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for details!

What Every Veterinarian Should Know Outside of Medicine

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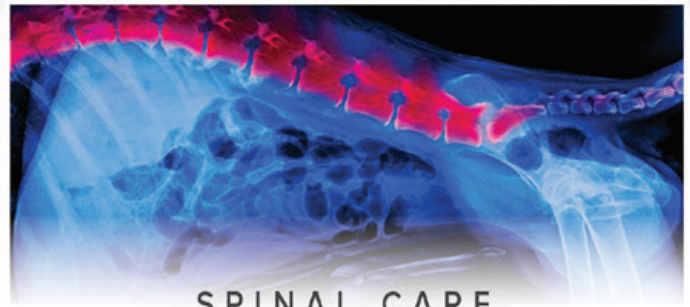
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Telehealth and the Veterinary Profession

By Dr. Justin Toth, GVMA President

Telehealth During COVID-19

Given a significant boost by the pandemic, telehealth is now an integral part of veterinary medicine. The concept of telehealth may seem new, but veterinarians have been using this method for decades. With the invention of the telephone in 1876, veterinary telehealth likely started soon thereafter.

Georgia Rules for Telehealth

Telehealth is defined as the overarching term that encompasses all uses of technology geared to remotely deliver health information or education. Telemedicine and telerriage are two components of telehealth:

- Telemedicine refers to the remote delivery of healthcare services. In other words, telemedicine allows veterinarians to evaluate, diagnose, and treat patients without the need for an in-person visit. **In the State of Georgia, a valid VCPR is required prior to engaging in telemedicine.**
- Telerriage refers to the initial assessment of a patient to determine if a potentially life-threatening animal health situation is present and to make recommendations for either veterinary care or conservative management. An example of telerriage would be an animal poison control service. **A valid VCPR is not required for telerriage. However, telerriage does not allow for the diagnosis or treatment of a patient.**

When to Use Telemedicine

According to the Veterinary Virtual Care Association (vvca.org), examples of cases to consider for telemedicine include anxiety, hair loss, head shaking, inappropriate elimination, itching, or visible skin lesions. Examples of cases to consider for telerriage would include constipation, coughing, laceration, post-surgical incision, vomiting, or ocular discharge.

Veterinarians have used telehealth for over a century. The demand for telehealth has grown exponentially and will likely continue to grow. With proper training, telehealth is a valuable service for both your practice and to your clients.

“The demand for telehealth has grown exponentially and will likely continue to grow. With proper training, telehealth is a valuable service for both your practice and to your clients.”



Protect Yourself While Protecting Animals

What Every Veterinarian Should Know Outside of Medicine: How Veterinarians Can Get Involved In Animal Laws and Protect Themselves From Liability

**By: Claudine Wilkins, Animal Law Expert, Founder of The Animal Protection Society and Animal Law Source.
Claudine@theanimalprotectionsociety.org**

Every veterinarian knows there is much more to their profession than just treating patients. Not only are they business owners, partners, or employees of a clinic, they are the front-line professionals who play a huge role in animal welfare, public safety, and disease/pandemic prevention. Veterinarians are crime fighters too protecting those who cannot protect themselves being pivotal.

As a former Georgia prosecutor, I learned early in my career that without veterinarians, our animal related cases would fall through the cracks. For the past thirty years, I have trained thousands of professionals who protect or treat animals including veterinarians, vet techs, law enforcement and animal control officers, judges, prosecutors, animal rescues/fosters, animal behaviorist, and domestic violence/human trafficking experts. Teaching realtors on how to spot and report animal abandonment and children to become better stewards of the future are all part of our programs.

The law dictates how we behave in society. Through good laws and enforcement, animals have become protected as well as your profession. Since 2003, I have had the honor of drafting, in part, eight Georgia state animal related laws (see inset) and fought bad legislation. One of those we defeated was a piece of legislation that would have taxed veterinarian services in Georgia.

- **Animal Cruelty Amendments (2014)**
- **Dog Fighting Law (2006)**
- **Responsible Dog Owner Law (2014)**
- **Cost of Animal Care (2016)**
- **Microchipping law**
- **Spay Neuter Tag**
- **Local Government Animal Fund Law (2021)**

Sharing the same mission as most veterinarians, I am determined to inspire the next generation to be responsible pet owners and animal protectors as well as strengthen the bond between humans and animals, make good laws, and provide education for professionals and the public.

Animal crimes come in all forms and veterinarians are often the first one to break a case on animal abuse, animal hoarding, puppy mills, dogfighting, sex abuse against animals, and domestic violence.

The Link Between Animal Abuse & Domestic Violence

When I was sixteen, I started my career as a vet assistant. Yes, I wanted to be a veterinarian until I hit organic chemistry in college. Anyone who can get through organic chemistry has my respect! During those early years of my career, I routinely saw cases of severe neglect and malicious animal abuse. I observed people in the exam room afraid to talk about "what happened" to their pet. Even as a teenager, I knew something was wrong.

A few years ago, I interviewed a young lady who asked her boyfriend to pet-sit her Yorkie. When she arrived home from work, her pup was barely alive. She rushed him to her vet clinic. The boyfriend, a professional football player, claimed the pup had been accidentally injured by a rocking chair. A very observant veterinarian noticed the boyfriend kept dominating the conversation, and the young lady was scared to talk and kept looking downward without making eye contact. The veterinarian excused herself from the exam room to take X-rays and determined it was blunt force trauma to the pup's head. The boyfriend's story did not add up and the veterinarian considered the odd behavior she witnessed inside the exam room. She decided to call 911. Police arrived at the clinic and interviewed the boyfriend alone. The truth came out.

The boyfriend finally admitted that he had kicked the dog because he was jealous of the attention his girlfriend gave to her pet. Then, he admitted that he came from an abusive family and grew up thinking it was normal to hit a woman. Not only did the veterinarian do the right thing, but she also saved the life of the Yorkie and protected the young lady. Perhaps even the abuser got the help he needed to stop the cycle.

Veterinarians continually ask me, "What should I do if suspect animal abuse or domestic violence?" These calls became so frequent, I decide to build a course around this topic and prepared a "Do's and Don'ts" poster for veterinarians to post in their clinics.

More Info on Veterinarian's Role in Animal Cruelty Cases

Using Pets to Obtain Prescription Drugs

Veterinarians have also been pivotal in drug cases. That's right, drug abusers or drugs pushers will actually harm their own pet (or a stray animal) just to score drugs. It's a hard pill to swallow but pain killers such as opioids or Ketamine are some of the top drugs sought by addicts and pushers.

In Kentucky, a woman repeatedly sliced her beautiful Golden Retriever with a razor blade to score Tramadol. When the veterinarian noticed it was her third visit in less than four months for the same type of injury, he called the police. She admitted doing this and the dog was saved, re-homed, and she went to jail.

It is important to train your staff on DEA requirements and ensure drugs are not "missing or depleted" and to notice when clients may have inflicted injuries on an animal just to score to feed their addiction. Looking for old broken bones overlapping new breaks on X-rays, or clean cuts (non-jagged) on animals could be a vital clue.

