

ManxSPCA Veterinary Report June 2024

Point of Care – mobile veterinary clinic has provided additional veterinary service to the ManxSPCA's contracted vet since 2021 when required.

In these requested times, the ManxSPCA had difficulty to get appropriate service from their veterinary provider mainly due to lack of vets but also other issues. Scheduling feral neutering especially was difficult - the waiting time at one point was reported to be 4 weeks or more. Feral cats which would need to be kept in any enclosed space for prolonged periods, would compromise their welfare, as they would require to be caught and caged twice daily for cleaning, some refusing to eat, adding to further stress. The Point of Care was called for assistance and could fit up to 18 cats to be neutered in one day.

This difficulty to schedule appointments for surgeries hasn't improved and we started assisting with more and more operations on the premises which needed either immediate or earlier than suggested dates.

In September 2023 provision of veterinary care rules also changed and prescribing certain medications POM-V (prescription only medication – veterinary) – namely antiparasitic, antibiotics, antiviral and antifungal medication could no longer be dispensed without seeing and clinically examining the patient first. This is obviously a difficult situation for any charity environment. When presented with a new patient which requires a vet's assessment, clinical examination and or medical/surgical assistance, scheduling appointments to be seen in a surgery, travelling with a distressed patient, and consequently waiting times or later collection if kept for short hospitalisation, puts further stress on the patient and charity staff's time. As getting through the feral neutering meant that we were present at least weekly (but often twice a week) at the Manxspca premises and could prescribe and dispense immediately and assist with any follow ups.

Other issues encountered was the UK lack of feline vaccines since August 2023. A solution was to assist with applying for special import certificates and deliver 100 doses of feline vaccines imported from the USA to have the kittens finally vaccinated and rehomed.

All of these scenarios enhanced our further involvement and Point of Care was encouraged to apply for tender.

We are very pleased to be now contracted as a primary provider of ManxSPCA veterinary services until June 2027.

As a practice we wish to continue our excellent working relationship with the Society and hope to build on what is already a strong foundation. Since January 2024 we provide at least weekly visits of a veterinary team, consisting of a veterinary nurse and at least one surgeon. We examine new animals, perform routine vaccinations and microchipping, and follow up on existing cases where necessary. When health checks are finished we provide routine surgeries such as neutering - cats, dogs, rabbits, dental care and further surgeries if required, we follow with further diagnostics where necessary.

In July 2023/June 2024 we have carried out the following procedures:

Bitch Spays – 4 (5)

Dog Castrates – 18 (6)

Cat Spays – 129 (67)

Cat Castrates – 105 (39)

Dentals – 28 (4)

Rabbit Spays – 10 (8)

Rabbit Castrates – 14 (3)

Other procedures – 5(4)

Radiographs - 13 (1)

The figures in brackets relate to the period 1st July 2022 until 30th June 2023.

A further detailed list is provided below.

These indicate that the number of neutering procedures increased compared to last year. That number is doubled compared to previous years. Half of these are the ferals, further increase is most likely due to neutering assistance when people cannot afford it. This demand of assistance is reported also on increase.

Cat flu is an ongoing issue in the cattery. Signs of cat flu can vary significantly from a small amount of ocular and nasal discharge to more severe signs which can affect the lungs and the animal's appetite. It is commonly a viral disease with secondary bacterial complications and some cats may suffer with recurring issues for the rest of their lives, especially when infected before being vaccinated. This also leads to a delay in rehoming as the cats could not have their routine vaccinations until the issues are resolved.

In the future, the reviewing of Standard Operating Procedures for cat flu and retraining is planned to hopefully reduce this problem, some parts are already implemented.

The plan is to provide training for ManxSPCA staff. This will involve spending some time in our mobile clinic to learn more about animal handling, behaviour and management of sick animals, strengthen our working relationship and allow for staff to assist with simple procedures like blood sampling at the health checks at the ManxSPCA. I would like to take this opportunity to say that it is an honour to work with the Society to improve the health and welfare of all animals on the Island and help by educating the public on animal health and welfare issues.

[illegible]