

# Spectrum of Care and Veterinary Education Hot Topics Write-Ups



*Within each institution, there may be individuals who are on board with the proposed spectrum of care (SOC) curricular changes, while others may need some convincing. Aligning your change vision to important institution and veterinary education program goals can help interested parties see the added value of the proposed curricular changes.*

*In this section, you will find compelling arguments you can make to your institutional administration, program colleagues and leaders, and students about the connections between SOC preparation and practice and hot topics within veterinary education and medicine.*

## Featured Resources

### **Supporting the financial health of veterinary practices via spectrum of care preparation and practice**

By Joyce Carnevale, Kristin Jankowski, and Michelle Wisecup

### **Meeting access, belonging, and community-building goals via spectrum of care preparation and practice**

By Lauren A. Bernstein and Elizabeth E. Alvarez

### **Promoting veterinarian well-being via spectrum of care preparation and practice**

By Elizabeth E. Alvarez and India F. Lane

### **Enhancing recruitment and retention via spectrum of care preparation and practice**

By India F. Lane and Sheena M. Warman

### **Meeting United Nations Sustainable Development Goals via spectrum of care preparation and practice**

By Joyce Carnevale and Kristin Jankowski

# Supporting the Financial Health of Veterinary Practices via Spectrum of Care Preparation & Practice



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## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. New graduates must adjust their care plans to meet client expectations and available resources.
2. Graduates need to balance the financial implications of their recommendations with both the practice's profitability and their own income.
3. Combining business education, spectrum of care (SOC) training, and effective mentorship helps graduates transition smoothly into practice.
4. Educating students on key performance indicators and diverse payment options enhances their understanding of practice management, contributing to improved cash flow, client compliance, and overall practice profitability.

New graduates entering private practice must quickly learn to adapt their diagnostic and treatment recommendations to meet the expectations and available resources of clients. For common problems such as canine pruritus and pyoderma secondary to atopy, practitioners may need to create multiple plans that differ from what they perceive as ideal care to meet the needs of individual clients and patients. New graduates must also consider how their recommendations affect the financial well-being and profitability of the practice as well as their own financial well-being, since their income may be tied to their productivity. A combination of basic business instruction and SOC training in veterinary school and effective mentorship during initial employment will help new graduates navigate this transition.

Educating students on factors that contribute to the financial viability of a practice is essential for careers in general practice, specialty practice, or the nonprofit sector. Creating confidence and competence in students to practice across the spectrum of care will contribute to any practice's financial health. Graduates

who are trained to provide relationship-centered client care with evidence-based clinical options and knowledgeable about using diverse payment options can positively affect the practice's financial health.

Graduates who can confidently engage in discussions with practice owners about key performance indicators (KPIs) are better prepared to identify financially viable practices that fit with their professional identity and goals, contributing to the long-term financial success of the practice. A clear understanding of the impact on practice financial health of practicing along the spectrum of care is aligned with American Veterinary Medical Council on Education standards, the AAVMC Competency-Based Veterinary Education Framework, and the AAVMC SOC Education Model subcompetencies.

KPIs are specific and measurable data points related to practice performance (Nelson, 2021; Slinger, 2023). For example, the cost of necessary goods is a factor that affects practice profitability. Indicators such as the number of new clients and patients who are overdue on services are related to practice growth and could be used to create goals and monitor the implementation of strategic growth plans. KPI goals should (1) align with the practice's mission, vision, and purpose; and (2) provide information about where the practice fits into the market that it serves. Educating students on KPIs and how SOC options can affect them helps students understand vital practice management concepts.

Offering SOC options contributes to long-term practice financial viability by serving diverse clientele with options that meet client financial and personal expectations. Recent practice management trends show that clients are delaying veterinary visits due to cost following the COVID-19 pandemic (Nolen, 2023). A focus on relationship-centered care with SOC options could dramatically improve client visits and compliance, contributing to practice and personal financial health.

