



# Veterinary Research News

## News of the Profession

### Dates announced for NAVMEC

With all the players and topics put in place, the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges has set the dates and locations for its upcoming meetings on the future of veterinary medicine.

The North American Veterinary Medical Education Consortium will take place over the course of three meetings this year.

The first session, "Societal needs and core competencies," will happen from Feb. 11-13 at the Oquendo Center in Las Vegas.

The second session, "Educational models," will convene April 29-May 1 at the Kansas City Airport Hilton in Missouri.

The third and final session, "Licensure and accreditation and their relationship to curriculum," will take place from July 14-16, once again at the Oquendo Center.

As many as 160 NAVMEC participants could take part in consortium meetings to discuss and deliberate over these issues, then make recommendations to the NAVMEC board of directors.

The board comprises members representing education, accreditation, and the licensing and testing arms of veterinary medical education. They are charged with drafting a final report for the AAVMC leadership.

Dr. Bennie I. Osburn, dean of the University of California-Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, was selected as chair of the NAVMEC board during its first meeting in November 2009. Dr. Mike Thomas was selected as vice chair. He is past president of the American Animal Hospital Association and a member of the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners.

Board members also established a method for the 98 financial contributors to NAVMEC to assist with the consortium's planning.

Dr. Mary Beth Leininger, project manager, said they decided on setting

up an advisory panel composed of these individuals and groups. In addition to being invited to the meetings, advisory panel members have been called on to review, comment on, edit, and suggest changes to questions that will be asked.

For more information about NAVMEC, visit [www.navmec.org](http://www.navmec.org) or e-mail Dr. Leininger at [mbleininger@aavmc.org](mailto:mbleininger@aavmc.org).

### USDA to restructure accreditation program, require renewal

Veterinarians who want to keep their government accreditation will need to apply under one of two newly created accreditation categories.

And those who want to maintain their accreditation will need to pursue continuing education and request a renewal every three years.

A 16-page Federal Register notice published Dec. 9, 2009, details the new requirements for participants in the National Veterinary Accreditation Program, which allows veterinarians to perform some duties for the Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Because of the changes, veterinarians who want to continue participating in the NVAP will have to apply under one of the new tiers. The new accreditation form is expected to be available by Feb. 1, 2010, when the regulation takes effect, at [www.aphis.usda.gov/nvap](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/nvap).

Veterinarians who do not apply will lose their accreditation status Aug. 2. The USDA estimates there are about 71,000 accredited veterinarians in the U.S. The notice states the changes will increase the level of training and skill of accredited veterinarians in disease prevention and preparedness for animal health emergencies.

One of the two accreditation categories will allow veterinarians to perform accredited duties, such as issuing certificates of veterinary inspection, for any animals. The other will allow accredited work on animals

such as cats and dogs, but not on food and fiber animal species, horses, birds, farm-raised aquatic animals, other livestock, or zoo animals that can transmit exotic animal diseases to livestock.

The USDA notice notes the NVAP regulates performance of specific accredited duties but not general veterinary practice.

Dr. W. Ron DeHaven, AVMA executive vice president, said the rule acknowledges the critical role of private practitioners in ensuring the health of animals and security of the nation's food supply. The two-tiered system recognizes the responsibilities of large animal veterinarians without placing unnecessary burdens on small animal practitioners.

Veterinarians accredited to work on any animal species will be required to complete about six hours of continuing education prior to renewing their accreditation every three years. Those who participate under the more restrictive category need to complete about three hours of continuing education in the same renewal period, and they will be able to change accreditation categories by fulfilling additional training requirements and submitting an application to the USDA-APHIS.

APHIS might count some relevant state-required continuing education toward the NVAP training requirements, and the agency is working with state veterinary licensing authorities to have the USDA's training accepted for fulfilling state continuing education requirements, the notice states.

APHIS will make its training available online to veterinarians at no cost and will provide paper or CD copies for the cost of production, shipping, and handling. The Federal Register notice also indicated the agency intends to offer the training through veterinary medical association meetings.

Veterinarians will also need accreditation specialization for some APHIS disease program activities that

require specific training and technical knowledge, the notice states. Specialization will require accreditation in the tier that allows APHIS work on all animals, and the cost of orientation or training could be borne by participating veterinarians.

## Product Safety

### Company recalls ketamine hydrochloride

Teva Animal Health has recalled certain lots of ketamine hydrochloride injection, 100 mg/mL in 10 mL vials, because of adverse events associated with the product—including lack of effect, prolonged effect, and death.