The "Dark Web" & Animal Abuse

Sex crimes against animals has a direct correlation with child porn and the dark web. Many of the video purchased on the dark web involved these two deprived activities and often they are featured together. It is a sick world. Finally, law enforcement officers are beginning to understand the correlation and are relying on keen to report their findings when they suspect such abuse. In 2017, an expert who spoke at my Animal Protection and Wellness Expo said 100% percent of the bestiality cases he had worked on lead to a child porn ring. Being a part of stopping human trafficking and such horrible abuse, falls upon veterinarians too.

Georgia Puppy Mills



In May 2021, Georgia made the list of the worst puppy mills in the nation. (do you need a footnote here?). Five puppy mills were noted but there are many irresponsible breeders that should have made the list. I have visited many "breeders gone bad" locations in Georgia throughout the last thirty years and can attest many animals suffer neglect and abuse at these breeding kennels.

Covid has only made things worse due to more people wanting to adopt animals, thus pushing the demand from breeders. When I am called to assist in large scale impounds, the first professionals I call are veterinarians. They are essential in proving animal cruelty under Georgia law.

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While it is sometimes difficult to find vets willing to take the time, travel and be in the field saving weary animals who have been neglected, starved, or overbred their entire lives, veterinarians are an integral and much needed part of stopping puppy mills.

Vets aid in triage, emergency treatment, microchipping, and later testifying in these cases. Their work can make or break these cases. By the way, a new law I worked on called the Local Government Emergency Animal Fund will allow veterinarians to recoup funds incurred while helping on site, or providing vet care and boarding for animals in large scale impounds.

Around 30% of the 159 counties in Georgia do not have animal related ordinances or animal control services. Georgia rural areas versus metro areas treat cases, and animals, quite differently. Many of those same counties do not have enough veterinarians to service the needs of the county.

We are always in need of veterinary services for these tasks. If any veterinarian would like to get involved in large scale impound cases involving puppy mills, animal hoarding or horses, we could truly use your help. We need you! **List of Counties w/o Animal Control**

The Importance of Veterinarians Testifying in Court

If you have concerns about being in court, please don't let this deter you as it is relatively easy. Your detailed exam reports and/or necropsies reports along with open communication with the investigative officers and prosecutors is key. Testifying in court, while it may seem daunting, is really not a big deal. We provide the top ten essential things for veterinarians to know when involved with a court case.



Claudine Wilkins with Nancy Grace at the 2019 Animal Protection Conference and Expo co-hosted by the GVMA.

as other specialties you can part take in as a veterinarian, vet forensics, how to participate in animal cases, understanding federal, state and local laws pertaining to animals, running a successful vet business, knowing your rights if someone dumps an animal at your clinic, how to protect yourself from lawsuits, how to report animal abuse or domestic violence and much more.

"Spot Abuse, Stop Abuse" PDF

Dangerous Dog Checklist



Claudine Wilkins is a former prosecutor and renowned animal law expert. She is the founder of The Animal Protection Society (TAPS), Animal Law Source (ALS), the Animal Protection Conference & Expo (APCE), and past chair of the State Bar of GA's Animal Law Section. She is the author of *How to Investigate and Prosecute Animal Cruelty*, numerous articles and is a contributing author for *Pet Life Magazine*. Claudine is also a frequent speaker in Georgia, nationally and internationally. Claudine is committed to turning the next generation into animal protectors, fighting animal cruelty, and increasing the awareness of "the link" between human crimes and animal crimes, puppy mills, dogfighting, animal abuse, pet overpopulation, dog bite prevention and other animal-related causes

Though rare, veterinarians can also be the ones to make sure an innocent person does not suffer for a crime they did not commit. A case that comes to mind, which I share during presentations, is about a mother whose son was killed almost 30 years ago. The police focused on her as the prime suspect. As a result, they took her other son away from her too.

Veterinarians are in the fabric of every community. We all benefit from having veterinarians to care for our beloved furry family members and to educate us on how to care and protect them. Exploring outside of your daily grind, you will see there is much to know such

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Differentiating Cash Flow and Profit

By Doyle Watson, DVM, President & Owner, Simmons & Associates

We are frequently asked, "What is the difference between cash flow and profit?"

Adjusted Net Cash Flow ("**Cash Flow**") is the total discretionary income available to the owner to pull out of the practice and spend as the owner pleases. Consider it as a "bucket of money" which includes the owner's compensation, owner personal perks and fringe benefits, and a few other items as determined appropriate by the practice appraiser. Cash flow does not include reasonable fair market rent the practice pays to the landlord, even when the landlord is the same as the practice owner. In a well-managed, mid-sized practice, cash flow should approximate 30% of gross.

A Cash Flow analysis is part of Simmons & Associates' "feasibility", or "sanity", check. The practice price must be such that, once terms of finances are considered, the transaction is **statistically sound, affordable, and financeable**. There are criteria for each which must be satisfied for the transaction to pass scrutiny.

Statistically the value is compared with Simmons & Associates' VetStats®, a large database with decades of appraisal and sales statistics, to ensure the value is in line with historical, national, and regional norms. If the value appears to be an outlier, then we will reconsider it or find sound reason to validate it.

As to "affordability", we have found over time that if we cannot structure a price and terms so that the buyer's personal after-debt income approximates a minimum of \$125K then we get little buyer attention. Importantly, from the commercial lenders' perspective, Cash Flow provides the ability to service acquisition debt and the buyer's personal lifestyle requirements. For most buyers, that hovers around \$125K, but that figure is rising. It is important to realize that the lender will not allow the debt service and the buyer's personal needs to consume all the Cash Flow. There must be some left over for a "rainy day" for the transaction to be considered "financeable."

However, when the Cash Flow figure is subtracted from gross revenues, there is no accounting for the **fair market compensation** of the "chief of staff" doctor (typically the owner) for being the doctor, not for being the owner. Once that is determined and subtracted from Cash Flow, the remaining balance is considered "**Earnings**" or **profit** remaining from revenues after all operating expenses and including management has been satisfied. This is the return on the investment and the figure that is capitalized to arrive at Fair Market Value, which could differ from the price.

The owner receives personal income from the practice in three different ways. First, it is earned by being a **doctor**. Secondly, a small amount is earned for **management**. Lastly,

it is received as **profit** by virtue of ownership. If the practice owner is also the landlord, then he/she also receives rent as a fourth source of income.

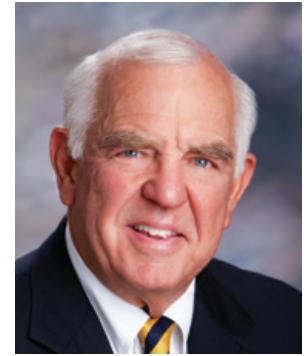
Thus, "**Cash Flow**" analysis becomes the price foundation and determining factor for a buyer's ability to obtain financing to purchase the practice. **Profit** is the return on investment that drives value, which is not always the same as price.

