

Note: I submitted this comment by typing it into your online form, but it is not clear to me that the comment went through. Accordingly, I am submitting it again as a pdf attachment. Please forgive me if this is a duplication.

I hope that the Workshop will consider the issue of prescription pet food.

I am a pet owner. My cat has kidney and thyroid problems, and the veterinarian prescribes Hill's Prescription Diet feline food. This prescription pet food is very expensive, and I will have to buy it for my cat for the rest of his life. The problem: I can buy it only from a veterinarian.

I contacted Hill's by using an online form, asking why I cannot buy this prescription food elsewhere, such as a pet supply store. They responded by an email, which I am attaching here. PLEASE read that email. I think you will agree that the rationale they give is EXACTLY the same as the rationale that contact lens manufacturers used to give for their requirement that contact lenses be purchased directly from eye doctors.

I responded to that email with these questions: "But why can't I get a prescription from my vet and fill it elsewhere? Why do I have to get both the written prescription and the food from my vet?" Hill's email response, which I have also attached, suggests that I try to buy the pet food from another vet who is not treating my cat. That is a very frustrating response, since it directly contradicts their (unacceptable) rationale that the pet food needs to be prescribed and provided by a treating vet.

I responded to their second email by saying: "Thanks for the response, but this still does not make sense to me. Why can't I buy the k/d cat food at a pet food store or even a pharmacy that sells medication for pets, as long as I have a prescription from my vet?" Hill's never responded to that question.

So again, please consider prescription pet food in your workshop, not just traditional prescription medications.

Thank you.