

REPORT OF THE USAHA/AAVLD COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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The Committee met on October 15, 2016 at the Sheraton Greensboro Hotel in Greensboro, North Carolina from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. There were eight members and 15 guests present. Attendees were welcomed and general overview and housekeeping comments were made.

The National Academies of Science (NAS) 2013 report on veterinary workforce served as the foundation for Committee presentations and discussions. The NAS report concluded that there are minimal workforce shortages but societal needs for doctor of veterinary medicine (DVM) expertise is growing; education and research funding has declined so that there is inability to meet societal needs; the current return on investment (ROI) for the DVM education is not sustainable and the response is slow; the profession is losing presence in Food Animal production and care; and global food security is critical, complex, and will require One Health solutions. Four presentations provided updates regarding selected sectors of the veterinary profession and relevant points related to the NAS summary and recommendations.

American Association of Industrial Veterinarians (AAIV) Perspectives on the Veterinary Workforce Mia Cary, AAIV and North American Veterinary Community (NAVC)

Dr. Cary provided an overview of the AAIV, indicating that the organization's mission is to advance the professional skills and standards of veterinarians engaged in any phase of industry, corporate, and public employment. The organization was founded in 1954 as a non-profit and currently has approximately 500 members. AAIV exists to advance professional standards, increase awareness of DVM contributions, inform the profession on diverse opportunities, and promote communication and collaboration. Industry positions are generally attractive and there has been some expansion due to promotion of One Health and public health in recent years. Extensive education and experience is often required, particularly in regards to regulatory expertise. The AAIV continues to support and promote the benefits and value of traditional general practice positions because those positions/experience are foundational for most "industry" veterinary positions in manufacturing (biopharma, medical supplies/equipment, food and feed), distribution, laboratory services and equipment, animal insurance, schools, government, and private industry.

The AAIV is attempting to address the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) conclusions and recommendations in the following ways:

Societal needs for DVM expertise is growing but positions are lacking

- AAIV is implementing collaborative partnerships (subject-matter experts, SMEs), networking events at national meetings, supporting career-transition workshops, and increase overall awareness.

Education and research funding has declined with inability to meet societal needs

- potential for collaboration via industry research centers of excellence, many animal health companies offer/fund educational programs, and quarterly educational webinars for members occur.

Current ROI on the DVM education is not sustainable with a slow response

- Industry is willing to support/fund but not able to be the sole supporter, industry-based intern programs at animal health headquarters are available with a broad reach into private practice.

Losing presence in the Food Animal production and care

- Industry provides many field-based herd health programs. Telehealth is growing and should be considered, and the potential exists for greater university-industry collaboration.

Global food security is critical, complex, and requires One Health solutions

- Many animal health companies have similar missions when it comes to promoting the profession and industry veterinarians are often focused on global food security.

The bottom line is, AAIV believes the veterinary profession must aggressively communicate and collaborate within and beyond to proclaim and demonstrate relevance to the public and decision makers to ensure continued, and greater success.

Veterinary Services Perspectives on One Health

Brian McCluskey, USDA-APHIS-VS

Dr. McCluskey provided an overview of the USDA-APHIS perspectives regarding One Health. There is obvious and extensive interconnectedness of the environment, animals and people that is not new to veterinarians. However, there must be new innovative ways to communicate and collaborate among animal, human and environmental health specialists. The USDA has had multi-agency coordination groups in the past, which have now transitioned to the VS One Health Coordination Center (OHCC), which provides One Health subject matter expert (SME), builds alliances and coordinates partnerships, creates One Health communication pieces, conducts outreach, and develops/delivers One Health tools. The OHCC is concerned and engaged regarding workforce development by providing core competencies, One Health competency framework for Workforce Resilience (OH-FRAME), and university collaboration and curricular integration. The OHCC enthusiastically supports workforce competency, expertise and collaborations.

National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians

Tom Sidwa, Texas Department of State Health Services

Dr. Sidwa provided an introduction and overview of the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV), which has a mission of facilitating collaboration among State Public Health Veterinarians and the veterinary health community. There are approximately 220 members in NASPHV, with the majority of state-employed members being in the agricultural arena and secondarily in public health and wildlife sectors. The association and its members provide veterinary public health consultation to human and animal health professionals in governments, private medical practices, and other health related organizations. NASPHV responds to emerging One Health issues including zoonoses to educate and implement prevention and control measures. They publish four compendia that include rabies, chlamydia, disease prevention in public settings, and standards for zoonotic disease prevention for veterinary personnel. Collaboration routinely occurs between NASPHV and other organizations: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), United States Animal Health Association (USAHA), Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE), Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

There are gaps-opportunities for additional veterinary positions in the State Public Health since a State Public Health Veterinarian (SPHV) is not available in all 50 states and in some states the State Veterinarian is asked to perform SPHV duties and/or may serve as the State or Deputy State Epidemiologist. Advanced degrees such as Masters of Science (MS), Master of Public Health (MPH), or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) may be desired, along with 1-3 years' experience in public health. In addition to difficulty in matching applicant qualification, compensation can be a challenge as well. Funding of a SPHV position in states without one and promoting the veterinary workforce role in One Health through mentoring students and outreach to national organizations and universities is strongly encouraged by the NASPHV.

National Association of Federal Veterinarians (NAFV) – Veterinary Workforce Update

Mike Gilsdorf, NAFV

Dr. Gilsdorf provided the following 2015 statistics for U.S. veterinarians: the total public and corporate veterinarians is 111,406 and the Public Health veterinarians are divided rather equally among industry and federal positions with academic positions double at approximately 38%. The Federal positions are primarily FSIS (34%), APHIS (25%), and Army (18%), with a total decrease from 2015 (3,199) to 2016

(2,933). There have been at least six workforce assessments since 2009, including the GAO report stating that the federal government lacks a comprehensive understanding of the sufficiency of its veterinarian workforce and recommending an advisory group. The Talent Management Advisory Council (TMAC) and Veterinary Medical Officials (VMO) were designated as Mission Critical until 2010 and then in 2011 a subgroup was formed for strategic planning, emergency management and recruitment/retention. In 2012, the TMAC published an assessment of the workforce needed to staff a large transboundary animal disease outbreak. The FSIS has instituted multi-year relocation incentives and expenses, which may vary for different locations but even so the vacancy rate remains at 11%. The Veterinary Services (VS) staff attrition between 2010 and 2014 caused a reduction of 15%; however, the 2017 budget may provide additional funds to rehire some personnel. There is also a student loan repayment program \$10,000 gross payment per year would be possible for a three-year service agreement, yielding a total repayment of \$30,000. Various programs have been, or are being implemented in the federal government, which follows recommendations of the National Academies of Science (NAS) report for state and federal governments to re-examine their policies on remuneration, recruitment, and retention of veterinarians. Based on the action being taken by the USDA to close gaps found in their workforce, the TMAC intends to use that assessment and the resulting actions as a model to be discussed, modified, and implemented by other federal agencies for their veterinary workforces.

Committee Business:

The committee developed and passed the resolution entitled, "Veterinary Public Practice Awareness and Promotion".