See the table below for an example:

Gross Revenues	\$1,000,000
Appraiser's Assessment of Adjusted Net Cash Flow ("CF")	\$300,000
Appraiser's Assessment of Reasonable Compensation for Chief of Staff Doctor	\$140,000
Earnings	\$160,000
Debt Service ("DS") on Purchase	\$97,000
Buyer's personal Pre-Tax, After-Debt Income	\$203,000 (\$300K CF - \$97K DS)
Lender's Determination of Buyer's Personal Lifestyle Financial Requirements	\$115,000

In the above example, everyone is happy. The appraiser is happy that the after-debt income is \$203K. The lender is satisfied that the total \$97K debt service and \$115K buyer personal compensation requirement does not exceed the \$300K Cash Flow and that there is a comfortable buffer remaining. Thus, it is a statistically sound value, or price, and now considered to be both **affordable and financeable**.

In summary, the difference between Cash Flow and Profit is that Cash Flow is the money bucket available for the owner to spend as she/he pleases, and Profit is the remaining balance after the owner is paid a reasonable salary, thus the return on the investment.



Doyle Watson, DVM
President & Owner,
Simmons & Associates
St. Simons Island, GA

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GA, South Central: Grossing >\$1.1M+ & growing, 2 Dr practice. Attractive facility kept in immaculate condition with 5 acres and modern equipment. Well-established staff. (GA14F)

UNDER CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS - GA, Savannah-Coastal: AAHA Listing – SA solo Dr. Prx. w/RE incl 2 acres, Approx 6,184SF spacious facility. 30 years same location, no emergency, 5 days/wk. Updated Equipment. (GA20S)

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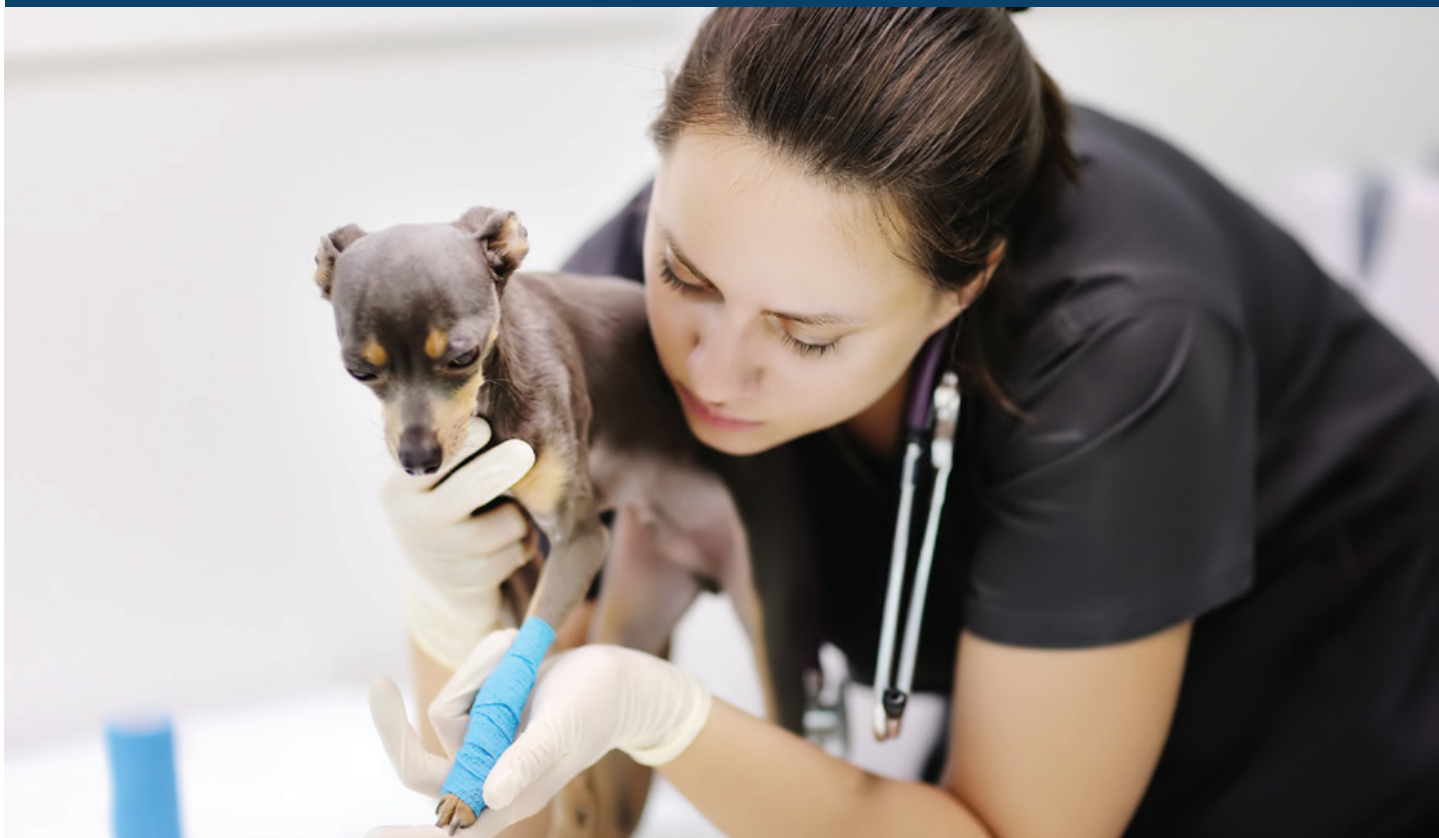
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This Profession Is Hard: *How to be More Like James Herriot*



By Dr. Duffy Jones, Owner, Peachtree Hills Animal Hospital, Founder, DVMSuccess

When you think of James Herriot, you think of all the wonderful things about being a veterinarian. I do not remember a chapter where he got yelled at by a client over a bill. I do not remember him sitting down after a long day of working hard to find a notification that he just got a 1-star Google review from a client he spent all day with. Did his office alarm go off in the middle of the night, or did his employees call in sick because they stayed out too late the night before?

I am sure similar things happened to him as well, but we do not hear about it. The great side of our profession is that we get to help people; the downside is that we have to deal with people – not all of whom are nice.

So how do we be more like James Herriot to our clients, but then let all the negativity roll off our backs? I think this is a very difficult question to answer but a question that we should all dedicate time to thinking about.

Admit it: Being a veterinarian is hard

In my opinion, the first thing we have to learn is that this job is really hard. When we admit that it is difficult, it frees us up from some of the stress that we are not good enough to be doing this job. For instance, even after 20 years of practice and countless spays, I still worry about certain spays (think like your 80-pound fat dog). I would beat myself up about the fact that I was worrying about that case. When I finally just accepted that spaying a huge dog will always be hard, it allowed me to let go of the stress.

Why We Do What We Do: Being Present With A Client

Perfection is an illusion, and as soon as we can realize that, it can help us start to understand how to control our own emotions so we can be there for our clients. When I am stressed out, either from that big dog spay or a client who thinks I am incompetent, it is hard to walk into a room and leave all that outside so I can be present with that client. However, being present with that client is why we do what

we do. When you start to lose the ability to slow down and be present in that room, veterinary medicine becomes a job instead of a vocation.