Ketamine hydrochloride is a rapid-acting, non-narcotic, nonbarbiturate agent for anesthesia in cats and for restraint in nonhuman primates. Teva initially issued a recall at the distributor level. On Dec. 21, 2009, the company expanded the recall to the veterinary level.

Teva also makes ketamine products for other companies. Veterinarians should check the lot number on ketamine hydrochloride products, regardless of the brand name. The product is part of the recall if the lot number has seven numeric digits or if the lot number starts with "5401," regardless of the rest of the lot number. The product is not part of the recall if the lot number has six numeric digits and does not start with "5401."

The current list of potentially affected products includes the following:

- AmTech Group (ketamine hydrochloride injection)
- Butler (KetaThesia)
- LLOYD Laboratories (VetaKet)
- Phoenix (Ketaject)
- RXV (Keta-Sthetic)
- VEDCO (KetaVed)
- Fort Dodge/Pfizer (Ketaset)

Not all products sold under these brand names are affected. Thus, veterinarians should check the lot numbers for all vials of ketamine they have in their possession.

Veterinarians in possession of a recalled product should cease use immediately and return the product to their distributor. Veterinarians with questions can contact Teva at (800) 759-3664 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central Standard Time, Monday through Friday.

## From the AVMA

### Symposium brings together leaders in animal welfare

The AVMA and Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges co-sponsored a unique educational event Nov. 8-11, 2009, at Michigan State University.

The symposium, titled "Swimming with the Tide," focused on animal welfare in veterinary medical education and research.

For two-and-a-half days, an international slate of veterinarians and animal scientists explained how animal welfare decisions in the U.S. and around the world are informed by science, ethics, public perception, and even the words used to express why we treat animals the way we do.

Offering insights on how foreign and international regulating bodies handle animal welfare standards were Dr. David Bayvel, chair of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) animal welfare working group; Dr. Peter Thornber, manager of animal welfare strategy and communications for the Australian government; and Dr. Laurence Bonafos, an animal welfare policy adviser to the Directorate-General Health and Consumers of the European Commission.

Approximately 225 people attended the symposium, including several veterinary and agriculture students. According to AAVMC Executive Director Marguerite Pappaioanou, student participation was especially important because "leadership in animal welfare will come from you."

With animal welfare practices increasingly debated and decided in the public arena, informed leadership is desperately needed.

Veterinarians long took for granted that society thought of them as the chief advocates for animal interests. Animal protection groups have risen up to challenge that long-held assumption, however, and now the profession is struggling to speak with a unified voice on complex and often emotional issues.

Jeffrey Armstrong, PhD, dean of the MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, described the difficulties associated with debating animal welfare issues in today's climate. "Many groups try to take something that is very complicated and needs to be viewed in a holistic manner and try

boiling it down to a bumper sticker or 30-second sound bite."

AVMA President Larry R. Corry's wish for the symposium was that it would confront "settled truths" within the veterinary community, spark discussion, and teach attendees how to effectively communicate with the public.

One reason for the symposium, in addition to greater consideration for animal interests, was to "regain the status we once held as leaders in animal welfare," Dr. Corry said.

Many of the presentations were videorecorded and will be posted on the AVMA Web site at a later date. In addition, papers from the symposium will be published in a future issue of the Journal of Veterinary Medical Education.

### Welfare courses have tough time breaking into curriculum

Veterinary faculty agree that students should have an awareness of the history and basic concepts of animal welfare and knowledge of related current events if they are to be an integral part of the animal welfare discussion after graduation. What educators continue to wrestle with is precisely what students should know before graduating and how animal welfare should be incorporated into the veterinary curriculum.

Dr. David C.J. Main is the British VMA Animal Welfare Foundation lecturer in animal welfare at the University of Bristol. Speaking at the Joint International Educational Symposium on Animal Welfare, Nov. 8-11, 2009, at Michigan State University, he said animal welfare education centers on three areas: science, ethics, and private and public standards. Specifically, students should consider what humans' impact is on animals and how animals should be treated.

The AVMA and Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges co-sponsored the event.

Above all, Dr. Main said, new graduates should be able to engage in conversations on a variety of animal welfare topics. Examples he gave were discussions of various husbandry systems, informed clinical decisions, basic welfare science, clinical welfare assessment, management of ethical dilemmas, and current standards and legislation.

This sentiment was echoed by the four-member student panel at the symposium.

Jamie Swoboda, a third-year student at the University of Missouri-Columbia, wants to see animal welfare issues incorporated more into the core medicine courses so she can understand when and why to apply certain procedures and know the concerns to discuss with clients.

