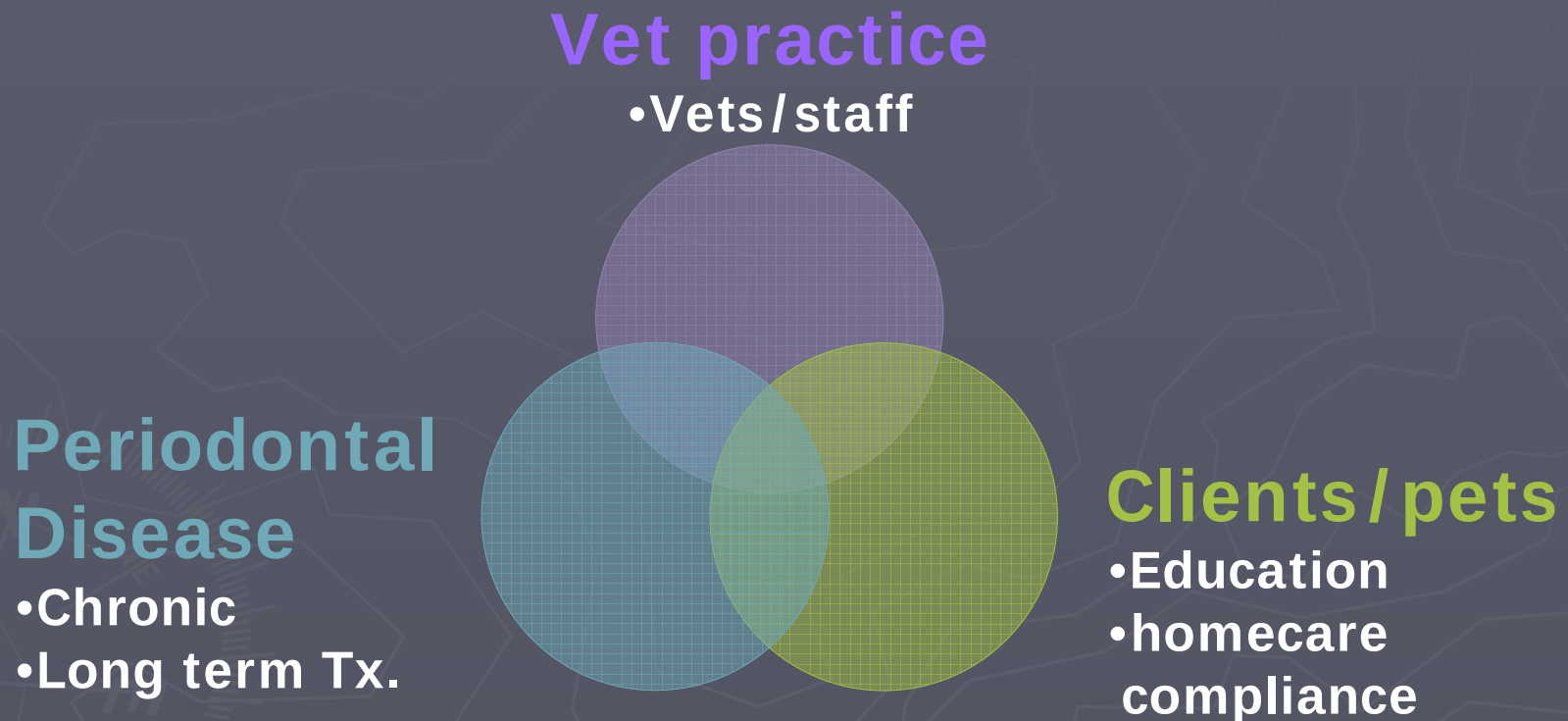


Marketing Veterinary Dentistry in Your Practice

**Dr. Tony Caiafa BVSc BDSc
MACVSc**

**University of Melbourne
Veterinary Clinic and Hospital**

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



**Quality dental care = satisfied clients, healthier pets
and increased profitability**

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Evidence* so far re veterinary practice/dentistry

- ▶ No. of clients/vet decreasing as no. of vets increasing in major cities
- ▶ With increasing life expectancy- older pets are presenting with extensive oral disease
- ▶ No. of dental procedures increasing every year
- ▶ Practice income derived directly or indirectly from dentistry should be on the rise
- ▶ Clients, today, are more “dentally aware”

* Based on discussions with colleagues

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Survey* of 200 vets in USA showed

