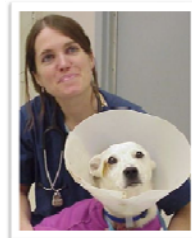


## The Five Freedoms and Shelter Wellness

---

### The Association of Shelter Veterinarians Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters

**Miranda Spindel, DVM, MS**  
**Task Force Member**  
**Senior Director, Shelter Medicine, ASPCA**



*Association of Shelter Veterinarians*

## Today's Presentation

---

- Overview
- The Five Freedoms & Medical Health Section
- Discussion of typical shelter challenges
- How standards can help
- Translating a document into everyday actions



*Association of Shelter Veterinarians*

## Medical Health and Physical Well-Being

pp 24-31

- Veterinary relationship & recordkeeping
- Considerations on Intake
- Vaccinations
- Emergency medical care
- Pain management
- Parasite control
- Monitoring and daily rounds
- Nutrition
- Population well-being
- Response to disease or illness
- Medical treatment of shelter animals



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## The Five Freedoms

1. **Freedom from Hunger and Thirst** - by ready access to fresh water and diet to maintain health and vigor.
2. **Freedom from Discomfort** - by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
3. **Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease** - by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
4. **Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour** - by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
5. **Freedom from Fear and Distress** - by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## What Are the Challenges?

---

- 4-6 million dogs and cats enter shelters/yr
- 4000-6000 animal shelters (?) exist in the US
- Many types of shelters (public, private, rescue)
- No umbrella organization
- Little oversight or regulation
- Unknown how many veterinarians are employed by shelters
- Huge differences in mission, treatment, budget



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## What Are the Challenges?

---

- Shelter operations are an interwoven puzzle
  - Population Management
  - Wellness Protocols
  - Facilities
  - Recognition and Reporting of Health Concerns
  - Veterinary Treatment Protocols
  - Spay/Neuter
  - Welfare Issues
- Veterinarians should be integrally involved



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Shelter Veterinary Relationship

---

- **Shelter medical programs must include veterinary supervision**
  - A formal relationship with a veterinarian should be in place
  - Develop all health care practices and protocols in consultation with a veterinarian
  - Ideally a shelter experienced veterinarian
  - Written standard operating procedures (SOPs) in keeping with professionally accepted standards



Association of Shelter Veterinarians



Show me the standards!!!!

### Poll Question 1:

- a) My shelter has a formal veterinary relationship.
- b) My shelter does not have a formal veterinary relationship.
- c) I am not affiliated with an animal shelter.



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

# Shelter Medical Records

- Accurate medical records are essential
- Medical and behavioral histories should be taken (when possible)
- Medical care must be documented
- Many software programs make this easy



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

Animal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 2008  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_ F 35 M 16 Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Temp: \_\_\_\_\_ Re-check temp: \_\_\_\_\_  
Examined by:  Staff  Veterinarian  Veterinary Student  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Attitude  Normal/Alert  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
2. Hydration  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
3. Coat and Skin  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
4. Eyes  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
5. Ears  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
6. Nose and Throat  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
7. Mouth, teeth, & gum:  Normal  Tarter  Mild  Mod  Severe  Gingivitis  Mild  Mod  Severe  
Mucous membranes color:  Pink  Pigmented  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
8. Legs & Paws:  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_

9. Weight: BCS \_\_\_\_\_, 9 lbs  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
10. Heart Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ bpm  Normal  Slow  Fast  Murmur Grade ( /NI) \_\_\_\_\_  
11. Lungs: resp rate \_\_\_\_\_  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
12. Abdomen  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
13. Gastrointestinal system  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
14. Urogenital system  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
15. Lymph Nodes:  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
16. Nervous system  Normal  Other \_\_\_\_\_

De-Wormed with: \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional de-worming (product, dose, date): \_\_\_\_\_

Lab Work:  Fecal Flotation \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fecal test \_\_\_\_\_  
 FIV test \_\_\_\_\_  
 Heartworm test / preventative advised when adopted \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fecal advised when adopted \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment: \_\_\_\_\_  
Treatment and Recommendations: \_\_\_\_\_

Vaccines given:  
Cat:  FVRCP date \_\_\_\_\_ Booster date(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rabies date \_\_\_\_\_ Booster date (s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other date \_\_\_\_\_ Booster date(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Dog:  DA,PP date \_\_\_\_\_ Booster Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bordetella date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other date \_\_\_\_\_ Booster date(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rabies date \_\_\_\_\_ Booster date (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Microchip Scan:  Implanted: \_\_\_\_\_

Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## FREEDOM FROM DISCOMFORT

---

- *by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area*



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## What Are the Challenges?

