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Preface: Advances in Palliative Medicine xiii
Katherine J. Goldberg

Where Have We Been, Where Are We Going: Continuity from 2011 325
Tamara Shearer

This article provides a brief review of important foundational concepts and an overview of major milestones in the history of animal hospice and palliative care. This article also presents a view of future goals and challenges that lie ahead of the veterinary profession as the field of animal hospice and palliative care evolves. Some examples of topics reviewed and explored in the article include current “state-of-the-art” of animal hospice, future research goals, improved veterinary college curricula, collaboration among medical disciplines, and support of the veterinary staff.

Section I: Established Programs and Curricular Initiatives

Colorado State University, Pet Hospice Program 339
Maria Gore, Susan E. Lana, and Gail A. Bishop

Serving clients since 2004, Colorado State University’s Veterinary Teaching Hospital is the first and only program to offer a student-run pet hospice program. Under the supervision of faculty and staff advisors, student volunteers provide home hospice care to families who have a terminally ill pet. This article describes the history of the program, how it is organized, the roles and responsibilities of the students, the challenges of the program and future goals. This article seeks to serve as a follow up on the 2008 Journal of Veterinary Medical Education article on the Colorado State University pet hospice program.

Michigan State University Veterinary Hospice Care: An Academic Hospice Practice 2011 to 2014 351
Page E. Yaxley

In 2011, Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine founded the second veterinary hospice in academic practice. This program was designed to meet the growing demand for veterinary end-of-life care in the community. Veterinary Hospice Care provided patients and their families palliative care services, through utilization of an interdisciplinary team, from the time of terminal diagnosis to the time of death. Families also received dedicated emotional support. As a direct result of the hospice care service, Michigan State University veterinary students as well as in-state technical college students received an increase in end-of-life care in the curriculum.

Pain and Palliative Care Service, Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals-Angell Animal Medical Center 363
Lisa Moses

A veterinary palliative care service was developed as a specialty service in 2006 at a large, nonprofit teaching veterinary hospital. The service
originally was conceived as a pain medicine service, but quickly refocused on palliative care because a need was evident. The Pain and Palliative Care Service at Angell Animal Medical Center is structured primarily as an outpatient service, but does provide consultation services for hospitalized patients. The goals of the service, appointment structure, referral relationships, client communication issues, and practitioner sustainability are described in detail in this article as an aid to development of similar services.

Current Topics in Serious Illness and Palliative Medicine: A Curricular Initiative in a US Veterinary Teaching Institution

Katherine J. Goldberg

Although interest in hospice and palliative care for companion animals is on the rise, formal training in these areas is limited. Veterinary teaching institutions, professional organizations, and accrediting bodies have much to gain from the human palliative medicine field. Core competencies, curricular milestones, and scope of practice for palliative medicine are identified. A formal palliative care intervention has been implemented in a US veterinary teaching institution, and preliminary evaluation data reflect significant potential for integration of palliative care training into veterinary teaching. Positive outcomes for veterinarian well-being and ability to cope with emotional demands are suggested.

Section II: Concepts and Essential Viewpoints

Overcoming Obstacles to Palliative Care: Lessons to Learn from Our Physician Counterparts

Lisa Moses

In the past 40 years, the field of palliative care for people faced many of the same obstacles in development and expansion that veterinary palliative care now confronts. A series of interviews with pioneers in human palliative care revealed what those early obstacles were professionally, personally, and institutionally. Many of the hurdles are strikingly similar to what veterinary professionals are currently facing in their attempts to grow palliative care as both an independent subspecialty and an integrated part of general practice. We can translate their experiences and successes to help veterinary palliative care flourish.

Goals of Care: Development and Use of the Serious Veterinary Illness Conversation Guide

Katherine J. Goldberg

Goals of care (GOC) conversations and resulting goal-concordant treatment are the heart of palliative medicine. Despite repeated evidence that GOC conversations offer significant benefit and minimal harm, barriers to widespread and high-quality implementation persist in human medicine. One strategy to overcoming these barriers has been utilization of a structured checklist format for serious illness conversations. The Serious Illness Conversation Guide was developed for human patients and has been modified for use in the veterinary profession. The guide promotes individualized, goal-concordant care planning even when conflict and emotional demands are high.
The Animal as Patient: Ethology and End-of-Life Care
Jessica Pierce

Treating the animal patient as a “person” involves refining the capacity to see the patient as clearly as possible. Veterinary end-of-life care can usefully engage with the science of animal emotion and cognition to help bring the patient into 3-D. This article highlights 3 specific areas in which engagement with the ethology literature and more careful attention to the subjective experiences of animals could improve end-of-life care: (1) interpretation and management of pain, (2) assessments of quality of life, and (3) attention to the autonomy of animal patients.

Caregiver Burden and Veterinary Client Well-Being
Mary Beth Spitznagel and Mark D. Carlson

This article describes veterinary client caregiver burden, including how it differs from other key client experiences in the palliative care setting. Caregiver burden in human relationships is reviewed. Research examining veterinary client caregiver burden in the context of serious illness (or pet caregiver burden), including the link between pet caregiver burden and client psychosocial well-being, is summarized. Risk factors for development of pet caregiver burden are discussed in the context of beginning to address how it might be reduced or prevented. Finally, suggestions are provided for veterinarians working with clients facing these issues in a palliative care setting.