So how do you learn to be present? I think that is different for everyone and for each clinic.

- It might be managing your schedule so you have some blocks in your day to catch up and take a breath.
- It might be meditation.
- It might be going to the gym every day.

Unfortunately, we all have to experiment with what things works best for each of us. Not much help – I know!

Shifting Your Mindset

A mindset change might be needed in all of us.

- Maybe James Herriot perfected how to be present.
- Maybe, just maybe, his way to let the angry client go was to write stories of what a perfect day in veterinary medicine should look like.
- Or maybe his best days of writing occurred after he got a 1-star Google review, and they were a way to remember the times he emotionally connected well to his clients.
- Maybe what we can learn from him is not that all of our client interactions need to be perfect like his, but instead that he found a way to forget about the difficult times and focus on the good.

Remember, this profession is hard, and we all need ways to cope with stress so we can do our best to meet our clients where they are emotionally.

“If having a soul means being able to feel love and loyalty and gratitude, then animals are better off than a lot of humans.”

– James Herriot



Dr. M. Duffy Jones, completed his Bachelor of Science degree in biology at the University of Notre Dame and obtained his Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine at Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine. He then completed an internship at Georgia Veterinary Specialist in 2000. In 2005, he founded Peachtree Hills Animal Hospital located in Atlanta, Georgia. Dr. Jones is a past president and the current treasurer of the GVMA. He is the co-author of *The Business Side of Veterinary Medicine: What Veterinary Schools Do Not Teach You*, published in 2017. Dr. Jones founded *dvmSuccess* in 2019 with a vision of applying his expertise, diverse experience and 21st century technology to the task of upgrading the practice financial advisory service and related services that serve the veterinary market.

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The Leadership Team:

The Key to High Functioning Practices

By Christine Shupe, CAE, Executive Director, Veterinary Hospital Managers Association, Inc.

What do well-performing practices have in common? A leadership team with clearly defined roles for the owner and practice manager!

Specifically, the practice owner provides the vision and sets the direction. The practice manager ensures that the daily activities of the practice support the owner's goals.

The leadership team, however, must be committed to creating strong interpersonal relationships with one another if they are to be effective and inspire confidence and promote productivity among team members. Often, the leadership relationship will influence the behavior of the team. It is critical that leaders are committed to building and maintaining good working relationships.

The best leadership teams have consciously worked to ensure that the following characteristics are developed:

Communication runs deep

The foundation of good communication is clarity because it allows others to understand expectations fully. To accomplish this, the message must be precise, focused, and unambiguous. But communication is a mutual exercise. What is said is just as important as listening. The ability to keep an open mind, really hear what is said, and valuing the other's viewpoint can facilitate communication. Owners and managers who communicate well are

less likely to waste time trying to puzzle out the true meaning of the message, thereby avoiding confusion and misunderstandings. They are more inclined to share, consider, and implement ideas effectively. They are also less likely to be stressed and anxious by the process. A leadership team that practices good, respectful communication also sets an example for the team.

A matter of trust

If you have ever worked in a setting where you have been consumed with 'watching your back,' you understand how enervating and nonproductive it can be. In a trusting setting, people feel safe and free to be collaborative and productive.

Trust is fostered by caring for others as people and holding their best interests at heart. Leaders can engender trust when they consistently keep their word and do what they say what they will do. Open and honest communication encourages discussions that will not be censored or judged, and sharing skills, requesting input, and inviting participation in making decisions promote building trust in relationships. Respect and consideration are essential for leaders to establish trust among the team.

Respecting the position

Imagine a team trying to put together a complicated piece of furniture without instructions. Most likely, chaos will ensue. Leadership teams that have not adopted clear role descriptions meet the same outcome—they waste energy, duplicate tasks, and are less productive. Managers and owners must understand, define, and communicate the scope of their roles and work within the parameters of their job descriptions. They must also acknowledge and respect the job descriptions of others. Mutual understanding and respect will promote productivity and efficiency.

Clearly defined authority

Managers and owners who adhere to clearly delineated leadership roles that specifically outline responsibilities can avoid tension and power struggles within the leadership team. Leaders should comply with the duties detailed in their job descriptions and respect their peers' authority to ensure a positive work environment where the team feels safe and comfortable.

Be a supporter

Effective leaders are committed to encouraging others to reach their full potential...including the potential of other leaders, colleagues, or team members. The best leaders focus on discerning potential in all team members and encouraging them to develop their skills and apply them to the organization's success.

Useful and constructive feedback

Managers and owners are often required to give feedback to their employees. Most agree that it is essential to employee growth and development and have probably been trained to skillfully present the harsh truth. Those in leadership positions should not consider themselves above receiving feedback regardless of their position. Allowing a colleague or staff member to comment on behavior can be challenging. It also offers opportunities for growth and improvement. Owners and managers who are receptive to constructive feedback can benefit from increased loyalty, improved morale, and greater engagement. However, it must be purpose-driven, specific, actionable, clear, and timely for the feedback to be constructive.

Team culture

All employees contribute to an organization's culture, but leaders have the greatest influence over the final result—a culture that is energizing, toxic, or somewhere in the middle. The culture will impact all aspects of the practice, including recruitment, engagement, and performance. The leadership team builds the foundation through behavior, policies, and goals, and objectives and must present a united front if the culture is to inspire and be embraced by the team. To create an effective partnership to lead effectively, owners and managers must be committed to successfully collaborating to improve business outcomes. As leaders strive to embrace the qualities outlined above, they must be ever cognizant of the current relationship and be attuned to opportunities to improve.

Shared with the Veterinary Hospital Managers Association (VHMA) permission, whose core purpose is to advance and support veterinary management professionals. www.vhma.org

Christine Shupe, CAE, graduated from the State University of New York College at Oswego with a Bachelor of Arts degree, major in Political Science. In 2003 Christine started her own association management company CQS Management Service, LLC. Christine has served as the Executive Director to the VHMA since 1998.



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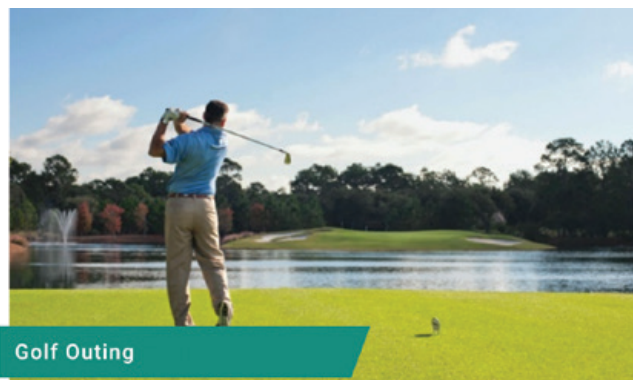


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Have you ever had to bottle feed a newborn rhesus macaque or milk a mouse? How about training pigs to weigh themselves or setting the mood to encourage a sparrow mating dance? These are just some of my daily experiences as a laboratory animal veterinarian.

