

A Veteran and His Dog: Man's Best Friend

This case is a simulation and is not based on actual events.

Case Classification: Problem-Based Learning Simulation

One Health Component Addressed: Environmental Health

Student Guide

Case Synopsis

Mr. Robert Santiago is a 63 year old male patient presenting to the Veteran's Affairs (VA) clinic for follow up of his post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression treatment. He uses an assistance dog, Siri, to help him manage these conditions. At his appointment, Mr. Santiago requests a refill of his anti-depressant, sertraline. He also complains to the team about being tired and nauseous for a few weeks. In the course of the visit Mr. Santiago mentions that Siri has been sleeping a lot and is not eating well. He is worried and asks the team for help.

Instructions

Prior to session one, students should review the following resources:

- American Psychiatric Association. Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. 2013. Available at <http://www.dsm5.org/Documents/PTSD%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>.
- Franklin, E. The Emerging Needs of Veterans: A Call to Action for the Social Work Profession. *Health Soc Work*. 2009;34(3):163-167.
- One Health Initiative Web Site. Available at <http://www.onehealthinitiative.com/>.
- Service Dog Helps Veteran with PTSD. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6WfDX8KPFU>
- Vieweg WV, Julius DA, Fernandez A, et al. Posttraumatic stress disorder: clinical features, pathophysiology, and treatment. *Am J Med*. 2006;119(5):383-390.
- WisCARES. An organization aiming to improve health care access for the Madison, WI area's disadvantaged citizens and their pets. Available at <http://www.vetmed.wisc.edu/departments/research-and-service/wiscares/>.

Additional resources will be suggested or provided over the course of the simulation.

Session 1

Students will view two videos pertaining to the case. During this session, teams will work to develop a working problem list and differential diagnosis, a list of tests they would like to recommend for Robert and/or Siri, as well as a list of additional questions they would like to ask Robert or his clinicians to further refine their differential.

Patient interview videos (order of viewing is at facilitator discretion)

- Human patient video (run time 6:24)
https://learn.pharmacy.unc.edu/tmp/oneHealth/oneHealth_vaHosp_draft001.mp4
 - Robert visits Dr. Rebecca Fowler, a nurse practitioner.
- Veterinary patient video (run time 5:50)
https://learn.pharmacy.unc.edu/tmp/oneHealth/oneHealth_dvmClinic_draft001.mp4
 - Robert takes Siri to see Dr. Brenda Stevens, a veterinarian.

Learning Objectives

- Describe how assistance animals may benefit human patients with depression and/or posttraumatic stress disorder.
- Recognize that animals cannot vocalize symptoms of disease and the need to include the owner as part of the care team.

Discussion Topics/Questions

- Develop a list of differential diagnoses based on videos.
 - What are the signs and symptoms of concern?
 - What types of conditions could affect both humans and animals?
 - Are any of these applicable to this case?
 - What additional information would be helpful, i.e. what questions do you have for Robert?
- Describe the rationale and benefit of using an assistance animal for a patient with PTSD.
- What are the social and financial challenges facing returning veterans with PTSD?
- What medical conditions are these veterans at risk for developing based on these challenges?

Session 2

Student teams will interview the facilitator to obtain more information, using the list of questions developed in Session 1. By the end of this session, students should identify a cause of the signs and symptoms noted by the patient(s).

Learning Objectives

- Describe how animals may serve as sentinels for human health.
- Identify possible disorders/diseases that could affect both the human and animal patients in this case.

Discussion Topics/Questions:

- Identify 3 potential causes of Robert and Siri's signs and symptoms.
 - Aside from signs and symptoms, what details of the case lead you to suspect these causes?
- How do the results of Robert and Siri's tests affect your differential?

Session 3

Student teams will work to develop a comprehensive assessment and plan based on the diagnosis determined in session 3 using the SOAP format, to be turned in to the facilitator at the end of the session.

Learning Objectives

- Recognize the importance and benefit of working with an interprofessional team to effectively determine patient diagnosis and treatment.
- Develop a comprehensive plan to address both the human and canine patient concerns using the SOAP format.

Discussion Topics/Questions

- Reflecting on your experience of working with Robert and Siri in this case, what stands out? Why is that a memorable experience?
- How does this case reflect the principles of the One Health Initiative?
- What have you learned from this case that will assist you in the care of future patients?