

# *Addressing Current Challenges in Sustaining Veterinary Clinical Departments*

*- The Role of VTH's in Veterinary Education*

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# *Past, Present and Future*

- ❖ *Students have been involved in case management throughout the history of veterinary clinical education*
- ❖ *No-cost clinics were part of the Land Grant mission to provide support for citizens of their state and region*
- ❖ *Accreditation required access to an adequate clinical caseload*
- ❖ *Early clinical faculty came from the ranks of successful practitioners*
- ❖ *Charging for services was initiated in 1940's*

# *Past, Present and Future*

- ❖ *Post-WWII, clinical faculty were recruited into M.S./ faculty roles, leading to tenure track faculty positions*
- ❖ *Internships began in 1950-60's and residencies in the 1960-70's*
- ❖ *Board-certification became the entry-level credential for clinical faculty positions in the 1970-80's and was equivalent to a "clinical PhD"*
- ❖ *"At least two specialists in every discipline" became a standard of success in the 1980-90's. Residency training programs expanded*

# *Past, Present and Future*

- ❖ *Companion animal specialties expanded in numbers and private practice salaries out-paced academe in the 1990-2000's*
- ❖ *Questions began to arise: Were we serving the food animal market via individual animal specialists? Were we preparing students for entry-level skills or simply teaching them to "look for zebras when they heard hoof beats"?*
- ❖ *Out-sourcing education to food animal private practices began in the 1980-90's.*
- ❖ *"Community Practice" sections were created to simulate companion animal primary care.*

# *Past, Present and Future*

- ❖ *Tracking became commonplace to satisfy student interest as well as faculty expertise; Centers of Excellence were attempted. Small number of students selecting electives hindered growth and sustainability of some specialties as well as centers.*
- ❖ *Clinical departments began to divide responsibilities into academic and hospital roles; Hospital Directors became commonplace in the 1980-90's.*
- ❖ *Veterinary colleges became more dependent on hospital income and shifted more and more fiscal responsibility to the hospitals in the 1990-2000's*

# *Past, Present and Future*

- ❖ *Tenure-track faculty hires often had board-certification and a PhD; clinical track hires became commonplace in the 1990's*
- ❖ *"Scholarship" related to tenure became mostly research driven, but "scholarship was being reconsidered".*
- ❖ *Some VTH's were not considered as major referral centers anymore, but a place for "dumping" expensive, atypical cases*

# *Past, Present and Future*

- ❖ *In addition to concern over appropriate cases for teaching entry-level veterinary students, the increasing numbers of private referral hospitals raised a concern over the VTH's being able to see an adequate number of teaching cases.*
- ❖ *Comparing VTH's and Private Referral Practices*
  - ❖ *VTH: student/intern/resident/faculty-centered, multiple missions, salary-constrained*
  - ❖ *Private Referral Hospital: client-focused, single mission, salary based on productivity*

# *JVME - Seven articles over 11 years related to the VTH or the use of clinical cases in teaching*

- Lisa M. Howe, Harry W. Boothe, Jr, John R. August, Kathy L. Bice, Karen L. Medicus, *Using Community-Based Service Learning Projects to Improve Surgical Instruction*, pgs 12-15 JVME 21:2 1998
- Jo Ann C. Eurell, Carol A. Lichtensteiger, Susan K. Kingston, Nancy A. Diamond, Gay Y. Miller, *Clinical Cases as a Teaching Tool in Veterinary Histology*, pgs 1-6 JVME 26:1, 1999
- Jill A. Barnes, Ian R. Taylor, *Off-campus Learning for U.K. Veterinary Undergraduates: Responding to Changing Learning Needs*, pgs 16-22 JVME 26:1 1999
- Winthrop Harewood and Brader Brathwaite, *The Evolution of the Food Animal Ambulatory and Theriogenology Clinical Rotation in Veterinary Education in the Caribbean*, JVME 27:2 2000
- Chris M. Brown, *The Future of the North American Veterinary Teaching Hospital*, JVME, 30:3, 2003
- Bradford P. Smith and Donal A. Walsh, *Teaching the Art of Clinical Practice: The Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital, Private Practice, and Other Externships*, JVME, 30:3, 2003
- Donna L. Harris, James W. Lloyd, and Michael J. Marrinan, *Hospital Management Principles Applicable to the Veterinary Teaching Hospital*, JVME 31:3, 2004

**Bradford P. Smith and Donal A. Walsh, *Teaching the Art of Clinical Practice: The Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital, Private Practice, and Other Externships*, JVME, 30:3, 2003**

*The VTH is where integration of basic science and initial clinical knowledge takes place*

- *Problem solving is done with naturally-occurring cases*
- *Professional standards of ethics are demonstrated*
- *Patient management plans are created*
- *Conflicting information is resolved*
- *Effective communication skills are developed*
- *Work takes place within the "veterinary team" setting*
- *Work must be done within economic constraints*

# *Where do we go from here?*

*Tenure-track faculty will not fill the staffing needs for clinical teaching; clinical faculty are needed.*

- *Clinical specialist*
- *Clinical investigator*
- *Clinical scientist*
- *Clinical educator*

*(ref. Staveley-O'Carroll, et al., J of Surgical Research, 118, 109-113, 2004. Developing the Young Academic Surgeon)*

# *Where do we go from here?*

- *Incentive-based salaries will be necessary to recruit and retain clinical faculty of the future*
- *Cost inefficiency will not be tolerated; future accountability will be greater*
- *Programs will be unique to schools and their demographics (e.g., urban vs. small town location)*
- *We have to find ways to balance Primary-, Secondary-, and Tertiary-care*

# *Where do we go from here?*

- *Students will travel to caseloads*
  - *Inter-institutional agreements (e.g., food animal access)*
  - *Satellite practices*
  - *Private/Corporate practice rotations; partnerships with the private sector*
- *Access to caseload will always be needed*

# *Where do we go from here?*

*"To study the phenomena of disease without books is to sail an uncharted sea, while to study books without patients is not to get to sea at all."* – *Sir William Osler* as quoted in **Bradford P. Smith and Donal A. Walsh, *Teaching the Art of Clinical Practice: The Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital, Private Practice, and Other Externships*, JVME, 30:3, 2003**