Crystal Gergye, DVM, is a clinical veterinarian at the Emory University Division of Animal Resources in Atlanta, GA. She obtained her doctorate from UGA's College of Veterinary Medicine in 2017 and completed her Laboratory Animal residency and fellowship at Emory University in 2020. Crystal is currently the department head over Large Animal Surgery, serves on the Emory Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and consults for the Atlanta Veterans Affairs Medical Hospital.

Making a Difference as a Laboratory Animal Vet

By Dr. Crystal Gergye

Dual Loves: Animals & Medical Science

Like other veterinarians, I knew I wanted to be a vet when I was young. The science of medicine was magical to me, and I wanted to use that magic to help animals. I always assumed I would go into small animal practice. That was until I met my first laboratory animal vet during an undergraduate research project. We discussed her job and the fact laboratory animals have their own private veterinarians who manage their health and welfare. This eye-opening conversation gave me a new outlook on my career as a veterinarian and appealed to my dual love of animals and medical science. From that day on, I set out to become a lab animal vet, and I've loved my career ever since.

Regulating Laboratory Animal Research

Most people, including many veterinarians, don't realize how intensely regulated laboratory animal research is. Federal laws dictate how animals in research are treated, and those laws specifically require the oversight of an experienced veterinarian. Beyond legal regulations, several federal agencies, including the Public Health Service and the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, require tracking, maintenance and verification of specific standards of care if a researcher or institution receives NIH funding. The American Association for Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC) International furthers supports laboratory animal care with its rigorous review process that upholds standards set forth in the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, which covers everything from species-specific room temperatures to appropriate floor drain sizes. AAALAC Full Accreditation is the gold standard and emphasizes what a privilege it is to conduct research with animals and to care for them. Until technology advances well beyond our current capabilities, animals will remain a critical component of biomedical research to improve human and animal health.

The Role of Veterinarians

The continuing ability to make scientific advancements relies on public trust that scientists and veterinarians conduct research with animals ethically and humanely. Veterinarians play a major role to ensure public trust is upheld, and we continually strive to improve and refine our animal care techniques. With regulatory guidelines at the forefront, we consult with researchers before any experiments start, review research protocols to ensure animals will be given appropriate enrichment, housing, analgesics and anesthetics, and make additional recommendations based on our species-specific knowledge. We also remain up to date on the latest experimental refinements and alternatives, which helps ensure the smallest number of animals is used without impacting scientific results and all animals included in studies receive the least invasive techniques. Pre-planning between researchers and veterinarians is key, including integrating lab animal vets into the study design and approval process to ensure research quality and humane practices.

Variety in Lab Animal Medicine

While the welfare of our animals will always come first, my favorite aspect of being a lab animal vet is the variety of medicine I get to practice. Think possibilities!

- *Do you like herd health?* All rodent colonies have extensive preventive health and active monitoring programs. The vet determines the best way to organize these programs and combat disease outbreak.
- *Do you prefer individualized medicine?* Larger animals and more exotic species are rare and valued in research, meaning each animal gets daily individual attention from both the animal care staff and the research staff.
- *Interested in theriogenology?* Breeding colonies rely heavily on veterinary guidance to produce and maintain the best genetic lines.
- *Oncology?* Join a cancer research team and contribute to the latest in therapeutic discovery.
- *Are you proud of your scalpel skills or have an undying love for anesthesia?* You can provide surgical services for researchers who are exploring novel medical implants, practicing xenotransplantation or performing micro-surgeries on 20g mice.

If clinical medicine isn't your cup of tea, no problem! There are plenty of vets who perform administrative duties, such as regulatory compliance, personnel management or facility design. If you have a favorite species, you can choose to specialize and become the go-to person for consultation. Laboratory animal medicine is many different aspects of medicine rolled into one specialized career, and you can flex it to fit your favorite parts of being a veterinarian.

Making A Difference

At the end of each day, I know I have taken an active role in protecting the welfare of research animals while helping advance knowledge that will benefit animals and people. As a lab animal vet, I make a positive impact on my patients' lives, which makes a



greater impact across lives worldwide. If any of this sounds appealing to you, visit aalas.org to learn more about a career in laboratory animal medicine!



The Role of The Georgia Meat Inspection Section Public Health Veterinarian

By Aaron K. Knighton, MPH, State Director of Meat Inspection

The purpose of this article is to explain the role, responsibilities, and authority of the Georgia Meat Inspection Section (GMIS) Public Health Veterinarian (PHV).

PHVs fulfill an absolutely essential and critical role in protecting public health, by appropriately addressing livestock with disease conditions and ensuring an appropriate disposition of affected carcasses and parts. In making dispositions, the GMIS PHV employs a consistent, systematic approach for evaluating each carcass by conducting a thorough examination to gather sufficient evidence to support a sound disposition. In doing so, he or she further ensures that meat products entering commerce are wholesome, unadulterated, and suitable for human consumption.

Although the GMIS PHV's primary responsibilities include appropriate livestock dispositions, lesion identification, tissue histopathology, disease detection, and livestock humane handling, PHV's are also responsible for assisting with the general quality assurance of the GMIS program. GMIS PHV quality assurance responsibilities include training of Inspectors' slaughter procedures, verification of establishment sanitation, review and observation of HACCP food safety requirements, verification of product labeling requirements, etc. As with each GMIS position, communication is also a key role, as the PHV is responsible for providing technical assistance to inspection staff, establishments, and the general public on veterinary-related, and other essential food-safety issues.

The GMIS PHV is responsible for visiting most of the slaughter establishments in their assigned, geographical area each month. During these visits, the PHV:

- routinely conducts ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection
- observes humane handling of livestock
- observes the assigned inspector conduct his or her slaughter duties
- provides training to the assigned inspector, as necessary
- reviews and observes the establishment's humane handling program
- enters daily task results into the USDA FSIS Public Health Information System (PHIS) (GMIS' inspection database).

Role of the Meat Inspector and PHV at Slaughter

The Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) and the Georgia Meat Inspection Act (GMIA) mandate that inspection personnel conduct antemortem inspection of each livestock animal (i.e., cattle, sheep, swine, and goats) prior to slaughter, and post-mortem inspection of all resulting carcasses and parts. GMIS in-plant Meat Inspectors are responsible for identifying livestock at ante-mortem, and carcasses and parts at post-mortem as either "normal" or "abnormal", according to established slaughter procedures (i.e., FSIS Directive 6100.2). When GMIS Meat Inspectors

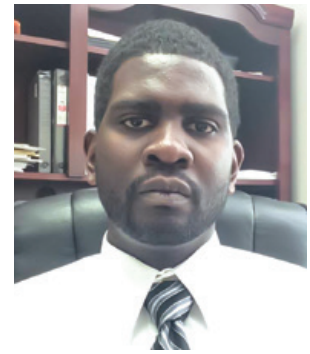
identify animals, carcasses, or parts as "abnormal" he or she is required to contact the GMIS PHV for a disposition, unless established procedures state otherwise (i.e., specific conditions allow inspection personnel to "trim and pass" or "condemn" carcasses).