Providing information on sustainable payment plans other than cash or credit that contribute to practice financial health is an important piece in educating students. Billing strategies such as payment plans may increase cash flow but could be associated with risks such as labor costs (Neill et al., 2023). Outsourcing

the management of payment plans to a third party may decrease those risks. In 2022, a study evaluated the outcomes for veterinary clinics working with a private company that manages client payment plans. The study demonstrated positive financial outcomes for a diverse group of for-profit and nonprofit practices (Cammissa & Hill, 2022). Understanding diverse payment options can lead to improved cash flow, decreased discounts on services, growth of new clients, and decreased accounts receivable, leading to improved profitability of the practice. Other strategies for financially friendly approaches to offering veterinary care can be found in the Open Door Glossary at Open Door Veterinary Collective (Open Door Veterinary Collective, 2024).

Many valuable opportunities exist across the veterinary curriculum to provide students with SOC knowledge and skills that lead to personal and professional success. Education empowers graduates to manage their personal financial health and critically evaluate opportunities as associates or owners. Training allows students to identify the best practice that meets their professional expectations and needs, and contributes to practice viability, which can benefit the profession holistically.

## RECOMMENDED CITATION

Carnevale, J., Jankowski, K., & Wisecup, M. (2025). Supporting the financial health of veterinary practices via spectrum of care preparation and practice. In AAVMC Spectrum of Care Initiative Task Force, H. N. Fedesco, & J. E. Brodsky (Eds.), *Enhancing spectrum of care preparation in veterinary education programs: An implementation strategies guide* (pp. 33–34). American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges. <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/AHWQE>

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# Meeting Access, Belonging, and Community-Building Goals via Spectrum of Care Preparation & Practice



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## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Opportunities still exist to improve access, belonging, and community-building in veterinary medicine, despite progress made in recent years.
2. People face personal and systemic barriers to veterinary services, and spectrum of care (SOC) is a useful framework for delivering equitable care.
3. Personal belief systems and institutional norms affect clinical decision-making and perspectives on veterinary medicine, which can influence care delivery, access, and the human–animal bond.
4. Preparing students to practice along a spectrum of care produces graduates who understand the importance of access, belonging, and community-building.

### Opportunities still exist to improve access, belonging, and community-building in veterinary medicine, despite progress made in recent years.

People of all ages, races, classes, gender and sexual identities, ability status, and family structures share their lives with companion animals. Among these psychological, physical, and social differences are diverse veterinary needs, abilities, and preferences for care. Despite the diversity of pet owners, veterinary medicine continues to be one of the most homogenous professions in the country; approximately 90% of the profession is White (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023) and the majority of U.S. veterinary schools are predominantly White institutions with curricula centered on Western medicine. In recent years, veterinary education programs have taken significant steps to understand, value, and increase diversity among veterinary students through improved pre-veterinary school recruitment strategies and revised admissions criteria. Consider reviewing your veterinary program's progress and benchmarks in this area. You can also learn more about the American Veterinary Medical

Association's (AVMA) efforts here: <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/diversity-and-inclusion-veterinary-medicine>

Despite these efforts to make practice more equitable, the veterinary curriculum still emphasizes an inherently inequitable “gold standard” of medicine, which is not accessible, affordable, or preferable for every pet owner (Englar, 2023a).

### People face personal and systemic barriers to veterinary services; SOC is a useful framework for delivering equitable care.

Veterinarians frequently provide multiple care plan options for clients, especially when faced with financial limitations. In recent years, recognition has grown of the additional personal and systemic challenges that affect clients' access to veterinary services for their pets, such as transportation challenges, cultural and language differences, and lack of awareness about the importance of routine veterinary care (Brown et al., 2021; LaVallee et al., 2017). The socioeconomic and policy landscapes within which humans and their animals exist affect not only the health of animals and people (McDowall et al., 2023), but also the trust between veterinary professionals and clients (LaVallee et al., 2017).

For example, consider a pet owner who lives in a highly polluted urban neighborhood with poor air quality—the result of city policies that permitted two factories to be built in this low-income area. Both the pet owner and the pet might experience higher rates of cardiovascular or respiratory disease than if they lived in a less polluted neighborhood. Now consider where the closest veterinarian is. If the veterinarian is outside of this community, they might not understand the systemic-level impact (i.e., air quality due to city policy) on the pet's health. They might not know to ask questions about the pet's overall living environment and may propose a treatment plan that inadequately addresses the pet's needs. If this treatment plan fails, that may sow distrust between the pet owner and the veterinarian. SOC offers a useful framework for delivering equitable care through a relational approach with open communication about client barriers to and goals for care, patient-specific considerations, and the veterinarian's own abilities or limitations (Englar, 2023b).

