**From the reception desk: Behaviour advice for cat owners**

*Speaker: Trudi Atkinson RVN, Dip.AS (CABC), CCAB*

Trudi qualified as a Veterinary Nurse in 1986. After further studies in Companion Animal Behaviour, she was accepted as a full member of the Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors (APBC) in 1999 and obtained certification as a clinical animal behaviourist (CCAB) in 2003. Although having previously worked with both dogs and cats, she now focuses solely on feline behaviour and runs a veterinary referral practice based in the South West of England. She is a contributor and marker for the ISFM Advanced Certificate in Feline Behaviour and the author of ‘Practical Feline Behaviour. Understanding Cat Behaviour and Improving Welfare’.

It is a scenario that all receptionists, vet nurses and vets are familiar with; the client at the reception desk, or on the other end of the telephone, who just wants a bit of advice. The advice that the client may require could be a simple husbandry or preventative health question, or they may have a more serious health or behavioural concern with their pet. Although there can be limitations as to what advice can be given in this situation, it is important the client is provided with the correct advice and information to steer them in the right direction.

In this lecture, Trudi will cover what advice and information can and should be offered if the client’s questions are about pet cat behaviour.

**Learning Points:**

- First-aid advice for cat owners experiencing feline behaviour problems
- The importance of veterinary examination prior to a behavioural consultation – why is it necessary?
- Behavioural consultation – ‘in-house’ or referral to an external behaviourist?
- Who to, and how to refer – the process of veterinary referral to an external behaviourist.