When an inspector identifies an animal on antemortem that requires a PHV disposition, he or she must have an establishment employee move this animal to the suspect pen and call the PHV, unless the animal is non-ambulatory (i.e., the animal cannot get up and move on its own). Non-ambulatory livestock are condemned immediately and are not to be moved. Once an establishment has humanely euthanized a non-ambulatory animal in the pen, the PHV should be notified due to the possibility of a reportable disease.

When the inspector identifies a carcass or part on postmortem that requires PHV disposition, he or she must have the establishment "rail out" the carcass (i.e., separate the identified carcass and parts pending a PHV's disposition). The inspector must then use as many retain tags as necessary to retain the carcass and its parts, on the PHV's behalf. The retain tag must remain in place until the PHV removes it or instructs the inspector to do so. Once the inspector has retained the carcass and parts, he or she must run a Kidney Inhibition Swab (KIS) Test while awaiting the PHV's arrival.

PHV Final Dispositions of Livestock, Carcasses, and Parts

Once onsite at a slaughter establishment, the PHV assumes full authority for any animal disease related issues that are present and will direct the inspector to take the appropriate regulatory action(s) necessary within the inspected facility. The PHV may seek diagnostic assistance from the pathology laboratory if he or she is uncertain of the appropriate disposition based on organoleptic findings alone. Once pathology results are available, the PHV considers the laboratory's report and ante-mortem and post-mortem findings together for his or her final disposition.



Aaron Knighton is the State Director of Meat Inspection with the Georgia Department of Agriculture. The Georgia Meat Inspection Section (GMIS) governs and regulates the statutes concerning meat slaughter and processing establishments to assure that all inspected and passed meat products are safe, wholesome, and properly labeled for consumers. The GMIS program consists of 84 staff-members, 92 daily inspected meat and poultry processing/slaughter facilities, and 72 licensed custom exempt establishments.



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Child Care and the Return to Work



The GVMA's Member Assistance Program has resources for childcare, including a child care locator. Go to our website at www.GVMA.net to access the program!

As more and more parents begin to return to work, finding child care will become increasingly important. Child care options may be limited due to continued closures or increased safety restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. If you can resume child care with your regular caregiver, you should expect some changes and allow extra time when dropping off and picking up your child. Depending on the caregiver, there may be a screening process, including taking the child's temperature before they can enter the facility. Keep in mind that you may also be asked to provide meals for your child as well.

Child care facilities are implementing various strategies to protect children in their care. This may include reduced class sizes and limiting interactions between the children, like staggering playground times and separated groups for special activities, such as art, music, and exercise. Child care classes will likely include the same group of children each day, as well as the same caregiver. It is important to discuss policies and plans for reopening with your provider before choosing who will care for your child while you are at work.

Keep in mind that the hours a child care provider is open may be limited. Caregivers may have shorter business hours to allow time to sanitize the space. Staff may also be working in shifts to limit exposure. These safety precautions can limit the number of spots available for care. You may also want to have several options for child care in the event that one doesn't work out.

Families are finding that they must think outside of the box of traditional child care to locate options that will work for their family. Below are some suggestions for parents who are returning to work soon and need to coordinate child care.

Talk with your manager.

Companies are aware of the challenge that child care presents. Your manager may be able to accommodate your need for an adjusted schedule or allow you to work from home some days. Be upfront about your needs, as your employer may have options in place to help.

Try to coordinate your schedule with your co-parent (where applicable).

Hopefully your company is implementing some flexible working arrangements to compensate for how different things will be going forward. If possible, see if you and your co-parent can work opposite schedules so that one of you will always be available to watch the children. This could mean alternating days where you work remotely, or even different hours worked during the day.

Create a child care cooperative with local family or friends in similar situations.

Creating a cooperative with other families with complementary work schedules can be a great creative solution. Post to social media or Nextdoor (<https://nextdoor.com>) to see if anyone in your surrounding neighborhood could offer care. The goal is to find another family that needs child care that you'll be able to coordinate schedules with and trade child care responsibilities with each other.

Contact your local places of worship to see if they are offering child care programs.

Some places of worship may offer regular care programs that have openings. It is also possible that there will be members of the congregation willing to help with child care in the community. Religious or spiritual centers often have newsletters or posting boards where you might be able to make a request to locate child care.

Call your Member Assistance Program (MAP) for help.

- A team of professional researchers with experience in finding child care resources can assist you in locating options that fit your needs. GVMA members can access this for FREE! Call (704) 529-1428 or (800) 633-3353 and let them know that you are a GVMA member.

Check your state's child care search website.

Your state's child care licensing website will provide information on qualified child care providers in your area. Many states even have websites specific to finding child care during the COVID-19 health crisis.

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE MAP



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GVMA Wellness Committee 2021 Update

By Dr. Laura Smallwood, DACVIM (SAIM),
Chair, GVMA Resilience & Well-Being Committee

How it Started

The GVMA Wellness Committee was originally founded as a peer support group to assist veterinarians seeking treatment for substance use disorders and addiction. In 2018, the committee undertook an ambitious effort to expand the scope of its work beyond addiction and recovery with a commitment to advocacy for the health and wellbeing of all who work in the veterinary profession, regardless of role. To facilitate these goals, a mental health professional was added to the committee and committee membership was expanded to include a veterinary technician. The first priority was to move the intervention and recovery work of the committee to a third party with the expertise to provide a best pathway for recovery and return to work. Now GVMA President Dr. Justin Toth took a lead on this effort, first by identifying the Georgia Professional Health Program (PHP) as model program and then working toward the passing of a state law to make PHP accessible to veterinarians.

How it's Going

The Wellness Committee currently has 16 members including veterinarians from a variety of professional backgrounds, two veterinary technicians, a regional practice manager with experience in customer service, a UGA veterinary student, and two mental health professionals. A law granting access to PHP for Georgia veterinarians became a reality in 2020 and the final steps of the process are currently in front of the Georgia Veterinary Board. The GVMA now offers a variety of mental health services and resources to its member veterinarians and all employees of member hospitals through the McLaughlin-Young Member Assistance Program and also offers QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) suicide gatekeeper training free of charge to GVMA members.

This year the committee is working to further expand the GVMA's online wellness resources. Each member of the committee had chosen a topic to engage with for the purpose of curating information and resources for the GVMA Wellness Webpage, twice weekly GVMA Member Facebook Group posts, and a quarterly GVMA Wellness Newsletter set to launch in May. Topics to be covered in the context of this project include Suicide Prevention, Substance Use and Addiction, Anxiety and Depression, Domestic Violence, Workplace Safety and Wellbeing, Diversity and Inclusion, Cultivating Emotional Resilience, Social-Emotional Skills, and One Health.

