



Assistance Dogs UK

Championing standards.
Breaking down barriers.

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Assistance Dogs UK
c/o Hearing Dogs
The Grange, Wycombe Road
Saunderton, Princes Risborough
Buckinghamshire
HP27 9NS

Assistance Dogs UK (ADUK) represents 15 accredited charities providing assistance dogs to disabled people within the UK. We have consulted our members about the proposed posters for veterinary surgeries, and have set out their views and suggestions below.

1. It was felt that the posters are clearly written and easy to understand. If displayed properly (and we feel that there should be a mandated way of surgeries doing this) they should improve clients' understanding of their rights.
2. It is important that alternative comms methods are available for those who have different accessibility requirements. Audio alternatives and alternative text options should be taken into consideration, including integration with NaviLens for people with sight loss.
3. Our members felt that the posters were bold and should be noticed, but that vets should be given clear requirements on where to display the notices. They must be clearly visible whilst people wait, before their consultation, in the consultation rooms themselves when prescriptions are being discussed, and around the areas where payment is taken.
4. There is some concern with the second poster that potentially people might think that cost savings don't apply to shorter term prescriptions. Perhaps removing the current sub heading and using the very powerful line about 'hundreds of pounds' instead would assist with this potential issue.
5. Our members felt strongly that the maximum prescription fee should be on the posters, along with the price cap for follow up medication. This will enable people to see whether their vet is charging the maximum possible, and assist them with making choices.
6. We wonder whether everyone will understand that the prescription fee is not the same as the fee for the medication, and whether this should be made clear on the posters.
7. People would not describe their assistance dog as a 'pet' so we wonder whether the broader term of 'animal' could be used instead. If not, could it say 'pet or assistance dog' ?

8. Whilst the posters represent an excellent step forward, our members felt that the CMA could do more to guide people to reputable pharmacies. Could a list be offered for example - maybe if people clicked on a QR code on the poster it could take them through to a list of options or to the Accredited Internet Retailers Scheme ?
9. We also note that online pharmacies may charge a delivery fee which could negate some of the benefit. But on balance this is probably not necessary for inclusion on the posters.
10. There was some concern about abuse of the comment around clinical or regulatory reasons why a written prescription is not available. Can any guidance be given on what these valid reasons might be ?