---

Problems must be recognized



Environment must exist



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Considerations on Intake

---

- **Each animal should receive a health evaluation at intake and regularly thereafter**
  - Checks for signs of infectious disease
  - Checks for problems requiring immediate attention
  - Exams should be documented in medical record
  - Allow shelter acquired problems to be distinguished from pre-existing conditions



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Monitoring and Daily Rounds

---

- **Rounds must be conducted at least once every 24 hours by a trained individual**
  - Food and water consumption
  - Urination and defecation
  - Attitude
  - Ambulation
  - Illness
  - Other problems
  - Group housed animals at feeding time
- If in care > 1 month, weight and BCS monthly
- Veterinary exams biannually
- Geriatric, ill, debilitated on a case basis



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## How Can Standards Help?



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Show Me the Standards!

**Doggy Wellness Hour**

*When is it?*  
The Kennels will be closed for Doggy Wellness Hour from 2 p.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Friday. Feel free to check out the cats during this time.

*What is it?*  
Doggy Wellness Hour is a time for all of the dogs to get some extra attention from our Officers and Volunteers. Each dog will be fed and monitored, ensuring they are eating the required amount of food and are fed at a consistent time each day. This also gives us an opportunity to monitor the dogs health, temperament and overall well-being.



*“Just wanted to share some exciting news. Today is the launch of our Doggy Wellness hour...Take a look at the brochure we have posted on our website which outlines it in brief for people to see... This is a way we hope to be able to accommodate our daily rounds as well as monitor all of our dogs during feeding time. We have a consistent feeding time every day now, so we will let you know how it works out.”*



Association of Shelter Veterinarians



## Show Me the Standards!

---

### Doggy Wellness Hour Results

- No negative comments from public so far
- Reduced medical problems and costs
- Reduced staff stress and increased opportunity for kindness
- Positive publicity for shelter
- Combined with other efforts, animals moving faster and live release rate increased



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## FREEDOM FROM HUNGER AND THIRST

---

- *by ready access to fresh water and diet to maintain health and vigor*



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## What Are the Challenges?

---

- Shelters receive all:
  - Ages
  - Species
  - Sizes
  - Life stages
  - Physical health states
  - Activity levels



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## What Are the Challenges?

---

**Old supplies and insufficient food storage areas are challenges**

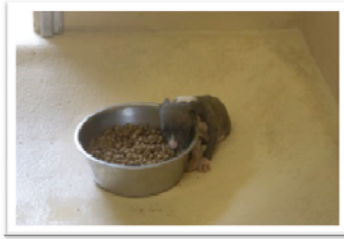


Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## What Are the Challenges?

---

Good intentions are not enough



Shelters often lack training, protocols, and monitoring



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## What Are the Challenges?

---



***“At least 3 dogs were observed to be completely unable to eat because they were housed with other dogs that were defending the food, either through overt or subtle aggression.”***

*– Shelter evaluation report*

Overcrowding and understaffing



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Nutrition

---

- **Fresh clean water and proper food are basic requirements**
  - Clean water accessible at all times
  - Food that is consistent with nutritional needs and health status
  - Food and water in appropriate dishes
  - Healthy adults dogs and cats fed at least once per day
  - Healthy puppies and kittens fed small amounts



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Nutrition

---

- **Food intake must be monitored daily**
  - Veterinary evaluation/treatment of animals displaying inappetance or wt gain/loss
  - Separate housing or feeding of animals who guard food or prevent access by cage mates
  - Veterinary input when developing a feeding protocol for a population of animals



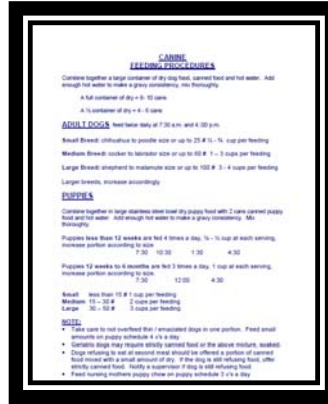
Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Show Me the Standards!