The GVMA is very fortunate to have such a talented and hardworking group of people from diverse professional backgrounds working hard to advance mental, emotional, and physical wellness for the veterinary profession in Georgia. We are especially fortunate to have Dr. Ashley Tolleson and Dr. Taylor Chastain-Griffin, both mental health professionals with backgrounds in research serving on this committee. Stay tuned for the first GVMA wellness newsletter coming later this month and the unveiling of the new GVMA Wellness Webpage. In the meantime, stay in touch with current wellness topics on the GVMA Member Facebook Group! **CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE GVMA FACEBOOK GROUP**



Dr. Laura Smallwood,
DACVIM (SAIM)

Dr. Laura Smallwood's professional experience includes over 30 years in the practice of veterinary medicine, the majority of that as a small animal internal medicine specialist and practice owner. Dr. Smallwood began her study of Mindfulness early in 2016 as part of a collaboration to develop a 6-week Mindfulness-based stress resilience program for Saint Francis Veterinary Specialists. Since that time, she has been committed to the intensive study and practice of Mindfulness as a methodology for cultivating emotional intelligence, stress resilience and leadership skills with an emphasis on the development of programs specific to the veterinary profession. Dr. Smallwood has lectured and taught workshops on Mindfulness for the Georgia VMA, the Alabama VMA, Chattahoochee Valley VMA, Pathway Vet Alliance, and Saint Francis Veterinary Specialists and Emergency. She is studying to become a Certified Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Teacher through the University of Massachusetts Center for Mindfulness and has completed Fundamentals of MBSR Teacher Education. Dr. Smallwood is a 200 hour registered yoga teacher (RYT-200) and leads yoga practices for workers at Saint Francis Veterinary Specialists and Emergency where she is the Medical Director. Dr. Smallwood chairs the GVMA Wellness Committee and serves on the Specialty Advisory Board for Pathway Vet Alliance.

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Working with Rescues & Breeders: The GDA Companion Animal/ Equine Program

By Mark Murrah, Manager – Companion Animal/Equine Program, Georgia Dept. of Agriculture



While there is nothing more rewarding than introducing a new family pet into the household, it can also present unforeseen challenges. Whether adopting from a shelter, rescue or purchasing from a responsible breeder, the Georgia Department of Agriculture's Companion Animal/Equine Program (CAE) collaborates with Georgia veterinarians to help make the experience a positive one for both pet and owner.

With a mission of ensuring a standard of care for companion animals and equines, CAE professionals are dedicated to the education, regulation, and licensing of anyone who sells, breeds, trains, boards, grooms, rescues or shelters companion animals and equines. Given the critical role Georgia veterinarians play in safeguarding a pet's health, a strong relationship between CAE staff and veterinarians can be extremely advantageous.

What Is the Companion Animal/ Equine Program?

The Georgia CAE Program was created in 1997 to regulate the pet industry in Georgia. Since inception the program has gone through many changes and continues to evolve to protect the animals and consumers. Currently, the CAE program licenses and regulates more than 4,000 establishments with a staff of just 14 field inspectors and 4 equine specialists covering all 159 Georgia counties.

The inspectors work closely with local law enforcement, veterinarians, and animal control officers to conduct inspections and investigations concerning the humane treatment of pets in establishments that are licensed or required to be licensed under state law.

Georgia veterinarians are encouraged to get to know the CAE inspector for their area. CAE inspectors often rely on assistance to provide veterinary reports, Certificates of Veterinary Inspection, and other supporting documentation to assist with inspections and investigations. The CAE programmatic objective is to determine compliance with regulatory law; however, it is not uncommon to receive calls from individuals, and in some cases veterinarians, that wish to report animal cruelty. Animal cruelty is a criminal offense in Georgia; therefore, callers are directed to report these types of crimes to local law enforcement agencies. As a part of a regulatory agency, the CAE program does not have the authority to investigate or bring charges on such matters.

When To Report Diseases

In addition to the vital role Georgia veterinarians play in supporting the CAE mission, they are also crucial in the success of the Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Health program's objective that pets purchased from licensed breeders and dealers are healthy. It is extremely important that a new pet receives an initial exam and any required vaccinations as soon as possible after entering a new home. Additionally, certain diseases are reportable to the Georgia State Veterinarian under Georgia's reportable disease law O.C.G.A. §4-4-6. The law requires that veterinarians must report any disease, syndrome or condition listed under this law when the person or establishment is licensed. The reportable animal disease (RADs) form can be located on our Animal Health page at <http://agr.georgia.gov/animal-health.aspx>. The Animal Health veterinary staff reviews all reports received and those reports are maintained in a secure fashion. Depending on the nature of the report, it may be forwarded to a CAE Inspector for follow up. Under O.C.G.A. 4-11-9.7 the report and data are deemed confidential and not subject to Open Records requests.

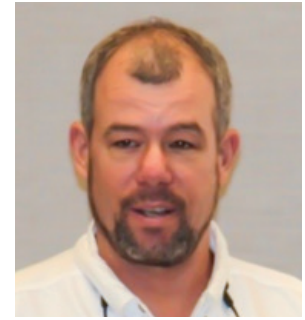
Georgia Dog and Sterilization Program



There are opportunities for veterinarians to work with the CAE program, such as the Georgia Dog and Cat Sterilization Program (DCSP). This program would not exist without the dedication of many Georgia veterinarians that have provided thousands of spay/neuter procedures to Georgia pets. Funds for the program are generated through the sale of Georgia Spay/Neuter license plates with annual grants provided to state licensed tax exempt, animal rescue organizations, Georgia government animal shelters and veterinary medical foundations. The most recent round of

grants provided \$711,000 to 97 recipients. The Georgia Veterinary Medical Foundation received a \$230,000 grant to provide sterilization surgeries through their member veterinarians. Veterinarians are encouraged to collaborate with grant recipients to perform these vital surgeries as participation in the program is a great way for veterinarians to promote their practices, show goodwill in their communities, and recruit new lifelong clients.

To meet your local Companion Animal/Equine Program Inspector or inquire about the Georgia Dog and Cat Sterilization program, please feel free to contact the Georgia Department of Agriculture, Companion Animal/Equine Program at CAECompliance@agr.georgia.gov or DCSP@agr.georgia.gov. You can also reach us by phone Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 4:30pm at 404-656-4914.



Mark Murrah has worked 27 years with the Georgia Department of Agriculture Manager of the Companion Animal/Equine Section and the Georgia Dog and Cat Sterilization Program, Ga. Department of Agriculture.



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One Health: How We All Play a Role in Protecting Nature's Triad

By Dr. José Arce, President-Elect, American Veterinary Medical Association

One Health refers to two related ideas:

1. One Health is the concept that humans, animals, and the world we live in are inextricably linked.
2. One Health refers to the collaborative effort of multiple disciplines working locally, nationally, and globally to attain optimal health for people, animals, and the environment.

The concept behind One Health has existed for centuries. But even today, studies in human, animal, and environmental science are largely conducted independently, and obvious connections may be missed. The goal of One Health is to address current and potential health and welfare issues through collaboration among all the health sciences—veterinary medicine, human medicine, environmental and wildlife sciences, and public health.

From issues like food safety and security, to diseases that can be transferred between people and animals, veterinarians have the unique knowledge and experience to address the many ways that animals and people impact one another and the ecosystems in which they both live.

Antimicrobial Resistance

Take, for instance, antimicrobial resistance. Slowing and limiting the emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistance to maintain the effectiveness of these valuable drugs requires widespread engagement from across the One Health spectrum, especially among animal owners and leaders in veterinary and human medicine and public health. As veterinarians, we are at the forefront of fighting antimicrobial resistance in animals, and we play a critical role in the overall health of animals, humans, and the environment.

