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World Veterinary Association Position on One Health Concept

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WORLD VETERINARY ASSOCIATION (AISBL)

Avenue de Tervueren 12
1040 Brussels, Belgium

T +32 2 533 70 22
F +32 2 537 28 28
E secretariat@worldvet.org

www.worldvet.org

The One Health Concept is a widely discussed worldwide strategy for expanding interdisciplinary collaborations and communications to improve all aspects of the health and welfare of humans, animals and the environment.

Background:

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. It is the outcome of a complex of several inter-dependent medical, economic, socio-cultural, environmental and ecological factors. People's health and wellbeing, and equally animal health and welfare are strongly interlinked. Both also influence and are impacted by the health of the environment. Health is a precondition for wellbeing and respectively welfare. Wellbeing and welfare reinforce health.

Animals, domesticated and wild, play a key role in the wellbeing of people and the future of our planet. They provide working power, food, protection, companionship and enjoyment, facilitate the advancement of biomedical research, and are a crucial part of healthy ecosystems. Keeping animals healthy is essential for the health and well-being of people and the environment.

Addressing animal health and welfare, public health, and environmental and zoonotic issues as separate professions, disciplines or entities has limited long-term impact on solving global problems. To make lasting progress, a broad inter-sectorial and interdisciplinary, holistic approach is essential to develop effective interventions that fully address One Health issues and concerns. The One Health Concept recognizes that the health and wellbeing of humans, animals and ecosystems are interconnected. It involves applying a coordinated, collaborative, multidisciplinary and cross-sectorial approach to address potential or existing risks that originate at animal-human-ecosystem interfaces.

WVA Position:

The advancement of the health and well-being of people and animals depends on effective and sustained collaboration between varied professions and disciplines, both in the public and private sectors.

The World Veterinary Association (WVA) recognizes and supports the Tripartite Concept Note titled "[Sharing responsibilities and coordinating global activities to address health risks at the animal-human-ecosystem interfaces](#)" jointly developed and adopted by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and

Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 2010. The tripartite note clearly recognizes that addressing health risks at the human-animal-ecosystem interface requires strong partnerships among all stakeholders.

Education

Pre and post-graduation, is key for the quality of services delivered by health professionals. Given the importance of One Health to the enhancement of human, animal and environmental health, it is essential to embed the One Health Concept into the curricula at colleges, schools and faculties educating animal, human, and environmental health professionals. Closer collaboration between veterinary schools and medical schools will foster a broader view on One Health issues. Student-driven initiatives to address One Health concerns are effective and deserve to be promoted. New communication technologies provide excellent opportunities to spread information and engage people in postgraduate education.

Veterinary Services

The services provided by the combined community of public and private animal health workers - are global public goods. Together with good governance practices, well-functioning veterinary services are essential for translating policies into practical strategies, implementing those strategies and achievement of sustainable results in the field.

Communication

Communication at different levels is crucial for achieving the veterinary profession's aspirations and societal needs. Effective communication needs to occur between:

- individual, private and public sector veterinarians and animal owners and keepers;
- veterinary professional organizations and stakeholder organizations and policy makers; and
- the profession and society at large.

The veterinary profession needs to foster good relationships. It needs to be clear about its goals, to make its goals known and to take responsibility for achieving those goals.

The One Health Concept mirrors the special responsibilities and outstanding position of the veterinary profession in serving both animals and human society.

In accomplishing the One Health mission, veterinarians are:

- enhancing the health and welfare of animals (e.g., through treatment and prevention of diseases and promotion of animals' physical and mental wellbeing);
- improving the health of people (e.g., through detection and prevention of zoonotic diseases);
- ensuring safer animal products for human consumption (e.g., through preventing foodborne diseases and food frauds; and overseeing best practices for use of animal medicines);
- ensuring sufficient food (e.g., through technological and management advances);
- protecting the environment (e.g., through conservation, prudent use of medicines, and chemicals, and the careful disposal of waste);
- demonstrating effective stewardship in the use of antimicrobials and thus insuring their effectiveness in both animal and human medical practice;
- improving communities livelihoods through improvements in animal and public health.