

Veterinary Research News

News of the Profession

Survey reveals upward trend in laboratory animal veterinarians' salaries

The mean income for laboratory animal veterinarians working in the United States in 2002 was \$117,240—an 18.3 percent increase from 1999, according to an economic study released in July.

For the past two decades, the American Society of Laboratory Animal Practitioners and American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine have surveyed their combined memberships every three years to assess their income levels.

The Salary Survey of Laboratory Animal Veterinarians for the Year 2002 shows a steady upward trend in salaries for laboratory animal veterinarians at a rate exceeding inflation. When the 1999 survey findings were corrected for inflation to 2002 constant dollars, using U.S. Bureau of Labor statistic measures, average income of laboratory animal veterinarians rose 9.6 percent in the past three years while inflation rose around 7.5 percent during the same period.

Also, secondary income for laboratory animal veterinarians, derived primarily from professional consulting, averaged \$20,011 during 2002 compared with \$15,006 in 1999—an increase of 33 percent.

A burgeoning biomedical industry and strict regulations governing the treatment and care of animals used in biomedical research have led to a growing demand in industry, academia, and the public sector for specially trained veterinarians.

But far too few veterinarians are taking advantage of the opportunities in this nontraditional field, resulting in a national shortage of laboratory animal veterinarians. Estimates indicate

that between 1,000 and 1,200 veterinarians are currently working in laboratory animal medicine in the United States.

The high salaries aren't a surprise, considering the low supply of specially trained veterinarians compared with the high demand of research institutions, according to ACLAM president, Dr. Diane J. Gaertner.

Many people become veterinarians out of their love for animals. But what many don't realize is they can also positively affect animal welfare in a research environment. "(People) don't think of laboratory animal veterinarians as the welfare advocates for thousands and thousands of experimental animals," Dr. Gaertner said.

The Salary Survey of Laboratory Animal Veterinarians for the Year 2002 can be viewed at www.aclam.org.

Legal advice to be sought on feasibility of independent assessment program

In June, stakeholders interested in the process for certifying the educational equivalence of graduates of non-AVMA-accredited veterinary colleges gathered in Philadelphia to comment about the current assessment programs.

Comments ranged from support or criticism of the AVMA's Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates program and the American Association of Veterinary State Boards' Program for Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence, to recommending joint recognition of those programs, to expressing hopes that a certifying entity independent of the AVMA and AAVSB might be established.

The AVMA Executive Board, meeting July 23 in Denver, approved an informal meeting with legal counsel

to determine the feasibility—particularly, legal feasibility—of continuing discussions on the development of an independent education equivalence assessment program. Dr. Robert E. Hertzog, District VII, recommended the measure.

Up to \$5,000 has been allocated for an informal meeting between legal counsel for the AVMA, legal counsel for the AAVSB, and independent legal counsel assisting representatives of the AVMA's ECFVG and the AAVSB's PAVE Board.

If the AVMA Executive Board and AAVSB Executive Committee determine that their legal concerns can be resolved, then the ECFVG and PAVE Board representatives recommend the continuation of ongoing discussions and the involvement of two other key stakeholders—the American Association of Veterinary Clinicians and the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges.

Regulatory Issues

Rabies vaccine for humans missing from some packages

Aventis Pasteur, manufacturer of IMOVAX rabies vaccine for use in humans, notified the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Aug. 27 that some packages are reportedly missing the vial of freeze-dried vaccine.

The CDC announced the notification in its Sept. 5 Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. The MMWR notes that each package should contain one diluent syringe and one vaccine vial containing freeze-dried vaccine.

An investigation is under way, and the company will notify its customers when it has additional information. Len Lavenda, a spokesman from Aventis Pasteur, said the vaccine was

omitted from only a small percentage of packages, and health care personnel who read the enclosed instructions should have noticed if the vaccine were missing.

Health care providers or pharmacists who encounter any IMOVAX dose packaged with a diluent syringe and no vaccine vial should contact Aventis Pasteur at (800) VACCINE and the Food and Drug Administration at (301) 443-1240.

