Shelter Medicine Today: 
where are we now? 

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1866: Birth of the U.S. Animal Welfare Movement
The 70’s & 80’s: Professionalization
Progress

Animals euthanized per 1000 capita

1970 1985 1990
One day, one of her veterinary students asked Dr. Patricia Olson, “How would the veterinary community respond to a disease that resulted in the deaths each year of between one tenth and one quarter of the entire pet population?”

Dr. Olson answered confidently, “We would respond with great fervor, similar to the way we did with parvovirus.”

The student’s next question jolted her. “Why is it, then, that for decades, millions of unwanted dogs and cats have died each year because of pet overpopulation?”
Our problem?
At least 3 billion dollars
~ 7.5 million animals (~ 3-5% of pets)

At least 340 million pounds
> 250,000 animals (~ 1.25 % of pets)

http://www.biomedcentral.com/content/pdf/1746-6148-8-163.pdf
Emerging and re-emerging disease
~ 2.7 million animals euthanized in U.S. shelters in 2012

> 22,000 animals euthanized in U.K. shelters in 2010
Our role

• Help animals before they become homeless
• Help animals become re-homed
• Help animals *while* they’re homeless: practice *shelter medicine* in shelters or in practice

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What is shelter medicine?

- Individual patient care
  - With few or many resources
  - Improves staff and volunteer commitment
  - Facilitates compliance with disease recognition and response
  - Feels great
Cost effective ≠ ineffective

“Intervention, while effective, requires inpatient care ranging from $1,500 to $3,000 – a cost some owners simply can’t afford. Euthanasia often becomes the only other option for severely affected dogs.

CSU researchers are showing that there is another possibility – intensive at-home care at a fraction of the cost ($200-$300), but with similar outcomes when compared to the inpatient “gold standard” of care.”
Are we there yet?
What is shelter medicine?

• Infectious disease/outbreak management
  – Increases number of animals that survive to adoption
  – Decreases suffering in the shelter
  – Improves public perception
  – Feels great
High stakes

• We had a litter of 7 puppies who seemed to have kennel cough...Two of the seven pups got pretty sick and depressed so our clinic sent out blood samples to the lab and it came back barely positive (1:50) for distemper. The pups were 9 weeks old at the test and had been given their first shots at 6 weeks of age, three weeks earlier. I took the other five puppies to my home 8 days ago. The test came back last Friday and we euthanized the two that were in the clinic, however, they were much better that day. Well, the 5 pups I have at home are now almost completely well from the "kennel cough", are happy playful, eating well puppies. Is this just a phase of distemper? Should I just euthanize these pups now and be done with it or wait it out since they seem to be healthy (about 90% better)?
New tools

IDEXX Reference Laboratories Introduces First Quantitative Real-time PCR Test for Canine Distemper Virus [Trade]

Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) Quant RealPCR™ Test differentiates between naturally infected and vaccinated dogs

WESTBROOK, Maine, October 11, 2011—IDEXX Reference Laboratories announces the availability of the Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) Quant RealPCR™ Test, a revolutionary new canine distemper virus (CDV) test that differentiates infected dogs from those vaccinated for the disease. The test allows veterinarians to make a more accurate diagnosis of dogs with clinical signs of respiratory illness. The new test has been incorporated into the existing canine respiratory disease panels at no additional cost. Results are available in 24 hours.

Clinical signs of illness usually develop in dogs, particularly puppies and adolescents, or shelters where they would have been recently vaccinated. Until now, this has been a qualitative test results. The CDV Quant RealPCR Test provides a quantitative result typically exponentially higher during infection than what would be detected before.

Christian Leutenegger, DrVetMed, PhD, FVH, Regional Head of Molecular Diagnostics in collaboration with veterinarians from the University of Florida. “IDEXX RealPCR offers unprecedented accuracy,” said Dr. Leutenegger. “Innovative real-time PCR technology also quantifies the virus. We run this test in a state-of-the-art facility with quality controls. Veterinarians can be confident in the results and in their diagnosis.”

A stand-alone test is also available for quantitative distemper virus information in mucosa. For more information about the CDV Quant RealPCR Test, panels and internal medicine specialists at 1-888-433-9987, option 4, option 2.


http://maddiesfund.org/maddies-laboratory.htm
Cheap thrills

We just wanted to thank you so much for helping to save our lives....the horrible case of distemper never got US but we and the staff are forever grateful for all your time and effort at helping us get a second chance at a happy life!
Are we there yet?
What is shelter medicine?

- Prevention
  - Vaccination
  - Sanitation
  - Parasite control
  - Stress reduction
  - Nutrition
  - Air quality
  - Facility design
"Hey Doc, Before attending your workshop many cats died. We were sick all the time. Sometimes dropping like flies. Since your workshop less than 10 cats/kittens a year. We no longer move the cat out of the cage everyday to clean. We give them play things that can be disinfected well. We have a much better air exchange. Our hand disinfectant is at least 67% alcohol. We don’t overcrowd. We are much better about cross contamination. We are aware of the effects of stress and handling. Etc. etc. etc.