- Written feeding protocol

***“Can we stop feeding the puppies their mid-day meal? They’re fat and robust now.”***

***“they aren’t as crazy for food during their behavior evaluation.”***



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## FREEDOM FROM PAIN, INJURY, DISEASE

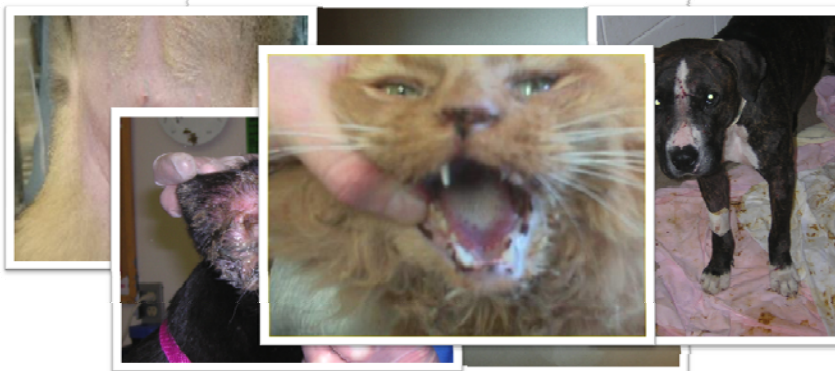
- *by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment*



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Acute & Chronic Pain in the Shelter

---



**What Are the Challenges?**



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Assessing Pain *IS* a Challenge!

---

***“A complex phenomenon involving pathophysiological and psychological components that are frequently difficult to recognize in animals. “(ACVA 2006)***

***“Recognizing and alleviating pain in a wide variety of species can be difficult and complex”***

***“Although there are multiple scales and scoring systems...there is no accepted gold standard system for assessing pain in animals.”***



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## What Are the Challenges?

- Many pain medications are controlled or have side effects
- Shelter drug access may be limited
- Many shelters receive animals after hours when veterinarian not present



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Pain Management

It is **EVERY** shelter's responsibility!

**Pain must be recognized and treated to alleviate suffering.  
Failure to provide treatment for pain is unacceptable**

**Assume that if a procedure is painful in human beings than it must be also be painful in animals."**

**When adequate pain relief cannot be provided, transfer to a facility that can meet the animal's needs or humane euthanasia must be provided**



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Emergency Medical Care

---

- **An emergency medical plan must be in place**
  - Appropriate and timely veterinary medical care
  - Prompt pain management
  - Humane euthanasia by qualified personnel as permitted by law
  - Either on site or via transfer to another facility



Association of Shelter Veterinarians



Show me the standards!!!!

### Poll Question 2:

- a) My shelter has an emergency medical care plan.
- b) My shelter does not have an emergency medical care plan.
- c) I am not affiliated with an animal shelter.



Association of Shelter Veterinarians



## FREEDOM FROM PAIN, INJURY, **DISEASE**

---

### No single disease response can suit every circumstance

A disease response plan should include:

- Minimizing transmission to unaffected animals or people
- Ensuring appropriate care of affected animals



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Disease – What Are the Challenges?

---

Animals often arrive:

- Ill
- Pregnant
- Parasitized
- Injured
- Unvaccinated



Even healthy animals entering new, expertly designed facilities risk becoming ill without a functional medical healthcare program.



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

# Vaccinations

- **Animals must be vaccinated at or prior to intake with core vaccines**

**The 2006 American Association of Feline Practitioners Feline Vaccine Advisory Panel Report**

Preface	1436
Introduction	1437
Executive summary: vaccination and infection	1437
Objectives of this report	1438
Types of vaccines	1438
Benefits of vaccination	1439
Special considerations	1439
Vaccine categories	1441
Legal considerations	1426
Vaccine handling	1427
Vaccine safety	1428
Adverse events and adverse event reporting	1429
Vaccination of cats in long-term care programs	1430
Vaccination of cats in temporary care programs	1431
Vaccination of feline transfusion donors	1434
Tables	
Table 1: Core vaccines currently available in the United States	1412
Table 2: Summary of vaccination of cats in general practice	1414
Table 3: Summary of vaccination of cats in shelter environments	1415
Appendix	
Table 4: List of cats exempt from Rabies Vaccination	1440
Table 5: Guidelines for vaccination of cats in shelters	1440
Table 6: Vaccination documentation	1440
Table 7: Vaccine handling and storage	1440
Table 8: Vaccine preparation	1440
Table 9: Vaccine administration tips	1440

