- Analgesic agents must be provided to each patient undergoing neutering and should be administered prior to initial incision – Administering a single injection that includes sedative, analgesic and anesthetic induction may reduce patient pain and stress
- If mask administration is used, ensure mask is properly fitted and maintained

## ❑ other considerations

**While there are countless considerations for the veterinarians performing the surgery, there are additional things the host shelter/clinics also must consider.**

- There must be sufficient recovery space for high-volume surgery
- A larger number of spay packs are required for high-volume surgery days and autoclave must be sufficient to keep up with pace
- Decide what information is important to your organization and community and have a data collection plan in place