

Patterson Veterinary Signature Solutions

Regional Service Technicians



Preventative Maintenance Agreement Program Provides Peace of Mind

Prior to enrolling in Patterson Veterinary's Preventative Maintenance Agreement (PMA) program, Diana Hatstrup was left scrambling anytime there was an equipment breakdown. As the office manager at Cascade West Veterinary Hospital in Centralia, Wash., Hatstrup was forced to determine the cause of the problem, contact a repair technician and order replacement parts. The process was frustrating and time consuming, pulling her away from her regular job duties. If equipment had to be sent away for repair, the doctors and support staff had to make do without it, sometimes for weeks at a time. In some cases, certain medical procedures had to be delayed and non-essential equipment that Hatstrup didn't know how to fix was no longer used.

In April 2012, Cascade West enrolled in the PMA program, and Hatstrup no longer has to worry about unexpected equipment issues. The program offers regular equipment maintenance services on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual basis (depending upon the type of equipment and the manufacturer's preventative maintenance recommendations). The program covers many types of diagnostic, surgical and patient-monitoring equipment; ensures patient and staff safety and provides priority access to loaner equipment and emergency service, eliminating down time.

When the owners at Cascade West learned about Patterson Veterinary's PMA program, they knew it would benefit the hospital by providing them with peace of mind, knowing they could rely on their equipment so their clients could rely on them. "The PMA program helps us to meet our goal of providing exceptional service to our clients by ensuring that we have properly functioning equipment that is safe for both our patients and our staff," said Dr. Chris Affeldt, partner at Cascade West.

Rick Gravett is Cascade West's Patterson Veterinary service technician and Hatstrup calls him a "miracle worker" who saves

them time and money. "He fixes lots of equipment himself," said Hatstrup. "Oftentimes he has the necessary parts in his truck so he can repair an item right away. He fixes essential equipment as well as items that we don't use as often," she added.

Gravett makes monthly visits to the hospital to provide a basic systems check on equipment used daily by the doctors and support staff. He completes a four-page checklist that includes servicing the autoclave sterilizer; checking cords, plugs, bulbs and batteries; checking the hydraulics on the surgery table; and checking the anesthesia machines for pressure leaks. If anything is not working properly, he fixes it immediately and he keeps a regular maintenance and cleaning schedule.

These monthly visits prevent many equipment failures but in the rare instance when something does go wrong, Gravett will make an emergency visit to ensure that equipment is fixed right away. For example, when Cascade West's dental machine broke down recently, Gravett arrived that day to fix it. And when the motor on the hot water heating blanket burned out, Gravett stopped by on his own time to drop off a loaner before sending the blanket back to the company to be fixed. (As part of the PMA program, if an equipment failure takes place, the machine gets fixed or a loaner is supplied until the equipment is up and running again.)

Gravett says his relationships with the veterinary technicians and with the doctors have grown tremendously over time. He has been able to fix equipment, eliminate problems and build their trust. "I think it's a good partnership," he said. "Staff members at the hospital no longer have to order parts or try to fix things themselves. It frees up their time to work on animals rather than equipment. In a clinic that has an open dialogue, you become a cohesive team working toward a common goal," he added.

Angela Miranda, the practice manager at All Creatures Animal Hospital in Puyallup, Wash., stresses the word “preventative,” when she talks about the maintenance program. She said that their service technician, Dave Kinney, catches potential problems and fixes equipment before it completely breaks down. “It allows us to keep equipment updated and calibrated so we have confidence in our machines and we don’t have to delay any procedures because a machine is broken,” she said.

Miranda says that Kinney always responds in a timely manner. In fact, when the pedal on the X-ray machine broke recently, Kinney replaced it the next day. Without him, Miranda said the clinic would have gone at least a week without X-rays. “The PMA program is definitely worth being enrolled in,” Miranda said. “I can work proactively to keep our equipment running properly and this saves us time, energy and hassle,” she added.

The Preventative Maintenance Agreement Program is another way that Patterson provides overall care and service to its veterinary partners. This unique and exclusive program

provides peace of mind and gives staff members the freedom to focus on what matters most, caring for animals. “I just can’t say enough good things about the program,” said Hatstrup. “Having such a talented technician come in to fix things allows us to do our jobs and keeps things running smoothly.”

Featured Practices

All Creatures Animal Hospital
16714 Meridian E., Suite 1
Puyallup, WA 98375
puyallupvet.com

Cascade West
Veterinary Hospital
1305 South Gold Street
Centralia, WA 98531
cascadewestvet.com

Patterson Veterinary Preventative Maintenance Agreement (PMA)

NOTE: PMAs are not available in all areas of the country; for details specific to your geography or for more information, please contact your Patterson representative or call 800.225.7911.

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