

2017 Heartland Veterinary Conference

Scenario Exercise with Charlotte Lacroix, DVM, JD

Scenario #1

“Shelters are expanding their reach to treat owned animals. Veterinarians are asking their State Associations to advocate for state restrictions on non-profit entities treating animals that are owned by the public.”

DVM Considerations

Working with shelters pros:

- Build partnerships with vets and rescues
- Address community need of low income demographic
- Can do more challenging medical situations

Potential cons of non-profits in the marketplace:

- Practice not regulated /medical records
- Pater aftercare relying on other area DVMs
- Greater potential for practice of vet med by lay persons

Other:

- What tax advantages does a non-profit actually have in reality ?

Association Considerations

Pros to association support of such a concept:

- Insure a level playing field
- Standard of care enforced
- Animal welfare issues as it pertains to client economics
- Opportunity for client education (zoonotic, nutrition, etc..) and practice growth

Cons:

- Potential illegal restraint of trade
- Alienate a segment of the membership whichever position take

Other:

- Assumptions made on pricing by clients – why can't my DVM do it for that?

Consumer Considerations

Pros:

- Tax deduction
- Feel good philanthropy
- Possible public health benefits
- Help out veterinary students with hands on experience

Potential cons that might be associated with non-profits:

- Cleanliness
- Staff turnover
- Who is licensed

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- Emergency aftercare issues
- Student assistance a negative in some eyes

Scenario #2

“Members are concerned about lay persons engaging in activities (alternative and complementary therapies, rehabilitation, non-anesthetic dentals) that most would consider the practice of veterinary medicine. The veterinary licensing board in your state is reluctant to get involved citing concerns raised by the North Carolina Dental Board Supreme Court Case.”

DVM Considerations

Pro to not getting involved :

- DVM supervision not needed on an activity may not want to do.

Cons to staying out:

- Consumer protection is harmed
- Slippery slope

Association Considerations

Promote/ protect

- Against lay persons for protection of animals, proper practice of medicine
- Lay person not educated to do the task correctly
- Human health practitioners to do perspective- DVM direct supervision

Consumer Considerations

Pro:

- Accessibility/ DVM might not offer
- Perceived value
- Convenience

Con:

- Consumer literacy
- No recourse for bad outcome
- Can ultimately cost more
- Negative outcome for the animal

Scenario #3

“Your board president believes telemedicine will harm the traditional practice of veterinary medicine and wants your board to adopt a policy opposing telemedicine”

DVM Considerations

Possible pros to taking a position against:

- Could be less opportunities for recent grads/shift in marketplace
- Protect client, patient and your business
- Maintain new client relationships

Potential cons to opposing:

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- Help with debt. Other opportunities for recent grads
- Can be an overall opportunity, help with emergency service
- Closing of expansion of your business model as is
- Greater use of techs and time
- No idea of what advancements in technology will be
- Shutdown referrals?

Association Considerations

Pros to opposing:

- Good PR with members who oppose
- Better care in most cases

Cons to opposing:

- Word telemedicine is too broad – need to narrow definition
- Alienate members who want to
- Public may want
- Drain on advocacy resources

Consumer Considerations

Pros:

- Saving time and money
- Might ease their fears
- Better than Dr. Google

Cons:

- Afraid of bad diagnosis
- Feels too business like
- May already have DVM relationship
- Think might be dealing with specialist but in reality maybe a lay person

Scenario #4

“Many veterinarians are approaching their State Associations to inquire about corporate consolidation. Some of these individuals are expressing a desire to stop corporate from infiltrating into the industry. They believe that the corporations are taking over the entire industry and are diminishing opportunities for veterinarians.”

DVM Considerations

Pros:

- Creates a career ladder for new grads
- More established structure
- Retirement option for owners
- Higher starting salary
- Better work life balance/ Full to part time, easier to relocate between states
- Practice medicine vs business things
- Expands buying pool for current owners

Cons:

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- Corporate benefits can be “unfair”
- Slower growth potential for associates
- Strict production based salaries- potential
- DVMs told how to practice medicine

Association Considerations

Other:

- States where owner must be a DVM
- Corporate can engage with a broader audience of members – more dues revenue
- Is there any evidence that corp. med. has a negative impact on private practice owner ?
- Association membership has those who want to buy and sell a practice
- Members for whom this is an exit strategy
- With student debt not as big a pool of those who can buy
- Association represents all constituencies
- Competition for better salaries for associates

Consumer Considerations

Pros:

- Easy access to consistent care
- More hours open/emergency hours
- Wellness plans
- Have technology/equipment – resources to purchase
- Consumers may not know if corporate or otherwise

Cons:

- Can be pushback by consumers who want to know owner, deal with small business

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