- ▶ 98% offered dental services
- ▶ 80% of vets: 1-10% of gross from dentistry
- ▶ 15% of vets: 11-15% of gross
- ▶ 5% of vets: 15-20% of gross
- ▶ Today, most practices should aim >10% of practice gross from dentistry (direct)
- ▶ I.e. \$350,000 gross 10% or \$35,000 dentistry or 3 “prophies” (\$250 ea.) per week

**Survey report: who's doing what in vet dentistry?*

Supplement Vet economics Feb, 1993

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Phone Survey* of 1000 pet owners in USA

- ▶ Survey found
- ▶ 63% of pet owners have never had their pets' teeth professionally cleaned.
- ▶ Of the 22% of pet owners who ever brush their pets' teeth
 - only one in 10 brush daily
 - four in 10 brush weekly
 - 20% say they brush only a few times/yr.

* Iams Gallup survey, 2001

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ Practices can see a **substantial increase** in no. of dental procedures with the right equipment/training
- ▶ e.g. **Moama Veterinary Hospital**- 2 vet SA practice on the Murray River, NSW
- ▶ Principal had an in-house all day dental workshop and purchased a new dental base in August 2005
- ▶ Results (Moama*): “A **59% increase** in the no. of Dentistry procedures invoiced in the 6 months after August, 2005 and a **91% increase in fees** generated from Dentistry procedures in that period!!”
- ▶ “Coupled with this is the ease with which the

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Periodontal disease

- ▶ PD- until recently, vets commonly thought it to be a normal part of the pet's aging process
- ▶ The same attitude was seen in human dentistry until the 1950's
- ▶ Discovery of bacteria as cause of PD in 1960's
- ▶ Studies showed the importance of plaque removal to prevent PD
- ▶ The most common chronic disease in man and our pets
- ▶ Links to systemic organ disease

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

What do clients want?

- ▶ Clients do not want their pets to be uncomfortable or in pain
- ▶ There is an increasing resistance to extraction
- ▶ Alternative treatments need to be offered
- ▶ Advanced dental procedures now available
- ▶ Referral services in Vet Dentistry available
- ▶ Owner expectations - trend to more referrals

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Barriers to offering a quality vet dental service

1. Inadequate training of vets
2. Lack of recognition of oral diseases
3. Antiquated dental equipment
4. Limited dental training of practice staff
5. Client apathy/price resistance

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

1. Improving your veterinary dental knowledge

- ▶ AVDS membership
 - ▶ newsletters, free workshops, interaction with peers
- ▶ Attending national/international conferences/congresses/forums
- ▶ Journal of Veterinary Dentistry/books
- ▶ Distance education
- ▶ In-house training- cadavers etc

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



Free dental workshops

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

1. Improving your veterinary dental knowledge (Cont)

- ▶ Veterinary schools offering Vet Dentistry lectures to undergraduates
- ▶ Melbourne, Brisbane, Murdoch and Sydney again
- ▶ Visiting practitioner schemes: Melbourne Uni
- ▶ Local dentist



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

**Melbourne University
Veterinary Dental unit**

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

2. Increasing recognition of oral disease

- ▶ Lots of disease out there
- ▶ First, look at normal healthy mouths
- ▶ Improving knowledge should sharpen diagnostic skills
- ▶ However, the first thing to do is:
LOOK IN THE MOUTH !

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

3. Improving your dental equipment

To offer a quality dental service
minimum requirements are:

- ▶ Periodontal probe/explorer, curettes, dental elevators, small extraction forceps, molt No. 9 periosteal elevator, sharpening stone
- ▶ **Dental base** including ultrasonic scaler, high speed, slow speed handpieces
- ▶ **Dental X-ray** unit/conventional X-ray unit and dental film

Decide what level of service you want to offer in dentistry?



