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## Newsletter – Summer 2020

### Pawsome Paddles reopened 2<sup>nd</sup> June following Covid-19 closure...

Throughout the corona virus pandemic, we have abided to the government guidelines which sadly meant closing the centre for ten weeks in total. With a slight relaxation of the rules we were delighted to be able to reopen our doors on June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

We have strict protocols in place to ensure we maintain social distancing with our clients and despite concern that this would cause distress to some patients, we have been really pleased to see they have adapted well to the new procedures. As of June 23<sup>rd</sup>, we have also started to take on new patients following a phone consultation with the client to establish if their dog will be suitable for hydrotherapy given the current unusual circumstances. In some case we have even asked the owner to pop the dog down for a 10-minute visit so we can make a more informed decision.

As expected, many of our existing patients had deteriorated to some degree over the course of the lockdown without their treatment and as a result many owners are choosing to come more frequently to get them back on track. As always, we will be providing regular update reports regarding their progress.

### FAQ's...

**Why can't I feed my dog straight before or after their session?** Feeding too close to exercise increases the risk of bloat. It may also be uncomfortable for the dog to swim on a full stomach and increase the chance they may defecate in the pool.

**Why can't I exercise my dog on the day of their treatment?** Even though some patients do very minimal swimming it can still be a tiring experience for the dog. A walk on top of attending their session could end up exhausting them. Also exercising them after their treatment could undo the benefits of the session.

**Why are they not doing more swimming?** Some dogs we see may only do a few lengths of the pool during their session. We focus on the quality of the swimming not the quantity. Owners worry that less swimming means less results but then they are always pleasantly surprised when they see the results we achieve with this approach. Too much swimming will only have an adverse effect on the patient.

**Why can't my dog retrieve and swim with toys?** Retrieving toys off the water line and swimming with them in their mouths increases the risk of secondary drowning and is a practice we do not allow. We do use toys for some dogs but always give the toy to the dog once they are on the pod. Some dogs can get over stimulated by toys so in these circumstances we would also avoid their use.

### Pod assessment...

All patients are assessed on our underwater pod when they first get into the pool and then periodically throughout the session. With detailed notes and continual monitoring, we are able to relay to owners and referring vets the progress the patient is making. Whilst patients are on the pod, we can check weight bearing, range of movement, muscle tone, reflexes along with a host of other measurements. The pod also wobbles slightly to help engage the core and build proprioception. In fact, patients probably spend up to 90% of their session on the pod and it is a vital tool for the rehabilitation of our patients. It also allows to treat patients which cannot swim very well or would not be able to cope with much swimming. We always like to stress to owners that there is so much more to hydrotherapy than swimming.

### Puppy classes...

Unfortunately, we do not foresee our puppy classes returning any time soon. It would be impossible to maintain social distancing at these events but soon we will be able to offer 1-2-1 puppy sessions for anyone interested.