The AVMA, advised by our Committee on Antimicrobials, has been working intensively to promote antimicrobial stewardship in veterinary settings. Our report, "Antimicrobial Resistant Pathogens Affecting Animal Health in the United States," is the first of its kind describing the current status of antimicrobial resistant bacteria affecting various animal species in the United States and is the newest addition to the AVMA's collection of interdisciplinary resources dedicated to fostering antimicrobial stewardship.



The report was developed in collaboration with many of our allied veterinary associations, with contributions from nearly 50 microbiologists, epidemiologists, and species experts. It examines bacteria of concern and describes actions veterinary teams, producers, breeders, and animal owners can take to foster antimicrobial stewardship.

Veterinary COVID-19 Response

The COVID-19 pandemic is a One Health issue!

With COVID-19 likely a zoonotic disease, the knowledge of veterinarians and organized veterinary medicine was critical in formulating a One Health response to the pandemic and coordinating with the scientific community and federal and state health officials across the country. The veterinary profession mobilized to meet the new challenge, and we did so in innovative and impactful ways. It was truly remarkable to see the great strides veterinarians from across the profession took to adapt to the pandemic and help keep animals and people healthy.

Many veterinary practices faced the same severe operational and financial challenges as in other professions:

- How to keep themselves, their staffs, and clients safe
- Provide high-quality care for their patients, and services to their clients
- Maintain financial solvency so they could keep their doors open

In the face of this historic threat, the entire veterinary practice team quickly adapted to meet these needs. Veterinarians' efforts also stretched beyond their practices.

- **Research** - Our colleagues in academia quickly acted to help ensure consistent, quality education for our veterinary students and redirected some research programs to support the COVID-19 response.
- **Supplies** - Veterinarians and veterinary institutions around the country donate personal protective equipment, ventilators, and other desperately needed resources to help address the incredible demands placed on human health care.
- **Testing** - Our veterinary diagnostic laboratories quickly adapted to contribute COVID-19 testing for both animals and people.
- **Vaccines** - Veterinarians also contributed to the development of new therapeutics and vaccines to treat and prevent COVID-19 in people, and are part of an expanded workforce helping to administer vaccines to people.

Veterinarians in various types of public health practice saw greater recognition of One Health and the importance of their roles.

One Health Advocacy

With strong support from the AVMA, a bipartisan group of lawmakers has reintroduced legislation that will be an important step toward implementing a nationwide, One Health approach to combat zoonotic diseases. The AVMA is working with House and Senate offices to generate cosponsors and pass the legislation in this Congress.

The Advancing Emergency Preparedness Through One Health Act focuses on prevention and improved coordination among federal agencies. It would direct the U.S. departments of Health and Human Services, Agriculture, and Interior to develop a One Health framework that would accomplish these goals:

- Advance workforce development related to preventing and responding to disease outbreaks in animals and humans
- Improve coordination between federal agencies that study human and animal health and the environment
- Advance scientific understanding of the connections among human, animal, and environmental health



Photo courtesy of Dr. Stephanie Jones

As lawmakers have learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, the health and welfare of animals, humans, and the environment are more interconnected than ever. Through a coordinated One Health approach, this bill would help ensure that federal agencies are better equipped to prepare and respond to zoonotic disease outbreaks. The AVMA is encouraging the veterinary

community to contact Congress on this issue and urge their representatives to support the Advancing Emergency Preparedness Through One Health Act.

As clinical practitioners, epidemiologists, and ecological experts, veterinarians are essential to advancing One Health and protecting the health and safety of its three pillars: animals, people, and the environment. By doing so, we honor our oath to benefit all of society and the places in which we live.



Dr. José Arce received a Bachelor of Science degree in animal science from Louisiana State University and a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine. In 2003, he founded Miramar Animal Hospital in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Dr. Arce most recently represented District IV on the AVMA Board of Directors, which includes AVMA members living in Florida, Georgia, and Puerto Rico.

CE Calendar 2021



Emerald Coast
Veterinary Conference
2021

Emerald Coast Veterinary Conference
Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort
Miramar Beach, FL
July 7th - 11th
www.emeraldcoastvc.com

VetSouth
The Hotel at Avalon
Alpharetta, GA
October 15th - 17th



Emergency/Critical Care Seminar
South Atlanta Veterinary Emergency
& Specialty Center
Fayetteville, GA
August 29th



Food Animal Conference
Lake Blackshear Resort & Golf Club
Cordele, GA
October 29th - 31st



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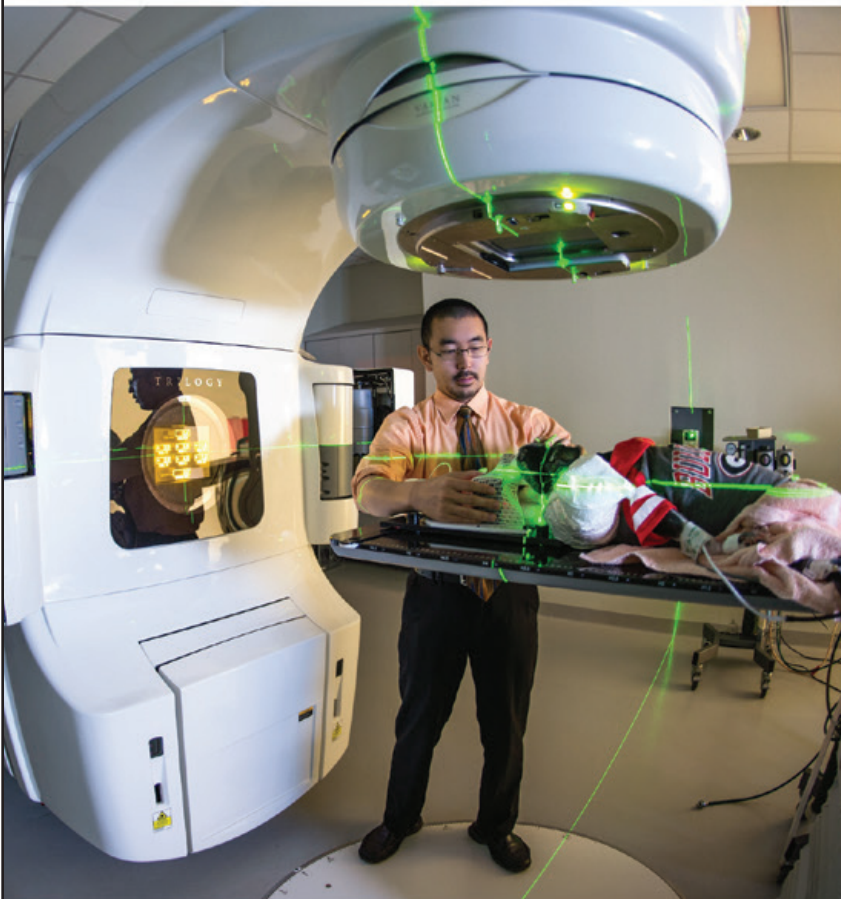
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