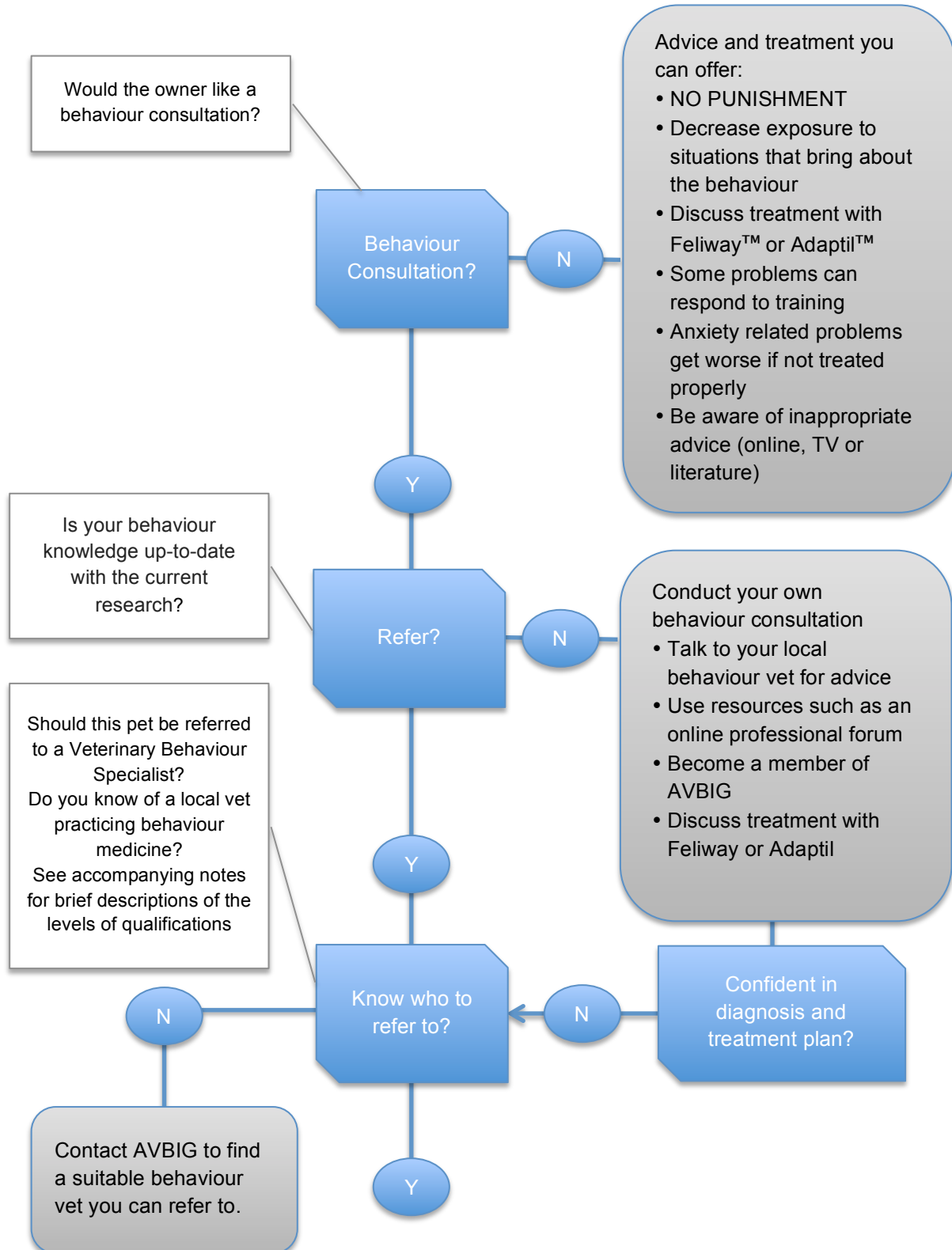


When a client raises a Behaviour Problem

Behavioural medicine is the field of veterinary medicine that deals with mental illness in pets. Many veterinarians feel uncomfortable giving advice regarding behaviour problems. This chart helps you work through the options of treating a behaviour problem. After ensuring there is no physical health issue contributing to the problem, the best place to start is by sympathising and reassuring the client that they have come to the right place.

Many behaviour problems are the clinical signs of psychological illness, just as scratching pruritic skin is a clinical sign of dermatological illness and drinking excessively is a clinical sign for metabolic disease and other progressive problems. As such, it is the duty of care of all veterinarians to provide appropriate treatment options to clients for the patients in their care.



Professionals working in behavioural medicine

Veterinary Behaviour Specialists

(post-nominals FANZCVS and/or DACVB and/or DipECAWBM):

Those veterinarians who have dedicated their career towards studying behavioural medicine. They have done years of in-depth study and research and gained further experience in the area of behavioural medicine. A specialist in training studies under a registered specialist and must see and manage a minimum of 300 behaviour cases. They must also research and publish in peer-reviewed journals and attend conferences. Once they have done this they are eligible to sit their examinations. Depending upon who they are sitting examinations with, they may receive a Fellowship [FANZCVS(Veterinary Behaviour)] or become a Diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Behaviourists (DACVB) or a Diplomat of the European College of Animal Welfare and Behavioural Medicine (DipECAWBM). With this qualification they may then register with the veterinary boards and use the title "Registered Specialist".

Veterinarians with post-graduate Membership qualification in behavioural medicine

(post-nominal MANZCVS)

Those veterinarians who have studied further in veterinary behavioural medicine and have passed examinations to be accepted into the veterinary behaviour chapter of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists.

Veterinarians who have completed continuing professional development in behavioural medicine:

Those veterinarians with an interest in helping animals with behaviour problems and have done a level of further study in the area of behavioural medicine but have not completed any examinations.

Some veterinary nurses and trainers

Some of the people working in these areas have an understanding of learning theory and can recognise animals that have behavioural illness. Referral should be made to a veterinarian in behavioural medicine if there is any concern that the animal is suffering from a mental health issue. These people can assist with problems related to training and can also provide adjunctive help to owners with regards to any behaviour modification that is recommended by a behaviour veterinarian. Training should be using positive reinforcement methods only. Unlike the veterinary industry, the training industry is not tightly regulated and care should be taken with regard to recommendations on which trainers to use. It is a serious animal health and welfare concern if referral to an unqualified trainer is recommended.

Professional association contacts:

AVBIG contact: avbigsecretary@gmail.com

Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists contact list of Members and Fellows:

<https://www.anzcvcs.org.au/chapters/veterinary+behaviour+chapter>

Websites to find professional trainers who use scientifically recognised learning principles:

<https://ppgaustralia.net.au/PetGuildMembers>

<https://deltainstitute.edu.au/trainers.php>