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Clinical rotation in population medicine

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Faculty at the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine recognized a need to provide veterinary students experience in population medicine. Although students were occasionally exposed to herd or population level medicine in other rotations, there was no experiential course dedicated to population medicine. Our objective was to create a new clinical rotation to encourage population level thinking.

Materials and methods: A required 3-week population medicine rotation was created for the third year of veterinary school. The problem-based clinical rotation includes onsite disease outbreak investigations and population-level consultations, taught by faculty with expertise in epidemiology, preventive medicine, internal medicine, shelter medicine, food animal medicine, poultry medicine, diagnostic medicine and food safety. There are 5 principles as learning objectives: 1) How the “system” affects animal health outcomes; 2) Critical thinking about causation; 3) Using diagnostic tests in population-based disease investigations; 4) Using data (evidence) to investigate/monitor population health; and 5) Implementing and communicating strategies for disease control and prevention. Students and faculty, investigate outbreaks of disease of impaired productivity in farms and shelters, prepare written recommendations post-visit, and demonstrate scientific literacy by preparing a Critically Appraised Topic (CAT) on a medical question of their choice. Fifty multiple choice questions are randomly selected from a question bank for pre- and post-test evaluation of learning.

Results: The rotation has been positively received by students. On the question “the laboratories and clinical experiences enhanced my learning,” 83 students rated the course a mean 3.5 (stdev =0.6) on an ordinal scale of 1-4, low to high. On the same scale, students rated the course 3.4 (stdev 0.6) on the question “the rotation provided opportunities to improve my communication skills.” Students demonstrate a mean 15 percentage point pre- to post-test gain in knowledge (n=163, p<0.0001).

Conclusion: Students improved knowledge and communication skills in population medicine.

Key Words: Veterinary education, population medicine, clinical training

Public-Private Partnerships in animal health: what is the current picture?

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) are defined as a collaborative approach in which the public and private sector share resources, responsibilities and risks to achieve common objectives and mutual benefits in a sustainable manner. PPPs are identified as one key solution to reinforce Veterinary Services. However only limited information is available on the added value and enabling factors of PPPs in this sector. The aims of this study were to develop a typology of PPPs in the veterinary field and to identify key success factors and obstacles to their implementation.

Material and methods: A structured questionnaire was sent to all 181 OIE Member Countries and to 50 private contacts. 47 different variables characterizing the PPP initiatives were collected. Multiple correspondence analysis was combined with non metric multidimensional scaling and K-means clustering to establish a typology of PPPs and derive a set of simple rules to classify new instances of PPPs.

Results: 97 examples of PPPs were retrieved from 76 countries. Three clusters were identified separated by two main variables: the type of private partners and the type of interaction. Cluster 1 represented the classic type of PPPs, initiated and funded by the public sector, giving service delivery accreditation to mostly private veterinarians; cluster 2 included partnerships between producers’ associations and public Veterinary Services, driven by trade interests; cluster 3 represented joint programs initiated and funded by private companies and initially driven by development objectives. Specific success factors and key obstacles affecting the performances and sustainability of these initiatives were identified for each cluster.

Conclusion: This study represents the first practical attempt to develop a meaningful typology for PPPs in the field of animal health, to identify fundamental obstacles currently inhibiting the development of PPPs, and informs ways to support national Veterinary Services to overcome these hurdles.

Key words: Public-Private Partnership, veterinary services, evaluation, animal health