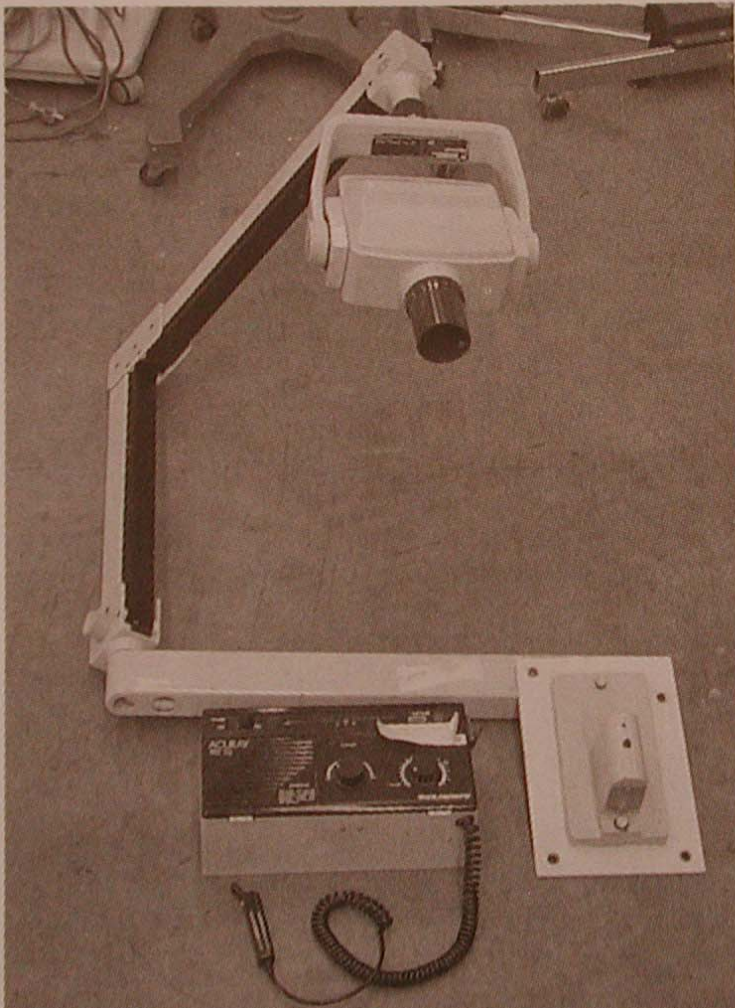
Dr. Laura LeVan's practice near Boston

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

DENTAL X-RAY UNIT



Belmont dental wall mount x-ray unit. Very good condition.

1 ONLY
\$950

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

4. Improving staff knowledge- “team” approach

- ▶ In-house tutorials by practice vets
- ▶ Role playing: Client/nurse simulations to get a consistent message
- ▶ In-house workshops with visiting specialists etc
- ▶ Vet pharmaceutical/pet food reps. providing in-house product tutorials

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

5. Client apathy/price resistance

- ▶ Educate your clients re importance of oral health-communication, models, handouts, videos
- ▶ Puppy preschool- brushing, teething toys, diet
- ▶ Pre “dental” quotes with an itemised breakdown
- ▶ Like human dentistry, quality vet dentistry is time consuming and costs!: equipment, materials, professional time

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

A guide to the “Dental Prophylaxis”

- ▶ Pre dental check to explain the procedure, answer any client queries, determine homecare compliance
- ▶ Written estimate (broken down) with a range
- ▶ Sample invoice of typical prophylaxis
- ▶ Warn clients re poss need to contact them
- ▶ Options on consent form: “do all that is necessary” down to “do nothing” if cannot be contacted
- ▶ Discharge the animal yourself
 - ▶ dental chart for client
 - ▶ discuss radiographs
 - ▶ before and after photographs
 - ▶ photos of pathology-incorporate into discharge sheet
 - ▶ itemised account including prophylaxis steps
- ▶ **HOME CARE** advice
 - ▶ Free toothbrush and dental diet sample

