Curriculum Development: Drivers of Change and International Comparisons

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Current environment in which veterinary medical education is being taught is one of profound change

Moving towards a global society

This will have an impact on veterinary education!

For example - education of US veterinarians now occurs worldwide

- Countries with AVMA accredited Vet Schools or Schools whose graduates feed into the US market
- Currently 9 accredited foreign schools but this number is growing!
Drivers of Curriculum Development

What factors have driven Veterinary Curriculum Development, both within the US and internationally, in the past?

What factors are likely to drive Veterinary Curriculum Development in the future?
Drivers of Curriculum Development

Inter-related

Accrediting Agencies
Outcomes Assessment
Information Abundance
Relevance
Admissions
Debt
Clinical Education
Recommenda-tions

Contemporary Veterinary Education

Drivers of Curriculum Review and Renewal

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But may have different emphases

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1. Accrediting Agencies

- Significant input into curriculum development
  - mostly indirect input, but occasionally direct!
- North America (US and Canada)
  - AVMA – Council on Education (AVMA – COE)
- Australia and New Zealand
  - Australasian Veterinary Board Council (AVBC) - Veterinary Schools Accreditation Advisory Committee
- United Kingdom
  - Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) + European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE)
Drivers of Curriculum Development

Accreditation

AVMA-COE
RCVS
AVBC
EAEVE

Harmonization

Global Curricula
2. Outcomes Assessment

- Recent focus of the accrediting agencies on an accountability by the Vet Colleges in demonstrating the competence of graduates.

Survey of mistakes made by recent veterinary graduates

R. J. Mellanby, M. E. Herrtage

Impact on curriculum development
2. Outcomes Assessment

- **Competencies - Knowledge, Skills and Attributes**
  - **Knowledge (Cognitive Skills)**
    - Ever-expanding!
    - Who defines these? NAVLE – Job Analysis?
  - **Clinical Skills – Clinical/Technical**
    - US – currently trying to define these (VEC, NAVMEC)
    - UK – Day 1 and Year 1 competencies and ongoing required CPD
    - Australia “borrowed” the UK’s Day 1/Year 1 competencies
  - **Attributes (Non-Cognitive Skills)**
    - All struggling to define these let alone assess them!!!
    - Increasingly seeing themes for “professional development” which are introduced longitudinally into curricula
3. Information Abundance

❖ How do we fit it all in?

✓ We don’t!

✓ Curriculum Reviews are now deciding what is core information and what may be additional
  ➢ Who is defining core information? NAVLEs? Accreditors?

✓ Additional information taught in some programs
  ➢ Tracking and Streaming – limited licensure???

✓ Is the core/additional program the same at all schools?

✓ In US - has to fit into 4 years

❖ But are we really? ↑ no. of students doing internships
3. Information Abundance

- How do the students make sense of it?
  - They don’t! “Academic bulimia”
  - **Future direction** - training student differently using different pedagogical approaches
  - Train students to navigate through the information abundance: how to make good decisions on where to go, what to access, and what to dismiss (“**factual relevance**”)
  - ↑ focus on “**just-in-time**” versus “**just-in-case**”
  - ↑ focus on **critical thinking, problem solving, and reflection** (self-directed learning)
4. Relevance

- Are we addressing societal needs?
4. Relevance – Underserved Areas

- **United States**
  - development of specific areas of focus in curricula
  - ↑ funding for under-served areas (e.g., VMLRP)

- **United Kingdom**
  - more emphasis on Public Health/Food Safety within veterinary curricula in UK Vet Colleges

- **Australasia**
  - opened two new veterinary colleges which emphasize either FA medicine or Public Health/One Health
5. Admissions

- Many veterinary schools have ↑ student numbers (UK & Australia) or are planning to do so (USA)
  - Number of students we admit to veterinary schools will impact on what we can teach and how we teach it
- But we have stagnant admissions numbers
  - AAVMC Sponsored Survey (March, 2008) reported admission applications to Veterinary Colleges have “flatlined” and ↑ need for veterinarians not being reflected in increasing application pools
Drivers of Curriculum Development

6. Money!

- Increasing cost of veterinary education
  - Student Debt
    - Median student debt – 2009 graduates
      - $84,828 - $162,851
    - Student debt increasing out of proportion with potential incomes
  - Universities Broke!
    - Progressive ↓ funding for Higher Education including Veterinary Education
Drivers of Curriculum Development

6. Money

*Impacts veterinary curricular development:*

- Length of time of courses & prevet requirements
  - 4 (undergrad) + 4 (DVM) years in US (=8 years)
  - 5-6 years total in UK and Australasia
- Courses offered & faculty hired to teach
- Clinical training – very expensive
7. Clinical Education

- Clinical Training is very expensive!

- New curricular models:
  - Distributive Model
    - where all clinical teaching is undertaken outside the College and don’t have Veterinary Teaching Hospital
    - Western (US), Calgary (Canada), Nottingham (UK)
  - Hybrid models (Partially Distributive)
    - some inside/some outside
8. Recommendations from Studies/Reports

- Number of foundational studies and reports that have impacted the direction of curricula - **though sometimes not as much as some would like!**
  - Pew Report - 1989
  - KPMG or “mega” study – 1999
  - Veterinary Education & Training: A framework for 2010 and Beyond – ESSG 2003
  - European Veterinary Education – Structuring Future Development - 2004
  - Foresight Report – 2007
8. Recommendations from Groups

- Other Professional Organizations
  - “Tomorrow’s Doctors” – U.K.
  - Brown University Alpert Medical School
  - Dentistry

- Professional Benchmarking

- Student Evaluations!
  - “how much curricular change would occur without student evaluation to drive it?”
8. **Recommendations from Groups**

- Groups recently formed to help direct change
  - Veterinary Educator Collaborative (VEC)
  - North American Veterinary Medical Education Consortium (NAVMEC)
  - Education Strategy Steering Group (ESSG) - UK
  - WikiVet
  - Veterinary Schools Accreditation Advisory Committee (VSAAC)

  “Creative & forward thinking individuals with a collective passion for the profession”
Curriculum Development

Still a Journey

Haven’t arrived at our destination!!!