

Our 'out of hours' system is changing from the 18th November 2019

We have answered some of the most frequently asked questions

Why is the out of hours system changing?

We have been very proud of the level of service we have provided out of normal working hours, however, this has been based on a vet working on an on call system. The work we are now seeing out of hours has reached a level where we cannot continue the on call system, with the vet often working a normal day both the day before and after their night shift. For this reason we are moving to dedicated night vets and nurses. In order to make this possible we are combining our out of hours system with another local practice, Argyll Vets, and will be called MiNightVet.

Where is the MiNightVet service located?

The MiNightVet service will be based at the Argyll Roundswell branch, just outside Barnstaple (Roundswell Business Park, EX31 3TD). The reason for its location is due to the distribution of both practices client base with branch practices in South Molton, Torrington, Ilfracombe and Braunton.

Which telephone number should I call if I am worried about my pet out of normal working hours?

If you have concerns about your pet you should call the MiNightVet service (as from the 18th November 2019) on 01271 318050. If you don't have the number to hand, just call any of our branches and you will hear a recorded message giving you the correct number. The number will also be on our website and Facebook page.

What time of day does the MiNightVet service take over?

The MiNightVet service will operate between 7pm and 8am Monday to Friday and from 5pm Saturday through to 8 am on Monday morning. The Bideford practice will have extended consulting through to 7 pm Monday to Friday, the South Molton and Torrington branches will continue to open 8.30am until 6pm. Our Saturday surgery at the Bideford branch has already been extended to 5pm to try and make booking an appointment as easy as possible.

Who will be looking after my pet?

There will be an onsite veterinary surgeon and registered veterinary nurse, both working through the night providing supervision and care to your pet at a time when they need it most. The vets and nurses working in these roles have an interest and further training in emergency medicine and critical care. They will work to diagnose and treat your pet in the same way as through normal day time hours.

Does the MiNightVet service have the same facilities as Torbridge?

The MiNightVet service will have all the facilities and equipment available at Torbridge and will be able to undertake all surgical and diagnostic procedures that are currently performed in an emergency situation.

What will happen to inpatients admitted at Torbridge through normal working hours?

There will be a registered veterinary nurse at the Bideford practice Monday through to Thursday night who will care for inpatients admitted through the day or staying post operatively. These inpatients will be assessed each evening and if it is felt an animal would benefit from having an onsite veterinary surgeon and the more intensive care they can provide, then they will be transferred in the evening to the

MiNightVet service. All inpatient care will be provided for at the MiNightVet site Friday to Sunday night.

Who will transport animals to the MiNightVet service?

If an inpatient is deemed to require intensive care then they will be transported to the MiNightVet service in the evening. We are able to offer this service free of charge or if you prefer, you can transport your pet across to the MiNightVet yourself, this would enable you to see the facility where your animal will be treated and meet the overnight staff caring for them.

What will happen if my pet is not in a condition to be transported?

If an animal has been admitted to the Bideford practice that is in a condition where we feel it would not be possible to transport them safely, provision will be made to provide onsite veterinary care until their condition improves to a point where they can be safely transferred to the MiNightVet service where their intensive care treatment can be continued.

How does this change in out of hours system benefit my pet?

The biggest advantage with the MiNightVet service is the presence of an onsite veterinary surgeon, working through the night. The vets and nurses who have been employed to fulfil these roles are experienced and interested in emergency and critical care. It also ensures that our day staff are as refreshed as possible each day and enables us to give the best standard and continuity of care.

Will house visits still be possible?

The MiNightVet service will be able to attend animals for house visits when possible, if however, the vet is attending an emergency, you may be asked to bring your pet to the surgery or if appropriate, a later time arranged for a visit. If you are unable to transport your animal, staff will be able to give you telephone numbers of taxi companies happy to transport animals.