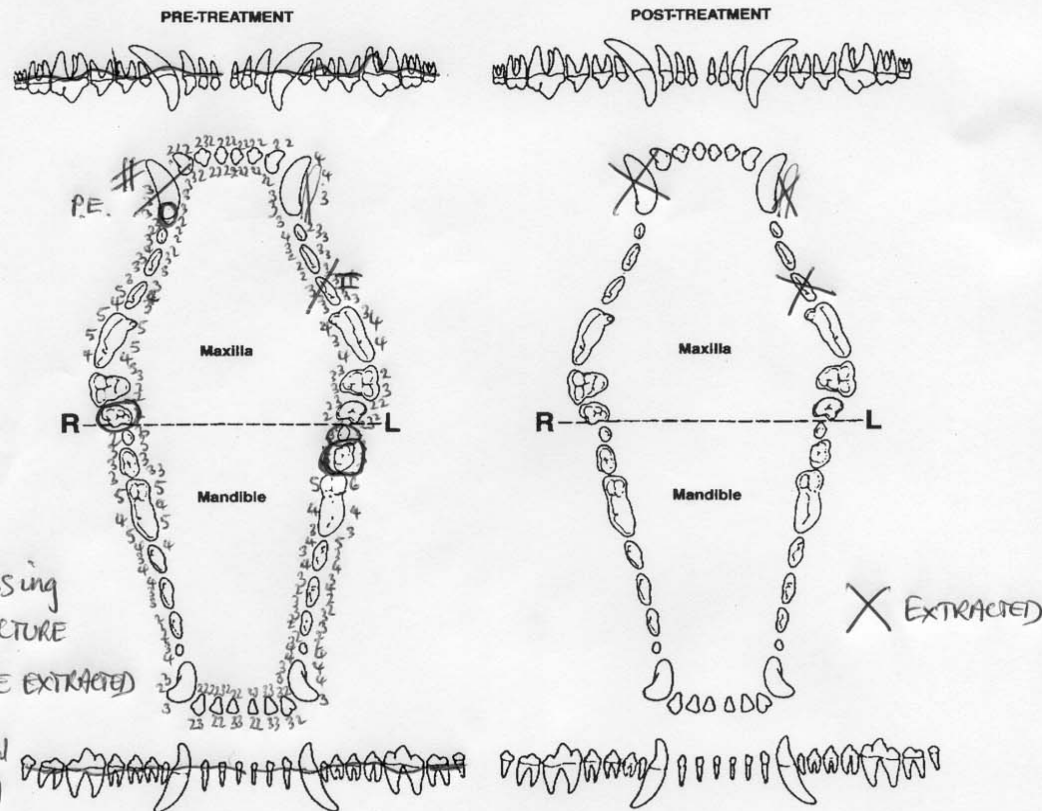


Pharmacia & Upjohn

Animal Health Business

CANINE DENTAL RECORD

Patient: MAX		Owner: STEVENS		Patient No:	
Breed: DOBERMAN	Age/Sex: 6yo (M)	Phone No:	Date: 22/7/00		
Chief Complaint: PERIODONTAL DISEASE			Occlusion: NORMAL		
Past Dental History: NONE					



Recommended Homecare:	☒ Brushing	☒ Oral Gel	☒ Medications
Antibiotics:	NA		
Pain Relief/Anti-inflammatory:	YES		
Recommended Re-visit Schedule:	6 MONTHS		
Further Treatment:	MONITOR ORAL HYGIENE		

Pharmacia & Upjohn – Manufacturers of ANTIROBE®
For further information: Australia (02) 9890 7177 New Zealand 021 800 033

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



Before and after photographs

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

The “Dental Propy”

REMEMBER

- ▶ The dental prophy is not the end of your professional input. It is the beginning.
- ▶ Think of it as getting the mouth back to a level which makes homecare easier for the client.
- ▶ Send out dental reminders to allow for follow up and review.



Reminder card for dentistry



PETQUARTERLY

ARTER 1, 2008



Say AHHHH...

Oral Hygiene, Discolored Teeth,
Dental X-rays, Diabetic Q&A
& Dental Health Care for Your Pet!

FROM YOUR VETERINARIAN



(LOGO)

**YOUR REMINDERS
HERE !**

**Dental newsletter /
reminder**

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

How to brush Handout sheet

- ▶ Start at an early age
- ▶ Be patient- start with soft gauze wrapped around a finger
- ▶ Introduce brushing gradually- start with the front teeth first
- ▶ Soft bristled pet toothbrush, small child's toothbrush or finger brush
- ▶ Brush angled at 45 degrees towards the teeth and gums and brush in a circular motion
- ▶ Concentrate on the area where the gums meet the teeth
- ▶ Pet flavoured toothpastes (fish for cats, chicken for dogs) increase the cooperation of your pet
- ▶ Avoid human toothpastes
- ▶ Avoid forceful restraint- try to make brushing a bonding experience and praise and reward your pet
- ▶ If your pet becomes agitated or upset while brushing- stop brushing consider alternatives- consult your vet on special teeth cleaning diets and other aids that help fight gum disease.

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Steps to Promote Vet Dentistry in your practice

- ▶ Wellness checks
- ▶ Special promotions- PDHM, free dental checks
- ▶ Newspaper articles
- ▶ Open days