Are we there yet???
Not the end goal
Not the end goal
What is shelter medicine?

• Shelter system analysis
  – Facility
  – Management
  – Staffing
  – Budget
  – Husbandry
  – Enrichment
  – Flow

• Development of standards of care and legislative policy
Progress

YCAS Dog Live Release Rates
Fiscal Years 2009-2010 through September 2013
(Not including Owner Euthanasia Request Dogs)
Progress

YCAS Cat Live Release Rates
Fiscal Years 2009-2010 through September 2013
(Not including Owner Euthanasia Request Cats or TNR Euthanized for FeLV/FIV)
Also progress
More good news

Please give me a treat if I'm **quiet** and have all four paws on the ground!

I'm training to be awesome! Thanks for helping!
Ar we there yet?
Ar we there yet?

Ar we there yet?
Ar we there yet?

Ar we there yet?
Study Finds Free-Roaming Cats Pose Threat from "Serious Public Health Diseases"

(Washington, D.C., September 18, 2012) A study published in the peer-reviewed public health journal, Zoonoses and Public Health, has found that free-roaming cats pose a threat from "serious public health diseases" to humans, domestic animals, and wildlife.

The paper was authored by R.W. Gerhold of the University of Tennessee’s Center for Wildlife Health, Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries, and by G. Jones, senior research scientist at the Wildlife Disease Laboratory of the New York State Department of Health.

Media Release

Contact: Robert Johns, 202-234-7181 ext.210, Email click here

Vets warn of killer virus outbreak infecting dogs

By BARBARA HOLLANDS on October 31, 2014 in Metro, News • 0 Comments

Authorities: Man Charged With Animal Cruelty After Dog Forced From Car On Garden State Parkway

October 2, 2014 12:20 PM

Aggressive dogs a steady problem for south Modestans, police say

Being homeless with a pet compounds difficulties

By Nathan Bruttell / The Associated Press
Published Mar 20, 2015 at 12:02AM

The Thin Line Between Dog Rescuing and Dog Hoarding

With the city overrun with strays, Dallas’ animal rescuers want to save dogs from cruelty and neglect. But some need to be saved from themselves.
What is our end goal?

• Healthy animal?
• Healthy population?
• Healthy shelter system?
• Or....
Healthy community

http://www.groundswellmural.org/project/bloom-healthy-community
Shelter medicine is *production medicine*
OUR PRODUCTS

• **Humane, safe shelters**
  – Facility design
  – Animal care

• **Increased shelter adoptions**
  – Animal health and public image
  – Management, programs and flow

• **Decreased shelter intake**
  – High quality, high volume spay/neuter
  – Behavioral intervention
  – Epidemiology of pet homelessness

• **Humane, healthy communities**
  – Protection of public health
  – Cruelty prevention and intervention
  – Increase access to care for all pets
  – Education for community members
15 years of progress

1999: Class in shelter medicine taught at Cornell
2001: Shelter Medicine Program and residency at UC Davis
2001: Association of Shelter Veterinarians forms
2004: First shelter medicine textbook published
2005: Formal discussion of specialty begins
2006: Veterinary Task Force to Advance Spay/neuter formed
2007: Shelter medicine job task analysis performed
2008: Residency standards developed
2008: Spay/neuter guidelines published
2009: Shelter medicine organizing committee formed
2010: Guidelines for standards of care published
2014: Shelter Medicine Specialty approved by AVMA!
The Association of Shelter Veterinarians today

- 1500 members and 28 student chapters
- Guidelines
- Position statements
- Continuing education
- Board specialty
- Active email list serve
- Any vet can join!

www.sheltervet.org
Textbooks

Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff

Animal Behavior for Shelter Veterinarians and Staff

Veterinary Forensics Second Edition Animal Cruelty Investigation

Infectious Disease Management in Animal Shelters
Online resources

- www.humanealliance.org
- www.aspcapro.org
- http://maddiesfund.org/maddies-institute.htm
- www.animalsheltering.org
Standards: high quality, high volume spay/neuter

- ASV: Veterinary Medical Guidelines for Spay-Neuter Programs
- JAVMA July 1, 2008, Volume 233; No. 1, page 74
- New edition in the works
- Also great info at http://humanealliance.org/e-learning
- Yahoo email group: https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/HQHVSNvets/info

Google: veterinary medical guidelines for spay-neuter
Standards: canine vaccination

- American Animal Hospital Association: shelter dog vaccine guidelines
- Pages 24-28

https://www.aaha.org/professional/resources/canine_vaccine.aspx#gsc.tab=0
Standards: feline vaccination

- American Association of Feline Practitioners
- Shelter and TNR guidelines page 791-793

“The Shelter Standards”!

