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Association of Shelter Veterinarians celebrates 20th anniversary with new guidelines and academic journal launch

ASV's comprehensive resources for shelter veterinarians continue to grow

APEX, North Carolina (December 20, 2021) – The Association of Shelter Veterinarians - the professional organization for veterinarians working in all aspects of animal sheltering - is set to launch a new revision of their *Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters* and announces the creation of an academic journal in celebration of its 20th anniversary. Since its 2001 inception, ASV has been dedicated to its mission to advance and support the practice of shelter medicine in order to improve community animal health and well-being.

The ASV published the first edition of its *Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters* in 2010, providing a comprehensive resource for the medical and behavioral care of shelter animals in North America and around the world. These guidelines have provided evidence-based support to shelters, rescue organizations, foster-based organizations and other small animal population settings, such as feline research and guide-dog facilities. The “Guidelines” are used across North America and in many parts of the world to create a benchmark for self-assessment and improvement aimed at optimizing the health and welfare of homeless animals.

As veterinary medical and animal welfare research has expanded, the industry, shelter veterinarians and the ASV recognized the need for an update. In 2019, ASV began the revision process by surveying shelter professionals about the diversity and breadth of their daily tasks. The “Guidelines” task force is now working diligently and anticipate publishing the updated scientific and professional consensus document as early as fall of 2022.

“ASV has the same sense of urgency it did in 2001 to establish and advance consistent care in animal shelters around the country,” said Chumkee Aziz, DVM, DABVP, President of ASV. “In our 20th year, we’re more focused than ever on bringing the most comprehensive guidelines and resources possible to the shelter veterinarian community. We’re starting with the updated guidelines but will continue to evolve long into the future.”

To further its reach, ASV also plans to launch a peer-reviewed journal focused completely on shelter medicine in 2022.

“Launching an academic journal for the ASV has been a goal for a long time,” said Rachael Kreisler, VMD, MSCE, DACVPM Epidemiology, board member and Associate Professor of Shelter Medicine and Epidemiology at Midwestern University College of Veterinary Medicine. “The journal will allow us to further share research, information and

perspective from shelter medicine experts around the world, as a part of our commitment to support and offer resources to shelters and shelter veterinarians.”

In addition to these initiatives, ASV – with more than 2,000 professional and student members and 20 student chapters internationally – has successfully expanded shelter medicine practice around the world. In 2001, the organization helped establish the first shelter medicine residency at the University of California at Davis. Since then, efforts continued with the addition of shelter medicine tracks at large veterinarian conferences, a shelter medicine specialty, and more. As of 2021, there are 32 diplomates in shelter medicine.

“We’re committed to driving the advancement of shelter medicine in a highly inclusive way and are looking forward to celebrating our anniversary with a number of strategic initiatives that offer even greater support to shelter veterinarians,” said Aziz.

For more information on the Association of Shelter Veterinarians, the current *Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters*, and more, visit <https://sheltervet.org/>.

About the Association of Shelter Veterinarians

The Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) was founded in 2001 at the American Humane Conference. That same year, ASV was integral in developing the first shelter medicine residency program at UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine. Since its founding, ASV has served as the voice of veterinary shelter medicine, providing access to comprehensive, evidence-based resources and education for its members and shelters. These resources include the seminal 2010 Guidelines for the Standards of Care in Animal Shelters, the 2016 update of The Veterinary Medical Care Guidelines for Spay-Neuter Programs, multiple organizational position statements, the 2020 AHS/ASV Guidelines for Minimizing Heartworm Transmission in Relocated Dogs, and the 2020 AVMA-ASV Relocation of Dogs and Cats for Adoption within the United States: Best Practices. The organization also led the efforts to develop a Board-recognized specialty in shelter medicine, which has grown to 32 diplomates. With more than 2,000 active members and 20 international student chapters, ASV has expanded its reach around the globe. To learn more about the Association of Shelter Veterinarians and its resources, visit <https://www.sheltervet.org/>.

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