**Members of the Advisory Panel**

James R. Beckwith, DVM, MSW, Director, Central Ohio Health Center, College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853  
 Thomas D. Brown, DVM, MSW, DABVP, CAW, Director, 8000 Edgeley Ave, Santa, CA 95070  
 Richard B. Cook, DVM, MSW, Director, The Department of Clinical Sciences, College of Veterinary Medicine, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC 27606  
 Richard D. Cook, DVM, MSW, Department of Veterinary Pathology, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, England, United Kingdom L69 3GB  
 Kristin E. Edwards, DVM, MSW, MS, Director, Michigan State University, Lansing, Michigan 48906  
 Janet J. Hendrix, DVM, MSW, Director, National Animal Health Care Program, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI 53706  
 Michael J. Lappin, DVM, MSW, Department of Clinical Sciences, College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523  
 John A. Long, DVM, MSW, Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32608  
 Bruce Miller, DVM, MSW, CAW, CAW, Director, 605 W. Whittier Way, Madison, WI 53706  
 Maggie Mink, DVM, MSW, CAW, Director, 2015 Broad, Syracuse, NY 13210  
 Ronald D. Nelson, DVM, MSW, Department of Pathobiological Sciences, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI 53706  
 Patricia M. Spindler, DVM, MSW, Director, Animal Health, Texas, Landerdale Park, Eastland, New Mexico, 88424, United Kingdom DM 330  
 The work for this advisory panel report was supported in part by a grant from the American Veterinary Medical Association. Address correspondence to Dr. Beckwith.

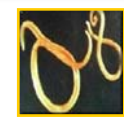
JAVMA, Vol. 238, No. 6, November 3, 2008      AAEP Feline Vaccine Advisory Panel Report      1408

- Follow guiding principles
  - FVRCP
  - Da2PP, Bordetella
  - Rabies when longterm or exit
- Pregnancy and mild illness are generally not contraindications
- MLV recommended
- Revaccination
- Tailor specific protocols with veterinary supervision



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

# Parasite Control



- A parasite control program should be developed with the supervision of a vet
- Treatment guided by parasite lifecycles and surveillance testing
- Treatment for internal and external parasites common to the region and for any obvious detrimental parasite infection they are harboring
- Ideally on entry and regularly throughout their stay
- Minimally, all dogs and cats must be dewormed for roundworms and hookworms before leaving the shelter



Association of Shelter Veterinarians



Show me the standards!!!!

### Poll Question 3:

- a) My shelter vaccinates all animals on intake (within 24 hrs).
- b) My shelter does not vaccinate on intake.
- c) I am not affiliated with an animal shelter.



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Disease – What Are the Challenges?

Facilities may not be ideal



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Segregation

---

- **Beginning at intake, animals should be separated by species and age as well as physical and behavioral health status**
  - <20 wks from adult
  - Species
  - Healthy from clinically ill



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Isolation

---

- **All facilities should have means of humane isolation that will not put other animals at risk (on site or transfer)**
- Even animals with mild clinical signs of contagious disease should not be housed in the general population
- No isolation?
  - Exposure of population vs. euthanasia must be weighed



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Disease – What Are the Challenges?



**Protocols should support individuals**



**AND maintain an overall healthy population**



*Association of Shelter Veterinarians*

## Disease – What Are the Challenges?



**Balancing individual animal and population welfare is hard**

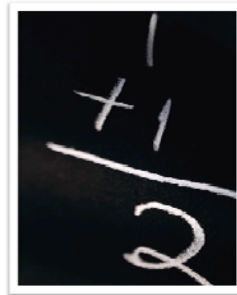


*Association of Shelter Veterinarians*

## Disease – What Are the Challenges?

---

- Measurements of success vary
- Statistics are not uniform
- Indicators are not always tracked
- Goals are not always set



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Population Well-Being

---

- **Animal health plans must be reviewed in response to changes observed in animal health, illness or deaths**
  - **Monitor frequency of specific problems**
  - **Set realistic goals**
  - **Develop targeted strategies**
  - **Monitor effectiveness of medical health programs**

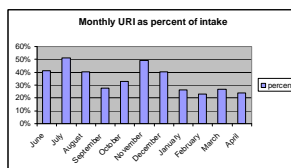


Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Population Well-Being

- Track **morbidity** (incidence of specific disease(s) )
- Track **mortality** (death not related to euthanasia)
  - 0.75% (0.18%-1.61%)<sup>1</sup>
  - <2% cats, <1% dogs<sup>2</sup>
  - Numbers in excess require immediate measures for control

- Track **specific problems**



<sup>1</sup> HSUS Lied Animal Report  
<sup>2</sup> Virginia Department of Agriculture Statewide Statistics



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Disease – What Are the Challenges?

