

## **Essential behaviour knowledge**

### **Canine Communication Skills**

The hydrotherapist should be able to demonstrate awareness, understanding and appropriate response to the communicative signalling of the dog in their care.

Including:

- understanding body language (facial expression, eye movement, tail position & movement, vocalisations, body tensions)
- understanding canine emotions
- know the behavioural signs of pain

### **Canine Stress.**

The hydrotherapist should be able to demonstrate an ability to recognise, understand and respond appropriately to canine stress caused by anxiety, fear or phobic behaviour.

- Have an understanding of stress (and its affects on the limbic system)
- Know the behavioural signs of stress
- Understand how to avoid/or reduce stress
- Know how to avoid conflict (ladder of aggression)
- Understand acute and chronic stress (learned helplessness, shut down)

### **Canine Learning Theory**

The hydrotherapist should be able to demonstrate knowledge, awareness and practical application of learning.

Including

- knowledge of learning theory (sensitisation, classical conditioning, operant conditioning, social (observational) learning)
- maintaining knowledge
- use of motivation (toy, food, owner, exit of pool) and reward (positive reinforcement training)



## **Practical Handling Skills**

The hydrotherapist should be able to demonstrate safe (for dog and hydrotherapist) handling skills of various dogs.

Handling skills should be safe for the dog, the hydrotherapist, the owner and other hydrotherapists present.

Skill should include walking the dog on lead, putting on a muzzle, holding the dog still, turning the dog in water, use of toys and food.

Dogs to include large, small, shy, confident, lively, fearful.