## Personal belief systems and institutional norms affect our clinical decision-making and perspectives on veterinary medicine, which can influence care delivery, access, and the human–animal bond.

To understand where gaps in access arise at a clinic level and why SOC closes those gaps, we must understand the social influences and cumulative life experiences that create our implicit biases and personal ethics and belief systems. These biases may shape clinical decision-making and perspectives. Milstein et al. describe examples in human medicine in which “Black and Hispanic/Latino patients presenting to the emergency room are less likely to receive analgesia compared to White patients, despite no difference in patient pain level or physicians’ ability to assess pain” (2022, p. 1145). Such disparities may also occur in veterinary medicine. Practicing along a spectrum of care requires a foundation of cultural humility and structural competency training. Cultural humility involves lifelong self-reflection to identify biased thoughts and behaviors (Alvarez et al., 2020). This foundation enables students to “think about how social biases, stigma, internalized racism, and power dynamics shape perceptions of health and disease” (Milstein et al., 2022, p. 1146).

## Preparing students to practice along a spectrum of care produces graduates who understand the importance of access, belonging, and community-building.

SOC and access, belonging, and community-building practices cannot be mutually exclusive. Preparing students to practice along a spectrum of care requires them to simultaneously evaluate themselves and the dominant cultural values reinforced by their academic institutions. Critical to providing equitable access to veterinary care is creating inclusive environments where multiple perspectives and knowledge systems are taught, valued, and practiced. This process can include veterinary curricular changes such as teaching alternative options to the “gold standard” (i.e., SOC; Brown et al., 2021) and incorporating client knowledge, community wisdom, and traditional cultural teachings into treatment plans.

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# Promoting Veterinarian Well-Being via Spectrum of Care Preparation & Practice



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## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Moral distress can occur when veterinarians wish to provide care for animals but are unable to because clients cannot afford the cost of care; it is associated with negative mental health outcomes, including professional dissatisfaction, depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and suicidality.
2. In veterinary curricula and academic veterinary centers where technologically and financially intensive models of practice predominate, misperceptions may develop as students transition into general practice. They may perceive that they are failing as doctors if they cannot provide the advanced care they were taught, leading to moral distress.
3. Embracing cultural humility and using spectrum of care (SOC) strategies that improve access to care for more patients could decrease burnout, buffer against professional stressors, and increase job satisfaction.

Many factors affect veterinarians' well-being as they seek to provide the most appropriate care for their patients. Veterinarians encounter ethical decisions and experiences that challenge core values as they negotiate the needs of multiple interested parties in animal care (Batchelor et al., 2012). *Moral distress* can be defined as the powerlessness, anger, and guilt that healthcare professionals experience when they must act professionally in a way that is misaligned with their own values or beliefs (Blackwell & O'Reilly, 2023; Dodek et al., 2016; Jameton, 2017). Moral distress can occur when veterinarians wish to provide care for animals but are unable to because clients cannot afford care (Ashall, 2023; Blackwell & O'Reilly, 2023; Kipperman et al., 2017). These instances of financial veterinary ethical dilemmas are at the top of the list of mental stressors for care providers (Kogan et al., 2023; Moses et al., 2018). Persistent moral distress has been related to negative mental health outcomes, including professional dissatisfaction, depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and suicidality (Blackwell & O'Reilly, 2023; Kogan et al., 2023; Williamson et al., 2023). Because financial or other

limitations of animal owners can negatively affect veterinarians' ability to practice medicine at a level consistent with their ethics and standards, the critical financial aspects of practice must be considered in veterinary training (Kogan et al., 2023).

Client economic limitations are an important cause of professional career dissatisfaction and burnout for veterinarians. A survey of over 1,000 small animal practitioners in the United States and Canada found that 57% of veterinarians believe owners' economic limitations affect the care that they are able to provide at least once per day (Kipperman et al., 2017). In a 2022 Veterinary Information Network survey, close to 2,000 veterinarians were asked how they felt about fewer clients being able to afford recommended care; 84% of respondents reported they were either distressed or extremely distressed (Kogan et al., 2023). Besides lack of financial resources, additional client factors that affect care options include the client's unique goals, values, expectations, beliefs, and abilities. As students transition into general practice, they may perceive that they are failing as doctors if they cannot consistently provide the advanced level of care they were taught. This misperception can damage new graduates' well-being as they navigate the realities of general practice, and this moral distress can be associated with decreased job satisfaction.

