



Contribution ID: 500

Type: Oral presentation

One Health Educators, Practitioners, and Advocates: Engaging Veterinary Social Workers in Canadian Veterinary Care

Tuesday, October 6, 2026 9:45 AM (15 minutes)

As emerging interdisciplinary professionals, veterinary social workers (VSWs) integrate social work practice into veterinary medicine, addressing the interconnected health and well-being of humans, animals, and the environment. Although VSWs are gaining increasing attention worldwide, little empirical research has documented veterinary professionals' awareness and familiarity with VSWs, their perceived practice impacts of engaging VSWs in clinical settings, and their anticipated barriers to hiring VSWs. Focusing on Canadian veterinary care, this study aims to investigate the veterinary practitioner's necessities and challenges of engaging VSWs in clinical teams. An online survey with both quantitative and qualitative questions grounded in the One Health framework was completed by 110 veterinary professionals across Canada. While over 90% of participants are familiar with VSW's contributions and over 80% are willing to hire VSWs, financial challenges and professional reorganization are the primary barriers to implementation. From the perspectives of veterinary professionals, survey results highlight the VSW's contributions to occupational health, client grief-loss support, client-practitioner relations, and the prevention of animal abuse and family violence in clinic and public education settings. These contributions further illustrate the VSW's roles as One Health educators, practitioners, and advocates for building healthy and resilient human-animal bonds.

Keywords

Veterinary Social Worker, Veterinary Care, Contributions and Challenges, Public Education, Human-Animal Bonds

Registration ID

185

Professional Status of the Speaker

Professor

Junior Scientist Status

No, I am not a Junior Scientist.

Author: Dr WU, Haorui (School of Social Work, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University)

Presenter: Dr WU, Haorui (School of Social Work, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University)

Session Classification: Session 6: Education, Implementation

Track Classification: Education, Implementation