The New AAVMC Comparative Data Report (CDR):

*Streamlined and Focused*

**The Age of “Big Data”**

We live in the era of “big data.” Data helps us make better decisions, predict trends, and better understand the world around us. Remarkable advancements in everything from meteorology to genomics can all be traced to increased computational horsepower.

But the explosion in data also has costs and consequences. It takes time and money to gather, curate and apply data in a manner that is useful and cost-effective for organizations.

Today, acquiring and diffusing essential information with precision and confidence is key. That has been a goal of the AAVMC since its origins, and such is the rationale for undertaking the most sweeping renovation of the AAVMC’s annual “Comparative Data Report” (CDR) in recent years.

**A Core Membership Benefit**

The Comparative Data Report (CDR) is a core AAVMC membership benefit that provides our members with timely, carefully collected and curated data that helps them operate more efficiently and improve planning. The CDR also helps our members and partner organizations in the profession of veterinary medicine better understand the needs, contributions and trends in academic veterinary medicine.

### The New CDR:

- Shrinks data collection demands and streamlines the report to focus on data more likely to be used on an ongoing basis
- Creates opportunities for adding additional datasets of historic or emerging interest
- Expands the survey to include AAVMC international member institutions
- Improves data collection regarding educational costs and student debt
- Tailors data collection to other data collection needs, such as those associated with accreditation reports
- Collects financial data that recognizes complexity and variability of college budgets in a way that is well-suited for comparison
The CDR, which contains information going back to 1967, annually gathers, organizes and presents detailed information regarding academic, research, and clinical programs, as well as organizational funding and structure at our member institutions.

**Responding to Member Needs**

Modern academic veterinary medicine operates in a dynamic environment. Things change fast in a medical discipline growing in size and scope every day as a result of technological change, discovery, and societal need. Economic factors continue to affect our institutions and our graduates in profession-shaping ways. New questions surface all the time that merit elucidation.

However, not everything can be addressed. We acknowledge that asking our members to track and respond to data requests can be time-consuming and burdensome. Plus, culling through the CDR’s many data points can present challenges in interpretation and understanding for the report’s readers and recipients.

With that in mind, early in 2013, the AAVMC Data Committee undertook an examination of the CDR designed to assess the nature and utility of each existing data point. The process also sought to eliminate extraneous effort and identify new data collection needs.

The overarching goal was to make the product more useful and the process less demanding for our members.

**A Grassroots Process**

From the inception, the Data Committee actively worked to engage members at the grassroots level with the process. The committee gathered input from member institutions and other AAVMC committees through a series of conferences and surveys.

After careful evaluation and analysis, the committee decided to renovate and streamline the report by aggregating, combining, updating and eliminating data fields.

It is impossible to refine a project as complex as the CDR in a way that is 100% compliant with every member need. Invariably, some will regret the elimination of a former data point. One of the main benefits of streamlining the report is that it will enable the CDR to examine former and emerging data points on an “ad hoc” basis about every three years.

**The Highlights of the New CDR**

Instead of 77 tables compiled through 22 surveys, the CDR now contains 19 tables, all deemed the most relevant and useful for member institutions. The result is a more condensed report
that contains the most essential information required by our members. It also adds new information designed to add value for our member institutions.

The new version of the CDR creates a more timely and useful product while reducing the workload for our member institutions. However, producing the CDR remains an iterative process that will continue to evolve into a data collection and analysis instrument more fully compatible with the data collection needs of the American Veterinary Medical Association’s Council on Education.

Details of the New CDR Report

Summary of New Comparative Data Report Changes

Faculty-Related Data

The survey will continue to collect data for faculty at each institution by both FTE and headcount. Major changes to this data subset include the aggregation of tenure-track faculty categories, the aggregation of race and ethnicity faculty data and the inclusion of underrepresented professional staff. More detailed faculty data is expected to be collected at less frequent intervals in order to periodically enhance the faculty data set. The resulting changes represent a significant streamlining of this faculty data.

Student-Related Data

Reported DVM enrollment will show residents and non-residents broken down by class year, gender, and racial and ethnic group.

The new report will also include the total number of DVM students who receive at least their clinical education at a college other than their home institution. The CDR will continue to report specific data on the first year class including their geographic origin, pre-vet GPA, age, and GRE scores, which will now be reported as percentiles to improve comparability. For the first time, the CDR will also now include total applicant numbers for each institution.

The report will continue to include institutional attrition data by class year. This data will now include figures for the total number of students graduating on schedule for the most recent graduating class.

Finally, a revised section on graduate students will show the number of students pursuing various graduate programs, with a breakdown of DVM students in dual-degree programs. DVM-MPH programs have been further segmented from master’s degree programs and data will include postdoctoral associates.
Financial Data

The CDR’s financial data sets have undergone substantial revision. Tuition and fee data will now be collected for each academic year. Institutions will also indicate if and when DVM students are able to qualify for resident tuition and fee rates. Data on additional attendance costs, such as housing and transportation, will now be aggregated to facilitate the calculation of the total cost of attendance of the DVM professional program. The report will continue to capture institutionally reported student debt; this data will be enhanced by the inclusion of the minimum, median and maximum graduating debt load figures for each institution.

The report will continue to provide salary data for various faculty ranks as well as data related to research activities at each college.

College budget data sets have been revised to focus on key data such as direct state appropriations, direct tuition income, and university allocation. The changes are designed to improve reporting flexibility and comparability across institutions.

Finally, college caseload data has been aggregated; this data now will feature more tailored reporting for hospital, ambulatory and satellite cases.