Students develop idealized professional identities and goals in training; these goals may misalign with their workplace experience (e.g., when a caregiver tries to model the skills and actions of a veterinary specialist while working in general practice) in a way that can harm their emotional well-being and career satisfaction (Armitage-Chan, 2020; Armitage-Chan et al., 2018). This dissatisfaction may contribute to high levels of psychological distress and burnout among veterinarians, including an increased risk of suicide (da Silva et al., 2023; Elkins et al., 1988; Strand et al., 2005; Volk, 2018).

Self-care is crucial for the well-being of future veterinarians, but mental well-being education in veterinary curricula remains limited (Liu et al., 2020). While the veterinary profession has begun to address the importance of mental health—with resources pertaining to burnout, compassion fatigue, and resilience becoming more common—less attention has been given to moral distress and its potential impact on psychological

well-being (Kogan et al., 2023). The strategy of preparing graduates to practice along a spectrum of care may improve veterinarian well-being in a variety of ways.

Recent studies have suggested that providing care to animals who otherwise would not receive it, as well as building relationships with team members and the broader community, is beneficial (Powell et al., 2021). Such positive feelings of meaningful work can be protective against burnout. By teaching students that there are multiple appropriate answers to a problem, and that the best course of action depends on the unique circumstances of each case, we can develop students' resilience as they navigate the many contextual challenges associated with providing care in general practice. Being able to offer a range of care options can also help veterinarians treat more patients, which may affect the rate of economic euthanasia and address issues surrounding access to care, thus improving veterinarian mental health.

Institutions should make time for ethical dilemma discussions along with conventional training to prepare veterinarians for circumstances in which they may not be able to provide "gold standard" care, and as a protective measure against moral distress (Ashall, 2021; Williamson et al., 2021). Offering ways to improve access to care and giving permission to offer a spectrum of care are two ways that hospitals can mitigate the negative impact of owners' financial limitations on animal medical care (Brown et al., 2021; Stull et al., 2018). Finally, educators should work to build cultural humility in our students—the ability to consider others' lived experiences and where all clients are coming from. This may help our future veterinarians embark on potentially stressful situations with empathy, curiosity, and a willingness to find solutions, rather than frustration and anger (Alvarez et al., 2020). Using SOC strategies to improve access to care for more patients can decrease burnout, buffer against professional stressors, and increase job satisfaction (Hoffman et al., 2021; Kipperman et al., 2017; Powell et al., 2021).

## RECOMMENDED CITATION

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# Enhancing Recruitment and Retention via Spectrum of Care Preparation & Practice



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## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Spectrum of care (SOC) preparation will affect retention of professionals across the veterinary workforce by increasing confidence, financial competence, and well-being related to dealing with client, veterinarian, and practice factors that influence veterinary care options.
2. Individuals leave the veterinary profession, including in academic institutions, for many reasons, not just for better compensation. Workload, departmental culture, organizational bureaucracy, and lack of perceived support or reward also discourage veterinarians from academic careers. SOC education offers an opportunity for the institution to highlight and fulfill its commitment to the community and reignite an overarching sense of purpose. Uncovering and allaying fears about primary and contextualized care can reduce conflict and improve morale, communication, and well-being within departments and clinical services.
3. With additional emphasis on SOC education, academic faculty and staff, as well as employers and referring veterinarians, will be more satisfied with overall hospital practices, dialog regarding patient care options, and the range of treatments afforded to a variety of clients.

Recruitment and retention of individuals in the veterinary workforce has been challenging, with widespread shortages across the profession, especially in academic settings, the veterinary technician workforce, and rural practices. An emphasis on SOC education will prepare veterinary graduates and technicians to better serve clients and communities with confidence and with appropriate economic management. The impact of SOC preparation and practice on well-being should reduce burnout and promote longevity in the profession (see Alvarez & Lane, 2025). Hopefully, general practice and rural veterinary practice careers will be perceived and experienced as more attractive and rewarding.

