



Press Information

WSAVA Targets Welfare with Release of First Global Guidelines for Companion Animal Practitioners

The [World Small Animal Veterinary Association](#) (WSAVA) has highlighted the key role of veterinarians as advocates for animal welfare with the launch of its Animal Welfare Global Guidelines for Companion Animal Practitioners and the Veterinary Team.

The Guidelines, launched during WSAVA World Congress 2018 in Singapore, aim to bridge differing perceptions of welfare around the world and help veterinarians to tackle the ethical questions and moral issues which impact welfare. They also offer guidance to ensure that, in addition to providing physical health advice and therapy to their patients, veterinarians can advocate for their psychological, social and environmental wellbeing. The WSAVA already offers Global Guidelines in key areas of veterinary practice, including pain management, vaccination, nutrition and dentistry.

Dr Shane Ryan, incoming President of the WSAVA and former Chair of the WSAVA Animal Wellness and Welfare Committee, said: "As veterinarians, our responsibility extends far beyond the physical health of our patients. Animal welfare as a science is a new and rapidly developing discipline and veterinarians need current, evidence-based information to enable them to maintain the highest welfare standards and to provide knowledgeable, accurate advice for pet owners and communities.

"Our new Guidelines provide recommendations, checklists and other tools to promote optimal levels of welfare throughout the veterinary visit. They also offer guidance on increasing welfare beyond the doors of the clinic through outreach activities."

He continued: "As levels of pet ownership increase in many regions of the world, including Asia, it is essential that veterinarians champion animal welfare and the WSAVA hopes that

these new Guidelines will encourage our members to adopt best practice and set the highest standards.

“I would like to thank the members of the Animal Welfare Guidelines team, who worked so hard to create them and, of course, our sponsor, Waltham®, whose constant support was instrumental in enabling us to deliver them.”

The WSAVA has called on its members to develop an animal welfare charter for their members and to adopt the Guidelines into daily practice. 32 WSAVA member associations have already endorsed the Guidelines with more expected to follow shortly. During 2018-19, the WSAVA will develop relevant continuing education (CE) and provide additional tools and translations of the Guidelines text.

The Animal Welfare Global Guidelines for Companion Animal Practitioners and the Veterinary Team are available for free download at: <https://bit.ly/2D3RAoc>

The WSAVA aims to advance the health and welfare of companion animals worldwide through creating an educated, committed and collaborative global community of veterinary peers. It represents more than 200,000 veterinarians through 110 member associations.

WSAVA World Congress 2018 is being attended by more than 3,000 veterinarians from around the world and brings together globally respected experts to offer cutting edge thinking on all aspects of companion animal veterinary care. [WSAVA World Congress 2019](#) takes place in Toronto, Canada, from 16-19 July.

Notes to editors:

The members of the WSAVA Animal Welfare Guidelines Group are:

WSAVA:

- Dr Shane Ryan, President, WSAVA
- Dr Nienke Endenburg, Co-chair Professional Wellness Group
- Dr Natasha Lee, member of WSAVA Animal Wellness and Welfare Committee
- Dr Gregg Takashima, Co-chair of WSAVA Global Nutrition Committee
- Dr Rod Jouppi, member of WSAVA Animal Wellness and Welfare Committee

Non-WSAVA:

- Dr Kersti Seksel, behavioural specialist
- Dr Susan Hazel, animal welfare lecturer
- Dr Heather Bacon, veterinary welfare education and outreach manager

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