Education & Earnings in the Health Professions

Malcolm Getz
Vanderbilt University
for the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges
March 10, 2012
One conclusion:

The most important part of veterinary medicine is the intellectual core, the ideas, the science, and the practical wisdom, that sustains every dimension of the profession.
Three Issues:

- Health Care Reform
- Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists
- Veterinary Medicine
A basic chart

Median career earnings plotted against years of post secondary education
Earnings and Education in Three Clusters 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Post Secondary Education</th>
<th>Median Earnings in $000s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>$350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>$400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Veterinary**
  - DVM
  - DVM BC
- **Dentistry**
  - DDS
  - Prostho
  - PA
- **MD**
  - MD Primary
  - Spec
Education and Earnings

• Upward sloping quadratic reflects the cost of education

• Changes in employment move earnings to an equilibrium

• External forces can shift the curve up and down
1. Health Care Reform

- The Case for Reform
- Nature of Reform
- Consequence for Veterinary Medicine
2. Nurse Anesthetists

- Median earnings $158,000 per year
- ~27 month post BA program
- The faculty are CRNAs.
- The curriculum is fixed and half is clinical.
Earnings and Education in Four Clusters

- Pharmacy
- Nursing
- Veterinary
- Dentistry

Legend:
- **Pharmacy**
- **Nursing**
- **Veterinary**
- **Dentistry**

Years of Post Secondary Education: 0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12

Median Earnings in $000s: $0, $50, $100, $150, $200, $250

Cluster Points:
- CRNA
- DDS
- DVM BC
- Prostho
- DHy RN
- NP
- Vet Tech
- Ph Tech
- Pharm
- DVM
3. Veterinary Medicine

- Dramatic decline in state support
- Debt-to-income ratio: MD 0.85, DDS 1.17, DVM 1.69
- How can the profession attract more talent?
Matching Occupation to Skill

Provider Skill vs. Skill Required by Procedure
Doctor of Veterinary Medical Practice

- To lower the cost of education
- Increase the number of providers
- Improve the quality of service

- For example:
  - Six years of post secondary education
  - Focus on a specific career path
  - Less expensive faculty
  - A clinical residency year
Doctor of Veterinary Medicine

- The education is in a research setting.
- Broad training for leadership and inquiry
- An exceptional collegiate faculty
The Public Responsibility

- Dr. Franklin, President Washington, and Mr. Jefferson
- Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Morrill, and the land grants
- Universal elementary and secondary education
- FDR & the GI Bill
- The two-year colleges
- NSF, NIH, and competitive research
National Institute of Animal Health

• Support for competitive research and advance training in animal and comparative health.
• Support from science, industry, and interest groups
• With national and international effect.
Five ideas:

Successful health care reform is essential.
Introduce a lower cost Doctor of Veterinary Medical Practice.
Emphasize the research and collegiate character of the DVM.
A sound tax system is essential to support public goods.