In academic veterinary medical centers, difficulties in recruiting and retaining faculty have been recognized for some time, especially for certain clinical specialty areas (Adams et al., 2005; Grauer, 2005; Hubbell et al., 2006; Jelinski & Silver, 2015). The concern has only grown in recent years as the number of veterinary schools and veterinary students increase (Lairmore et al., 2024). Growth in compensation and opportunities outside academia provides competition for talented veterinary graduates, graduate students, and house officers (Lairmore et al., 2024).

Competition is fierce for trainees or experienced faculty to fill critical roles in a veterinary program. Challenges include compensation, which can be constrained by limited resources; other factors playing a role in recruitment and retention may be more amenable to change. In addition to salary and benefits, reasons specialists leave veterinary academia include geographic location, family concerns, perceptions of work–life balance, and departmental culture (Furr, 2018; Furr, 2020; Jelinski & Silver, 2015). Notably, most of these individuals do not become disenchanted with academia because of the teaching or clinical practice. Their decisions are influenced by bureaucracy, perceived lack of support and reward for clinical work, and, for some, the expectations for research productivity and difficult steps to promotion or tenure (Furr, 2018).

How could SOC preparation positively affect the academic profession, especially clinical faculty recruitment and retention? While effects are theoretical at this stage, incorporating and supporting SOC preparation could affect morale, climate, and well-being across an institution. A robust curriculum and affiliated SOC practice opportunities could:

- Provide opportunities to hire additional faculty members who can contribute to the curricular, governance, and other program needs of the program in addition to providing SOC content or clinical experiences.
- Clarify roles of primary care and advanced care throughout the curriculum, reducing perceived conflicts among faculty and staff and reducing the expectations for individual educators to focus on both.
- Complement specialty care services and improve communication among specialists and primary care

clinicians to benefit the hospital environment as well as curricular content.

- Stimulate faculty professional development in instruction, clinical teaching, advanced communication skills, practice management, and leadership, which are considered attractive topics for faculty needs (Haden et al., 2010).
- Serve new populations and help the program meet multiple missions, leading to increased sense of purpose and community for all; SOC education and experiences could help demonstrate leadership's commitment to the clinical and outreach missions of the institution.
- Provide another pathway and caseload for discovery and scholarship for primary care or practitioner instructors, enhancing opportunities for promotion and reward.
- Provide an opportunity for exposure and participation of faculty, staff, and students in a workspace and workload that resembles general practice; faculty specialists could enjoy the opportunity to spend some of their clinical effort in this setting and gain more flexibility and work-life balance.

With these expected benefits, a positive effect on external key players is also likely, which can enhance student recruitment. As the program's SOC preparation efforts improve well-being, learning climate, and quality of education, student and employer satisfaction should increase. Students and graduates will feel more prepared for general practice dilemmas and more confident in SOC options. Employers will hire graduates ready to employ a variety of treatments in contextualized veterinarian-client-patient relationships. Referring veterinarians will feel more confident that a range of acceptable options may be considered and offered without judgment in a contextualized care approach, and will feel more valued as partners in patient care. All these outcomes will enhance the program's educational reputation and foster support for programs.

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# Meeting United Nations Sustainable Development Goals via Spectrum of Care Preparation & Practice



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## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. The United Nations adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, aiming to achieve global peace and prosperity.
2. Veterinary medicine plays a crucial role in global health through the One Health approach, which recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health.
3. Spectrum of care (SOC) practice in veterinary medicine aligns with several UNSDGs by providing tailored care across various client–patient circumstances and addressing health inequalities. Training should include understanding client and patient barriers, promoting relationship-centered care, and using evidence-based medicine.
4. Veterinary education programs can contribute to achieving the SDGs by expanding human capital, conducting research, and implementing the agenda through service-learning activities and curriculum changes that incorporate SOC concepts.

In 2015, all United Nations member states adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Division for Sustainable Development Goals, n.d.), which outlines 17 goals leading to global peace and prosperity. These broad goals have health and health equity at their core, and veterinary medicine is a crucial component of global health as defined by the One Health paradigm. One Health is defined as “an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals and ecosystems. It recognizes that the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants, and the wider environment (including ecosystems) are closely linked and interdependent” (“Tripartite and UNEP,” 2021).