Warning added to euthanasia products

The Food and Drug Administration's Center for Veterinary Medicine is adding an environmental warning to labels of pentobarbital-containing euthanasia solutions. The FDA hopes the two supplemental new animal drug applications that require manufacturers to revise these labels will help prevent or alleviate future injury to wildlife.

The FDA says it initiated the revision because of reports of wildlife dying from barbiturate intoxication, including a news article in the Jan. 15, 2002, *JAVMA*. For example, from 1986-2001, the National Wildlife Health Center linked the deaths of 34 eagles to secondary pentobarbital poisoning. Poisonings occur for various reasons, including people leaving carcasses in fields, burying dead animals in shallow graves, or leaving carcasses uncovered in landfills.

The new warning will state the following:

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARD: This product is toxic to wildlife. Birds and mammals feeding on treated animals may be killed. Euthanized animals must be properly disposed of by deep burial, incineration, or other method in compliance with state and local laws, to prevent consumption of carcass material by scavenging wildlife.

The CVM maintains a pharmacovigilance program that, in part, consists of a database of adverse drug experiences. Federal regulations require veterinary drug manufacturers to report information to the CVM concerning any unexpected side effects, injury, toxicity, or sensitivity reaction.

The CVM uses this information in determining whether manufacturers need to revise their products' labels. The CVM encourages consumers and wildlife veterinarians in particular to report wildlife poisonings and other adverse events by calling the CVM at (888) FDA-VETS (888-332-8387).

Invitations

Abstracts invited on emerging, infectious diseases

Organizers of the International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases invite the submission of abstracts for presentation Feb. 29-March 3, 2004, in Atlanta. Electronic and paper submissions must be received by Nov. 14, 2003.

First convened in 1998, the conference is being held for the fourth time. The event brings public health professionals together to encourage the exchange of scientific and public health information on global and infectious disease issues. Registration is limited to 2,500 attendees; preregistration by Feb. 14, 2004, is encouraged.

The conference organizers are the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Society for Microbiology, Association of Public Health Laboratories, Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, and World Health Organization.

The program will include plenary and panel sessions with invited speakers as well as oral and poster presentations. Topics will cover current work on surveillance, epidemiology, research, communication and training, bioterrorism, and prevention and control of emerging, infectious diseases in the United States and abroad.

Subject areas will encompass antimicrobial resistance, bioterrorism and preparedness, foodborne and waterborne illnesses, global health, molecular diagnostics and epidemiology, nosocomial infections, socioeconomic and political factors, vector-borne diseases, and zoonotic diseases.

To submit an abstract, register, or learn more about the conference, visit

www.iceid.org/regist.asp; phone, (202) 942-9330; or e-mail, iceid@asmusa.org.

The Veterinary Community Vaughan honored by Auburn

Auburn University recently dedicated its new large animal teaching hospital to Dr. John Thomas Vaughan, the former dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine.

During a ceremony August 29, university officials honored Dr. Vaughan for his service to the university by naming the facility the John Thomas Vaughan Large Animal Hospital. The 71,500 square foot facility will feature modern surgical suites, an intensive care unit, a pharmacy, a radiology section, field services unit, office space, and a 60-seat classroom.

"We are very pleased the university is honoring Dr. Vaughan," Dean Timothy Boosinger said. "He has been a legend in veterinary medicine for many years and has brought much prestige to Auburn."

Dr. Vaughan (AUB '55), an internationally recognized equine surgeon and speaker, served as dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine from 1977-1995. He joined the Auburn faculty in 1955, then moved to Cornell University, where he headed the large animal hospital from 1970-1974. Returning to Auburn, he became head of the Department of Large Animal Medicine and Surgery.

Additionally, he has served as president of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons and the AAEP. Currently, he chairs the AVMA PLIT.

Iowa State's dean to retire

Dr. Norman Chevillie, dean of Iowa State University's College of Veterinary Medicine, will retire at the end of the 2003-2004 academic year.

"The college has made remarkable progress and is positioned to lead the nation in production animal medicine, food security, public health training, and other veterinary issues," the dean said. "This is a satisfying time for me to depart."