Section III: Advances and Information to Guide Clinicians

Advances in Pain Management: Palliative Care Applications
Jordyn M. Boesch

One of the most important goals of palliative medicine and hospice care is pain relief. Although great strides have been made in veterinary analgesia, severe pain, especially at home, is still difficult to control. Pain control in the context of palliative medicine and hospice care is far more advanced in human medicine. Many modalities used in chronically or terminally ill humans might be adapted to animals to better manage severe pain. This article discusses drugs and procedures used to control pain in humans that are relatively nascent or unavailable in veterinary medicine and deserve further attention.

Julie M. Ducoté

Most neurologic diseases are incurable. Palliative care is vital in the treatment of companion animals with serious or chronic neurologic disease. A Neuropalliative Care Core Skill Set includes multifaceted communication competencies and symptom management. Because some of the most common clinical signs of neurologic disease are also associated with stress of caregiving, veterinarians should understand their clients’ unique potential for caregiver burden. Acknowledging caregiver burden in their clients, means that veterinarians treating patients with neurologic disease must be proactive in building their own resilience to the occupational
Canine Cognitive Dysfunction: Pathophysiology, Diagnosis, and Treatment

Curtis Wells Dewey, Emma S. Davies, Huisheng Xie, and Joseph J. Wakshlag

Canine cognitive dysfunction (CCD) is the canine analog of human Alzheimer disease (AD). The pathophysiology of CCD/AD is multifaceted. CCD is common in aged (>8 years) dogs, affecting between 14% and 35% of the pet dog population. Apparent confusion, anxiety, disturbance of the sleep/wake cycle, and decreased interaction with owners are all common clinical signs of CCD. Although there is no cure for CCD, several proven effective therapeutic approaches are available for improving cognitive ability and maintaining a good quality of life; instituting such therapies early in the disease course is likely to have the greatest positive clinical effect.

Perspectives on Feeding and Nutrition

Anthony J. Smith

Many palliative care patients have reduced oral intake during their illness. Managing inadequate intake through appetite stimulation and/or artificial hydration and nutrition poses many clinical, ethical, and logistical dilemmas. This article aids the health care team in making appropriate recommendations regarding assisted nutrition and hydration for palliative care and terminal patients. It provides a decision-making framework, including an ethical approach to determining appropriate use of assisted feeding and hydration methods in pets at the end of life. It also summarizes various clinical and logistical approaches to treating decreased food/water consumption, including potential benefits and burdens, should intervention be deemed appropriate.

Private Practice Oncology: Viewpoint on End-of-Life Decision-Making

Michael Kiselow

Veterinary oncology has evolved rapidly over the past 30 years, with combinations of surgery, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, and radiation therapy now representing standard practice for managing pets with cancer. Recently, additional effort has been directed toward optimizing palliative strategies for mitigating clinical signs associated with advanced-stage disease, thereby reducing patient morbidity as pet owners navigate end-of-life decision making. This is a multi-dimensional, individualized process, which demands attention to the primary neoplastic condition, concurrent diseases, and emotional needs of the family. An approach to oncologic referral and end-of-life care is described, with attention to the dynamics between oncologist, referring veterinarian, and client.

Palliative Care Services at Home: Viewpoint from a Multidisciplinary Practice

Courtney Bennett and Nathaniel Cook

A growing, multidisciplinary, mobile hospice and palliative care practice in Louisville, Kentucky, is described. Services are exclusively dedicated to
palliative medicine, hospice, and end-of-life care. The characteristics of, and unique considerations associated with, this practice’s patient population are discussed. Demand for hospice and palliative care services is increasing even though these fields are in the early stages of growth and development, and availability of services is limited. Research is an essential step toward improving care provision and evaluating the value of hospice and palliative care services in terms of patient comfort, quality of life, and survival time.

An Objective Exploration of Euthanasia and Adverse Events 553
Beth Marchitelli

Companion animal euthanasia is of great emotional, social, ethical, and medical significance because of the strong bond between pets and their owners. Few studies exist quantifying adverse events during and after euthanasia. Such events have profound effects on pet owners, veterinary professionals and veterinary patients. Best practices or standards of care have yet to be established. Companion animal euthanasia warrants further rigorous investigation regarding current veterinary medical practices due to its significant, complex, and far-reaching effects. Literature evaluating human euthanasia and assisted death in countries where such practices are legal can be a useful area of investigation and collaborative inquiry.

The Social Worker: An Essential Hospice and Palliative Team Member 565
Sandra Brackenridge

In veterinary hospice and palliative care practice, there is as much or more interaction with people as with the animal patient. It is an emotionally volatile environment, and veterinary professionals do not have the training to assess the mental health and emotional needs of clients. Nor are they qualified to counsel or provide therapy for humans. Providing veterinary treatment in this environment is emotionally draining for the treatment team, necessitating assistance to address workplace stress and compassion fatigue. Social workers are uniquely qualified to serve in these capacities. This article explains how they are essential to the interdisciplinary team.

Brain Awareness and Conflict in Veterinary Medical Practice: What Happens and How to Deal with It 575
Elizabeth B. Strand

Video content accompanies this article at http://www.vetsmall.theclinics.com.

Conflict resolution is a technical skill required in medical environments. This article explores interpersonal conflicts through a brain awareness lens and offers tools for increasing the ability to manage conflict in veterinary medical practice.