- Published by the Association of Shelter Veterinarians
- Based on the Five Freedoms
- Minimum to ideal
- For shelters, rescues, foster parents, sanctuaries

www.sheltervet.org
Background

- Review of existing standards for confined companion animals
  - Shelters, catteries, kennels, pet stores, puppy mills, veterinary hospitals, sanctuaries, laboratories
- Detailed review of scientific and professional literature
  - Sanitation, ventilation, vaccination, training, public health, etc. etc.
Unacceptable

• No sheltering organization, regardless of its circumstances, i.e., budget, size, etc., should engage in any practice that is deemed unacceptable.

• E.g. “It is an unacceptable practice to spray down kennels or cages while animals are inside them.”
Must

• Without adherence to this recommendation, the delivery of a minimum level of acceptable or humane care is not possible

• E.g. “A primary enclosure must allow animals to sit, sleep and eat away from areas of their enclosures where they defecate and urinate.”
Should (and should not)

• Use of the word “should” implies a strong recommendation.
• E.g. “Monitoring should take place during feeding time, so that appetite or conflicts around food may be observed”
Ideally

• May not be possible in all circumstances but would certainly enhance care for animals.

• E.g. “Protected indoor-outdoor access is ideal for most species, especially when animals are held long term.”
Standards resources

• Published in multiple languages
  – Canadian, Belgian and Russian versions
• The “Mighty Excel Tool” at www.sheltermedicine.com
• Checklist guide at http://www.aspcapro.org/checklist
• Webinar series at www.ASPCApro.org
Veterinary roles

• Contract or career
• Shelter network services
• National welfare organizations
• Academic programs
• Board member/advisor
• Volunteer

www.shelteroutreachservices.org
Lots of variety

www.vin.com – ASV veterinary wage survey
Reasonable pay

Median pay

$75,000
We love our work!

I love being a shelter vet! I was a veterinarian in general practice for about 15 years (Ohio State grad '96) and after a heart attack at age 39 I decided to find something less stressful. For me dealing with clients day in and day out was hard. I had a hard time not getting sucked in to their emotional lives and it was hard to be able to focus on the animal. While I was in general practice I always did local TNR and other spay/neuter programs which made me feel like I was contributing more to the overall good rather than just individual pets. Now that I have started doing shelter work full time I feel like I am contributing to my community and the overall good of animals on a daily basis. It definitely has its stressors but shelter med feels good to me every day. I love being able to work on the animals every day. Never have to discuss cost or prognosis or euthanasia with a client. Can just focus on the good of the animals. I plan to stay in this field for the rest of my career!

http://voicethread.com/#q.b2945119.i15549869
Shelter medicine training

- Taught at 80% of U.S. veterinary schools
  - Average 13 hours of course credits
- Fellowships
- Internships
- Residencies
- Faculty

[www.vin.com](http://www.vin.com) – ASV veterinary wage survey
Petition
to the
American Board of Veterinary Specialties
for
Provisional Recognition
of a
Recognized Veterinary Specialty
in
Shelter Medicine
under the
American Board of Veterinary Practitioners

http://www.sheltervet.org/board-specialty
"Recognition as a specialty will help to enhance the status of shelter veterinarians, who not so long ago were thought of not as pioneers in an underserved area of animal husbandry, but as a weird sort of small animal vet. Recognition will help to promote science and good practice in shelter medicine, as new specialists are trained and new knowledge is generated and shared."
Beyond the shelter

Today

Animals euthanized per 1000 capita

- 1970: 120
- 1985: 80
- 1990: 40
- 2000: 20
- 2014: 10
U.S. animal shelters are now killing fewer cats and dogs than at any time in the past 60 years—nearly 300,000 fewer in the most recent fiscal year than just one year earlier, and just 8.6 per 1,000 Americans, the lowest ratio on record.
Trying to catch up!

www.millioncatchallenge.org
Hi Kate, Is there any shelter yet that has met or exceeded all the standards? It’s our FY16 goal to be at 90%, then at 100% for FY17. :)

Working Cats Adoption Program

Not every cat enjoys playing and outdoor, some are independent and prefer to be adored from afar. The Working Cat Adoption Program gives these cats a second chance by finding them safe, indoor homes where they can thrive.

- Working cats and home cats, they prefer to live in the not, close bugs, and generally keep their distance from humans.
- They are not friendly or brave. They'll avoid contact with any and are the perfect addition to busy, wide-open, corporate environments and open meadows.
- All cats are vaccinated, wormed, sterilized, and microchipped.

Our expert staff supports adoption before, during, and after adoption to ensure the cat’s successful transition to their new home.

Community Cat Garden

At Humane Society Silicon Valley, we cater to the needs of every animal, which is why we have the Community Cat Garden. Instead of being plugged before, working cats are free to roam in our outdoor, enclosed and safe Community Cat Garden.

The Working Cat Adoption Program and Community Cat Garden save the lives of animals that would otherwise have nowhere else to go.
Our problem?
Our problem?
Our opportunity!
Our Reward ♥
Stop by and visit

www.sheltermedicine.com

http://virtualconsultant.sheltermedicine.com