U.S. veterinary schools and colleges at Tufts University, the University of Florida, Iowa State University, Michigan State University, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison are among those with noteworthy offerings in animal welfare education. North Carolina State University is developing an animal welfare class that should be online within the next year or two. Otherwise, it was said, most veterinary colleges do not have classes dedicated to animal welfare, or they avoid the topic entirely; however, implementing more animal welfare education in the veterinary curricula won't come easy.

Dr. Linda K. Lord, assistant professor at The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, said veterinary faculty and staff still haven't figured out where animal welfare belongs in the veterinary curriculum and whether it should be a core for all students, not to mention who should teach animal welfare and what teaching methodologies should be used.

One of the contributing challenges involves the logistics of adding another course to an already full veterinary curriculum, according to Janice Siegford, PhD, assistant professor in the MSU Department of Animal Science.

Dr. Siegford mentioned that the geographic location of students seeking instruction often does not coincide with the location of qualified instructors in animal welfare. In fact, she said, most U.S. veterinary schools do not have faculty with training and expertise in animal welfare. Animal welfare faculty are typically housed in animal science departments rather than in veterinary schools, and not every veterinary school is located at a university with an animal science department. However, a growing number of veterinarians, including those at Michigan State, Ohio State, Iowa State, and Washington State universities and all but one Canadian veterinary

school now have faculty with animal welfare expertise.

Dr. Siegford argues that online courses work well in teaching multidisciplinary subjects such as animal welfare because they allow for collaborative content assembly and delivery by pooling resources from multiple instructors to create the depth and breadth needed. They also permit instructors and students from various geographic locations to participate. Students can complete material according to their schedules and at their own pace. Drawbacks to online courses include less human interaction and a perception that classes are less important.

#### **Education council schedules site visits**

The AVMA Council on Education has scheduled site visits to seven schools and colleges of veterinary medicine for 2010.

Comprehensive site visits are planned for the Oklahoma State University Center for Veterinary Health Sciences, March 21-25; Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine, April 18-21; University of Saskatchewan Western College of Veterinary Medicine, Oct. 3-7; Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine, Oct. 24-28; Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, Nov. 7-11; and Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine, Dec. 5-9.

A consultative site visit is scheduled for the University of Queensland School of Veterinary Sciences, Aug. 28-Sept. 2.

The council welcomes written comments on these plans or the programs to be evaluated. Comments should be addressed to Dr. David E. Granstrom, Director, Education and Research Division, AVMA, 1931 N. Meacham Road, Suite 100, Schaumburg, IL 60173-4360. Comments must be signed by the person submitting them to be considered.

#### **Grant Proposals Invited Collie Health Foundation solicits grant proposals**

The Collie Health Foundation is soliciting grant proposals for research into health problems associated with Collies.

Of particular interest are gastric volvulus, autoimmune skin diseases, seizures, and MDR1 clinical application.

Researchers who would like to seek funding from the Collie Health

Foundation should contact Dr. Nancy Kelso at [grantschair@colliehealth.org](mailto:grantschair@colliehealth.org) for more information or Ann Boles at [grantssec@colliehealth.org](mailto:grantssec@colliehealth.org) for an application packet. The deadline for grant proposals is April 1.

Additional information about the Collie Health Foundation is available at [www.colliehealth.org](http://www.colliehealth.org).

#### **Funding Announced Morris funds research on respiratory infection in shelter cats**

Upper respiratory tract infection is a leading cause of illness and euthanasia for cats in animal shelters. Therefore, the Morris Animal Foundation is funding research on modifications in shelter conditions to reduce the spread of upper respiratory tract infection and other diseases in cats.

Morris is funding a study on housing of shelter cats by Dr. Kate F. Hurley, director of the Koret Shelter Medicine Program at the University of California-Davis School of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Hurley is comparing two cage types for their effects on shelter cats' stress, prevalence of upper respiratory tract disease, and subsequent likelihood of adoption.

According to research by Dr. Hurley, the prevalence of upper respiratory tract infection in shelter cats varies across the country—affecting 5 percent to 60 percent of shelter cats. So far, the shelters that provide high-quality housing for cats appear to have the lowest infection rates.

Dr. Hurley's study of cage types is one of three projects receiving funds through the Helping Shelters Help Cats program under Morris' Happy Healthy Cat Campaign.

The foundation is funding a team from the United States, Canada, and Australia that seeks to develop behavioral interventions to decrease stress in shelter cats and thereby increase the cats' mucosal immune response—the first line of defense against upper respiratory tract infection.

A study at The Ohio State University will determine whether changes in cage environment reduce stress in shelter cats and will create a training program to help shelter personnel become experts in observing and working with cats to reduce the cats' stress.