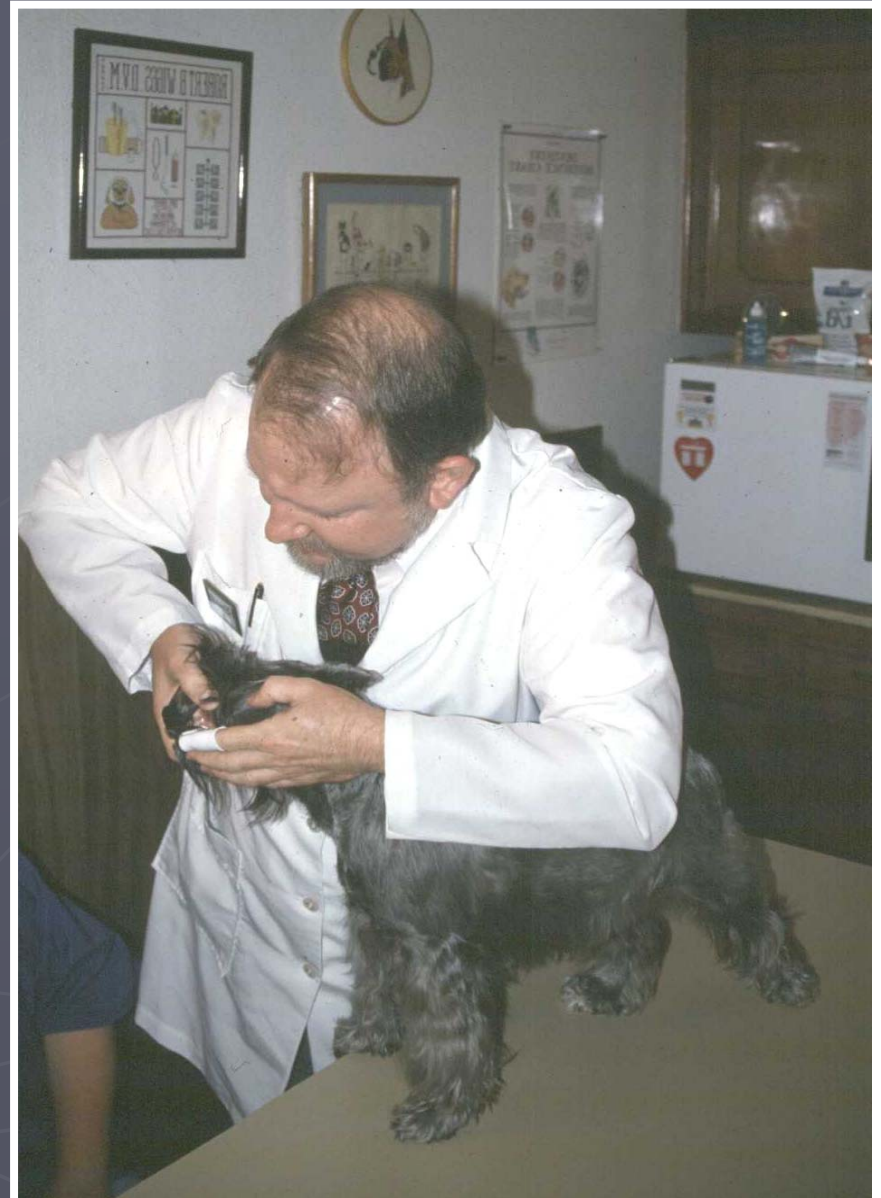
Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Wellness checks

- ▶ The best time to promote dentistry is during routine checks
- ▶ Clients appreciate a thorough check-up that includes the oral cavity
- ▶ Clients tend to be more responsive to suggestions made at **routine** checks

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- Examine the oral cavity
- Demonstrate tooth brushing
- Offer a tooth brushing service for clients' pets



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Special promotions

- ▶ PDHM
- ▶ Free tooth brush, dental diet
- ▶ Free dental check up



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ Program your own dental awareness program around the time of PDHM (August)
- ▶ Media coverage will assist your campaign
- ▶ Order free dental pamphlets from Hills, Pfizer etc
- ▶ Make certain all staff members are involved
- ▶ All staff should understand the importance of oral care for pets
- ▶ Deliver the same message- **'TEAM APPROACH'**

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

For a successful campaign the 'TEAM' approach is imperative!

- ▶ Well trained staff that can handle the most often asked questions
 - ▶ Do I really need to brush?
 - ▶ What is the best homecare product?
 - ▶ How often does my pet need a professional clean?
- ▶ All staff should attend at least one veterinary dentistry course

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice





Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Western Australia:
2004 state winner
Ranford Veterinary
Hospital

Karingal,
National winner PDHM 2004

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

PDHW,
Mercury
newspaper
2002



OPEN WIDE: Sandy Bay vet Michael Eland cleans the teeth of Tammy Rossiter's cat, Jelly, yesterday. Picture: FRED KOHL

Good advice for all pets to chew on

By CHARLES WATERHOUSE

OKAY, you know how important it is to brush your teeth — but consider your pet's.

This week is Pet Dental Health Week, which has the theme Teeth for Life.

