

Discharge Against Veterinary Advice

- Owner signs documentation acknowledging decision (include date, name, patient details)
- Keep all documents on file
- Ensure full contemporaneous clinical notes are recorded
- Prescribe pain-relieving medication for home care
- Encourage open communication and future support
- Advise that in some cases, a report to RSPCA may be required



Reporting a pet carer



Contact your
professional
indemnifier at
earliest
opportunity

- RSPCA (England & Wales): 0300 1234 999 (emergency line)
- SSPCA (Scotland): 03000 999 999 (9am–5pm)
- Animal Welfare Officer (Northern Ireland): Local council Animal Welfare Officer

Guidance from RCVS on reporting a pet carer



CoPC Section 8.11:

“If the pet carer insists on taking the animal home against veterinary advice, it may then be necessary to breach client confidentiality by making a report to the RSPCA” this may breach client confidentiality if the animal is taken home against advice

Client Confidentiality – RCVS Supporting Guidance Section 14:

14.14: Consult senior veterinary surgeon before breaching confidentiality

14.21: Attempt to discuss concerns with client

14.22: If discussion isn't possible or raises further concerns, report to authorities

14.23: Reporting should occur only when there is real and immediate risk of harm



These cases are rare but highly stressful
Reach out to colleagues or veterinary
support helplines like Vetlife