**New York City animal shelters scramble after strep outbreak kills dogs**

BY [Lisa L. Colangelo](#)  
 DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER  
 Wednesday, January 7th 2009, 12:00 AM



POSTED: 6:02 pm EST January 18, 2010  
 UPDATED: 8:01 pm EST January 18, 2010  
**FAIRFIELD, Conn.** -- A highly contagious and sometimes deadly disease is affecting animals at a Fairfield shelter.

**Distemper outbreak at Georgetown, TX animal shelter**

January 7, 2010 by [News Hound](#)  
 Due to a distemper outbreak 24 dogs have been euthanized.



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Diagnosis

---

- Diagnosis of specific pathogens should be sought in the event of:
  - severe disease
  - unusual conditions
  - outbreaks
- Necropsy/histopathology when animals die from unexplained causes



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Outbreak Response

---



**Exposed**

1. Clinically ill/at risk

**Exposed**

1. Not showing signs, low risk

**Not exposed**



Association of Shelter Veterinarians



## Outbreak Response

---

Ideally, animal movement should stop until a targeted control strategy can be implemented



Vaccination, sanitation, movement, etc should be reviewed to ensure measures are effective shelter-wide



Animals should be monitored twice daily during an outbreak



*Association of Shelter Veterinarians*

## Outbreak Response

---

- Follow all laws
- Release to public – open disclosure
- Depopulation as a last resort – explore all other avenues
  - Transmission
  - Morbidity
  - Mortality
  - Public Health



*Association of Shelter Veterinarians*

## Disease – What Are the Challenges?

---



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Medical Treatment of Shelter Animals

---

- Shelters are responsible for safety of animals, people and environment when treatment is needed
- Effective and safe medication use
  - Reasonable diagnosis
  - Proper administration
  - Monitoring disease course



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Medical Treatment of Shelter Animals

---

- Those providing treatments must have training
- Policies for disease problems after adoption
- Professional supervision for prescription drugs
- All treatments recorded
- Protocols to provide immediate care when legal status is an issue



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Medical Treatment of Shelter Animals

---

- Treatment decisions should be based on:
  - Ability to safely and humanely provide relief
  - Prognosis for recovery
  - Likelihood of placement
  - # of animals to treat
  - Duration of treatment
  - Expense
  - Resources



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Medical Treatment of Shelter Animals

---

The routine prophylactic use of antimicrobials should never be used as a substitute for good animal management



AVMA policy: AAHA/AAFP Basic Guidelines of Judicious Therapeutic Use of Antimicrobials  
[http://www.avma.org/issues/policy/jtua\\_aafp\\_aaha.asp](http://www.avma.org/issues/policy/jtua_aafp_aaha.asp)



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## The Five Freedoms

---

1. **Freedom from Hunger and Thirst** - by ready access to fresh water and diet to maintain health and vigor.
2. **Freedom from Discomfort** - by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
3. **Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease** - by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
4. **Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour** - by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
5. **Freedom from Fear and Distress** - by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Any “Take Homes”?

---

Take a moment and type into the chat box something you are “taking home” from this session!



New idea...  
Something to try...  
Concept to look into...  
Challenge to overcome...  
Other....

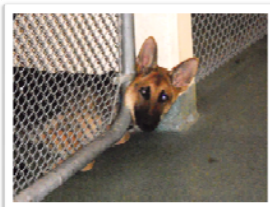


Association of Shelter Veterinarians

## Want to Know More?

---

Please join our next session  
April 28, 2011 - 3 pm EST



Dr. Sandra Newbury ~ Shelter Math and  
Population Planning

[www.ASPCApro.org/asv](http://www.ASPCApro.org/asv)



Association of Shelter Veterinarians