National co-ordinator Tony Caiafa said up to 80 per cent of cats and dogs older than five were affected by periodontal disease.

Dr Caiafa, an associate professor in vet dentistry at the

University of Melbourne, said cats and dogs had similar teeth and gum structures to humans and suffered from oral diseases.

"They are particularly susceptible to periodontal disease, a painful condition where bacteria attacks the gums, tissues and bones that support the teeth," he said.

Pets, like their owners, were living longer and by six months had a full set of adult teeth which they would need

for about another 15 years.

Dr Caiafa said a good oral routine should start when pets were young with annual check-ups by a vet — which could be at the same time as annual vaccination — and regular brushing with a pet toothbrush as the "gold standard" of care.

Specially designed dental foods and raw bones could also be included in a pet's diet.

Bacteria could build up between the teeth and gums to

cause the irritation, redness and swelling gingivitis.

Bones were recommended three times a week for cats and dogs, with chicken wings recommended — or necks for cats.

They should be raw and large enough to prevent the animal swallowing them.

However, they could break teeth — particularly dogs' — and although this did not happen often, breaks tended to be serious.

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Marketing Veterinary Dentistry

- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Niche marketing
- ▶ Marketing budget?
- ▶ Use what works/discard what doesn't

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ Marketing is the process of informing and promoting your services to the target audience.
- ▶ Easier to promote your services to a current client than to a new client
- ▶ In service marketing, the client judges the service
 - ▶ on the level of technical quality
 - ▶ also the level of functional interactive quality
 - ▶ **does the whole clinic experience instill confidence within the client?**

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Communication

- ▶ Communication is the most important part of dental marketing
- ▶ Waiting room displays, smile books, practitioner qualifications
- ▶ Teaching aids
- ▶ Well trained staff
- ▶ Consistent message

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Communication (cont.)

- ▶ Visual educational tools
 - videos, static display models, and posters
- ▶ offer the advantage that they can deliver messages **without** the active participation of staff
- ▶ Clients waiting for appointments are a **captive audience** and look at waiting room displays etc.

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ Client education handouts

- ▶ www.lifelearn.com

- ▶ On line newsletters

- ▶ Vet channel

- ▶ Dr James Ramsden's Pet Pack:

- www.petpack.com.au

- “*Pet Pack* monthly online newsletter for busy vets wishing to impress their clients”.

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Niche marketing

- ▶ Find out what level of Vet. dental services are available in your area
- ▶ Vet dentistry lends itself well to niche marketing
- ▶ Targeted clients/pets
 - ▶ Disease worse in small breeds- so target dogs < 15 Kg
 - ▶ up to 70% of cats > 5 yrs have ORLs- target older cats
- ▶ mail outs, newsletters, reminders, special offers
- ▶ professional marketing companies available

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice



Veterinary Metrics

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Veterinary Metrics marketing company

www.veterinarymetrics.com

- ▶ “a typical 2 vet practice has up to \$2 million in unrealized, annual revenue within its existing client base?”
- ▶ “Vet Met’s services are designed to help practices realize their full revenue potential.... and improve the level of care given to the animals”
- ▶ “> 200 veterinary practices in USA have utilized our services to improve client communications, operational efficiencies and their bottom line”.

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

2005 Dental Marketing Program

- ▶ “Vet Met offers a full service dental program your practice can really sink its teeth into”.
- ▶ “The program is built around a customized, highly targeted direct mail campaign designed to educate clients and increase office visits — and revenue — through dental health exams”.

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

► Targeted pets / clients:

- Dogs and cats over three years of age

► Client call to action

- Schedule appointment for dental exam

► Client incentives:

- % off dental services (practice specific)

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Practice / Staff Training

- ▶ A Dental Program Implementation Guide is provided to participating practices. The implementation guide:
 - Provides comprehensive staff education modules and scripted talking points designed to maximize client compliance
 - Establishes a year-round dental program including re-checks and product repurchases

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

► Consultancy costs

- One Vet \$750-\$1,500 U.S.
- Two Vets \$900-\$2,000
- Three Vets \$1,200-\$2,500
- Four Vets \$1,500-\$3,000
- Five or more Vets \$2,000-\$4,000

- Money Back Guarantee! Vet Met promises that your practice will generate revenues of at least 5 times your program investment
- we'll refund or credit your practice for all setup, mailing and fulfillment expenses associated with the Dental Marketing Program

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

IN summary

Dental Health Promotion message

- ▶ Decide on your primary initiatives and keep it simple i.e. Increase dental revenue during PDHM
- ▶ Make sure the entire practice staff is comfortable and knowledgeable about the promotion
- ▶ Educate the staff re FAQs re oral health
- ▶ Display health information in your waiting room and treatment rooms
- ▶ KEEP IT SIMPLE !! eg. **use human analogies**

Dental Disease in Dogs and Cats



Pet Dental Month 2004

WITH PERMISSION CANDICE STORME

Brought to you by...