Dr. Chevillie was named interim

dean in October 2000 and dean in May 2001. This fall, he will lead the college through its reaccreditation process, and continue to advocate for renovation and expansion of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital and the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

A Distinguished Professor of veterinary pathology, he is also recognized for his research on bovine brucellosis. His team developed a vaccine that was important in eradicating the disease. Dr. Cheville joined the National Animal Disease Center in 1963, serving as research leader and chief of pathology, and then as research leader for brucellosis. He went on to chair the veterinary pathology department at Iowa State and serve as interim chair of biomedical sciences.

A search committee is being formed to find Dean Cheville's successor.

ACVIM honors researchers, announces diplomates

The American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine honored several researchers at their annual convention, June 4-9 in Charlotte, N.C. Dr. John Bonagura, an ACVIM diplomate in the specialties of Neurology and Small Animal Medicine, received the Robert W. Kirk Distinguished Service Award. Dr. Bonagura is a professor of veterinary clinical sciences at The Ohio State University. A clinician, educator, and researcher, especially in veterinary echocardiography and congenital cardiovascular disease, he is the editor of "Kirk's Current Veterinary Therapy." Dr. Bonagura has served as president in the Specialty of Cardiology, member of the board of regents, and on several committees of the ACVIM.

Several researchers received the Resident Research Award, including Drs. Wendy Arsenault, Texas A&M University; Julie Byron, The Ohio State University; Richard Elders, Royal Veterinary College; Monica Figueiredo, Cornell University; Marnin Forman, University of California-Davis; Kristi Gibbon, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Brian Luria, University of Florida; Carrie Miller, Denver; Nicola

Pusterla, University of California-Davis; Scott Schatzberg, Cornell University; and JoAnn Slack, University of Wisconsin.

Eighty-five veterinarians completed the requirements for board certification by the ACVIM in 2003. Of the 85, eight were certified in cardiology, eight in neurology, 17 in oncology, 15 in internal medicine (large animal), and 37 in internal medicine (small animal).

Funding Announced

LSU professors receive NIH, NCI funding

Two researchers in the Department of Comparative Biomedical Sciences at the Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine have received federal grants.

The National Institutes of Health awarded Gary Wise, PhD, professor and head of the department, \$1.47 million to continue his research on tooth eruption. His grant has been funded for 12 years, and this renewal will continue the funding another five years.

Dr. Wise is studying the cells and tissues involved in tooth eruption, and the molecules that affect those cells. He said this research can have a great impact on human health by enabling wisdom teeth to erupt when they fail to do so. The research may benefit children suffering from progeria, a rare condition that causes premature aging.

His research is also important in veterinary medicine. It could help animals whose teeth are missing or did not erupt. This is a particular problem for certain show dogs.

Dario Marchetti, PhD, an associate professor of tumor biology, received a National Cancer Institute grant to mentor another cancer researcher, while studying the invasive mechanisms of brain tumors. Dr. Marchetti will receive \$330,052 over a three-year period.

Dr. Marchetti will mentor Yvonne Denkins, PhD, who will work in his laboratory and serve as a research assistant professor. The two scientists will study how tumor cells invade the brain. Brain metastasis is a serious bio-

logical and clinical problem; 30 percent to 40 percent of patients with cancer will develop brain metastasis, and that percentage is rapidly growing.

From the AVMA

SAVMA honors educators

The Student AVMA honored two educators for teaching excellence at the General Session of the AVMA Annual Convention in Denver on July 19.

Dr. Anna Fails (COL '87) of Pierce, Colo., received the Student AVMA Teaching Excellence Award in Basic Sciences in recognition of her excellence, innovation, and enthusiasm in the field of basic veterinary science and education. Dr. Fails, an assistant professor in the Department of Biomedical Sciences at Colorado State University, has received several awards for her teaching from the university. Prior to her time at the university, Dr. Fails practiced in Tempe, Ariz., for seven years.

Dr. Souvigny Salisbury (MSU '79) of West Lafayette, Ind., received the Student AVMA Teaching Excellence Award in Clinical Sciences in recognition of her excellence, innovation, and enthusiasm in the field of clinical veterinary science and education. Frequently honored for her creative approach and excellence in teaching, Dr. Salisbury is a professor of surgery in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences at Purdue University. Dr. Salisbury, a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons, is a member of the American Association of Veterinary Clinicians.

We invite you to send news items for this feature.

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