While many nations have systems in place to more equitably provide healthcare to those experiencing financial or other barriers to care, a similar structure or training system does not currently exist in veterinary medicine. SOC practice acknowledges the importance of delivering care across a range of client–patient circumstances. Incorporating SOC pedagogy takes steps towards UNSDGs 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), 4 (Quality Education), and 10 (Reduced Inequalities). SOC is defined as “providing a continuum of acceptable care that considers available evidence-based medicine while remaining responsive to client expectations and financial limitations” (Fingland et al., 2021, p. 464). A key aspect of SOC practice is tailoring care based on a range of contextual factors that are often unique to each individual case and the client, patient, and veterinarian involved in it (Stull et al., 2018).

The veterinary community can contribute to meeting several of the UNSDGs, but only if we begin to educate professionals on how to provide care across a spectrum and acknowledge that the social determinants of human health are connected to the welfare of companion animals. Training and experience in SOC will allow veterinary professionals to develop care plans across a wider range of circumstances and encourage a broader understanding of the interconnectivity of human and animal health. SOC practice is improved when professionals of veterinary medicine, social work, and public policy work together on solutions. These collaborations can inspire new ways to solve global problems, including gaining new sources of shared funding, developing more equitable healthcare policies, and improving academic program development, thus working towards UNSDGs 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

The Sustainable Development Goals Fund identified three primary roles of academia in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Expanding Human Capital, Research, and Implementing the Agenda (Duran, n.d.). While veterinary education programs currently contribute to these three areas in diverse ways, the addition of clear guidelines around SOC practice and education will help achieve these goals more broadly. The United Nations Academic Impact website offers

guidelines and training research opportunities, and showcases best practices from universities around the world (Duran, n.d.).

Opportunities for veterinary educators, researchers, and administrators to create programs incorporating SOC concepts are diverse, and doing so can contribute to the overall goal of meeting UNSDGs. Examples of activities in each of the three primary roles of academia are discussed below. Administrators, faculty, and students are encouraged to work together to explore ways in which each individual program can contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## Expanding Human Capital

One fundamental pillar of creating SOC options is a clear understanding of client and patient capacities, expectations, and barriers (Fingland et al., 2021; Stull et al., 2018; Warman et al., 2023). Identifying these factors and training veterinarians to develop management plans for individual animals as well as animal populations support several of the UNSDGs, primarily Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) and Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities). Effective training of veterinary students or retraining graduates could support better care in underserved areas, including rural and urban domestic or international areas.

## Research

Evidence-based medicine is another fundamental pillar of creating SOC options. Many veterinary health problems have not been the subject of adequate research to identify effective diagnostic and treatment plans along a spectrum of care options. New and recent practitioners often rely on educational material and clinical experiences presented by veterinary specialists; these materials often focus on approaches that are expensive and rely on advanced technologies. Once in practice serving a more diverse client population and having access to a broad range of technology, a clinician should adapt diagnostic and treatment protocols to meet the needs of clients and patients. Research supporting evidence-based medicine for common medical problems would support the implementation of SOC approaches to problems.

Research is also needed to understand what SOC options are needed to improve the health and well-being of people in a community. One Health topics such as zoonotic diseases are well understood; however, others—such as the importance of the human–animal bond to people’s mental and physical well-being, or the relationship between access to veterinary care and human healthcare—remain less clear. Addressing these research opportunities can support the UNSDGs.

## Implementing the Agenda

Within many veterinary education programs, students have diverse opportunities to serve at-risk communities through a variety of formal and informal service-based learning courses and noncredit events. Student activities most commonly focus on delivering SOC services, including community wellness clinics, elective spay and neuter procedures, and limited care for common first-opinion cases. Events occur in both domestic and international locations. These events support UNSDGs 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

To strengthen these experiences, veterinary education programs could consider associating service-learning activities with course credit and specific learning outcomes. For example, an elective online asynchronous course combined with experiential opportunities could be incorporated into the curriculum. Credit could be assigned based on hours engaged in various service projects. Online module learning objectives could focus on options across a spectrum of care, identifying community needs, cultural competency, and postgraduate activities.

Overall, SOC concepts are integral to the mission of veterinary education programs to meet the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development agenda. The United Nations Academic Impact page provides a wealth of information for academics, and administrators of veterinary education programs have many opportunities to contribute to goals on many distinct levels (Duran, n.d.).

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