KARINGAL VET
HOSPITAL



Does your pet have bad breath?



Dental Disease is common in over 85% of adult pets*



*Hills NAP Level 3, Unit 5

Does your dog have a sore mouth?



Is your cat in pain?



Your pet may Require a Dental Procedure



How do we prevent Dental Disease?

- Enlist a home care routine...



Brush your pet's teeth daily...



Feed a teeth cleaning diet

- Such as Hills Science Diet® Oral Care

For Dogs



For Cats

Or, if prescribed by a Vet

► Hills Science Diet® T/D

For Dogs



For Cats

Teeth friendly toys

- Kong Toys



Healthy Teeth Should be Checked Every 6 Months

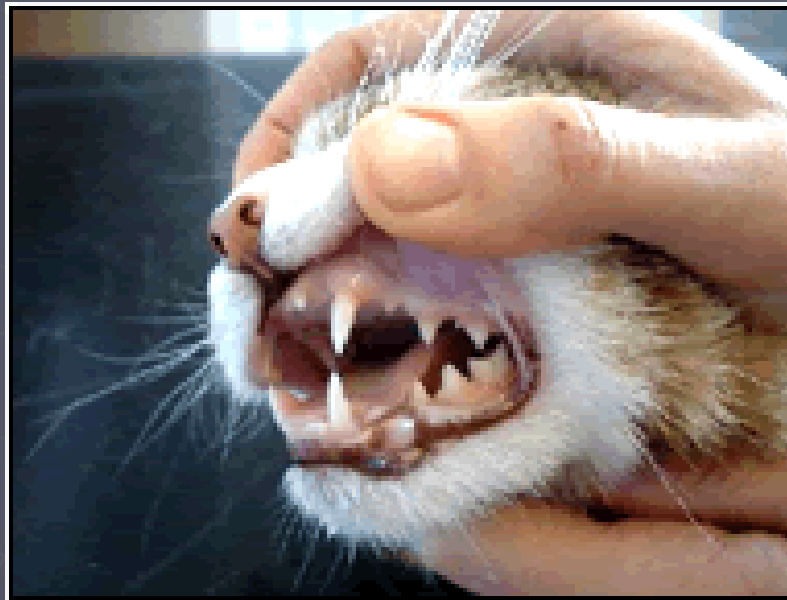


Imagine having a toothache,



But no body knew.....

Have your pet's mouth examined in a FREE Dental Check!



Ask a staff member today

Keep Them Smiling



And Pain Free



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ THE END

- ▶ PDHM August, 2006



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ Clients willingness/reluctance for dental tx for their pets may be influenced by their own dental experiences
- ▶ The raising of dental awareness in the general community has been a positive for vet dentistry
- ▶ Increasing media attention on veterinary dentistry
- ▶ Rapid growth in plaque reducing diets
- ▶ Dental awareness month in August both for human dentistry and vet dentistry

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

To deliver quality dental care

- ▶ Define your dental message
- ▶ Train staff to deliver that message
- ▶ Low risk anaesthesia
- ▶ Flip the lip be proactive in diagnosing oral disease
- ▶ Assess your ability of providing quality care
- ▶ Willingness to charge for your professional time- Quote!

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ WIN-WIN-WIN Situation
- ▶ Improved Client Satisfaction
- ▶ Improved Patient Health
- ▶ Improved Practice Revenue

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ BEGIN WITH THE FIRST EXAMINATION
- ▶ Discuss dental anatomy and expected exfoliation.
- ▶ Demonstrate tooth brushing.
- ▶ Offer a sample brush and tooth paste.
- ▶ Emphasize the importance of healthy teeth in aging.
- ▶ Inform the client they will receive dental reminders.
- ▶ Send “report card” after each dental procedure

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ Discharge & Recall Visits
 - Discharge form should contain a dental chart & report
- ▶ See examples
- ▶ Demonstrate brushing on a dental model
- ▶ Explain the importance of maintenance visits
 - Electronic
 - 1, 2, 3, 6, 9 & 12 month recall codes
 - use reminder system similar to vaccination notices



**HELP PETE AND GIGI
SPREAD THE WORD
ABOUT PET DENTAL CARE**

Ask Us About Dental Care *TODAY!*



FIGHT PLAQUE! TAME TARTAR! CRUSH GINGIVITIS!



Attend workshops



- ▶ Step 1 Order free dental kit from Hills
- ▶ Step 2 Train your staff re dental disease and answer questions from pet owners
- ▶ Step 3 Staff meetings to formulate a consistent message
- ▶ Step 4 Dental care promotion- discounts, free dental check ups, free home care kit
- ▶ Step 5 Direct mailing ie pts over 4 and no dental in past year. Customised postcard with dental promotion
- ▶ Step 6 Dental related article in newsletter
- ▶ Step 7 Follow up phone calls to direct mail out
- ▶ Step 8 Deliver a quality service
- ▶ Step 9 Printed before and after photographs
- ▶ Step 10 Free recheck post tx
- ▶ Step 11 Reminder sent 6-12 mths post Tx
- ▶ Step 12 Track response from mail out

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ Health promotion is the science and art of helping people achieve optimal health through changing adverse health behaviors, enhancing awareness of good health practices, and creating environments that encourage good health.

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ The key to successfully increasing patient awareness about health problems and risk factors is the repetitive delivery of a simple, well-focused message through multiple channels. For example, not only just telling patients about a particular health problem, but also using visual aids to get the message across and then giving them written summaries that they can read at their leisure.



Floyd centre UC Davis



▶ **Dr. Tony M. Woodward** DVM, AVDC

▶ *** Practice Limited to Veterinary Dentistry**

▶ **Pets Have Teeth Too!** Imagine how your teeth would look and feel if you didn't brush them daily. The same applies to your pet's teeth. Unless you are regularly providing some form of dental care, you are neglecting an important part in the overall health of your pet.



health exams.

A Proven Approach

Vet Met's dental programs have been used by a wide range of veterinary practices nationwide. Since the launch of our first campaign in 2002, our dental programs have been responsible for more than 27,000 performed dental procedures and over \$5.7 million in revenue for participating practices. Vet Met 2005 Dental Marketing Program

details are as follows:

On average, Vet Met personnel programs generate a revenue return that outweighs the cost of the program by 25 times.

Program period: February through March, 2005
Targeted pets/clients: Dogs and cats over three years of age. Additional proprietary Vet Met segmentation criteria will also be used.

Client call to action: Schedule appointment for dental exam.

Client incentives: Percentage off of dental services as specified by the individual practice.

Practice / Staff Training: A Dental Program Implementation Guide is provided to participating practices. The implementation guide:

- Provides comprehensive staff education modules and scripted talking points designed to maximize client compliance.

- Establishes a year-round dental program including re-checks and product repurchases.

- Measures internal program awareness and understanding through staff testing.

Consulting: One Vet \$750-\$1,500

Two Vets \$900-\$2,000

Three Vets \$1,200-\$2,500

Four Vets \$1,500-\$3,000

Five or more Vets \$2,000-\$4,000

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

- ▶ How do I know if my Veterinarian is knowledgeable about dental problems?
- ▶ Although the trend is slowly changing, most veterinarians receive very little dental training while in veterinary school. You need to ask questions to find out their level of dental expertise. Ask what additional training they have obtained, and what courses or wet labs they have attended. Have they attended the Veterinary Dental Forum that is held annually? Are they a member of the American Veterinary Dental Society? Do they read the Journal of Veterinary Dentistry? Do they have and use a dental X-ray machine? Most veterinarians will welcome your questions and concern, and will let you know if they are comfortable treating your pet's dental problems.
- ▶ Animal dental care Dr. Tony Woodward



Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

No masks
Protective eyewear ?



Veterinary dental websites thro. the world

- ▶ AVDS: <http://www.petdental.com.au>
- ▶ American Veterinary Dental College:
<http://www.avdc.org>
- ▶ American Veterinary Dental Society:
<http://www.avds-online.org>
- ▶ Journal of Veterinary Dentistry:
<http://www.jvdonline.org>
- ▶ Academy of Veterinary Dentistry:
<http://www.avdonline.org/>
- ▶ Veterinary Oral Health Council:
<http://www.vohc.org>
- ▶ British Veterinary Dental Association
<http://www.bvda.co.uk/>
- ▶ British Equine Veterinary Association
www.beva.org.uk

Veterinary Dentistry and your practice

Improving pets oral health

- ▶ by increasing clients awareness about select dental health problems in their pets and the risk factors
- ▶ by encouraging homecare compliance where indicated, through health promotion and education.
- ▶ the use of human examples helps drive home the health message