

# THE VETERINARY PROFESSION

## PRIDE AND CHALLENGING

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It's a proud thing for us being veterinarians as we are serving the speechless innocent creatures rather than humans. It gives a very satisfying feeling after treating an animal. It's challenging a way more than an M.B.B.S. doctor as a human patient can tell his problem but an animal being speechless can't describe its pain and location of pain. It's the skill of a vet that he makes out and diagnose the problem of an animal and cure it.

veterinarians serve the healthcare needs of animals, including small animals, livestock, avian, and zoo and laboratory animals. Commonly called "vets," small animal veterinarians do most of their work in private clinic settings. Here, they treat companion animals—pets—like dogs, cats, and birds.

Some vets will care for more exotic pets such as ferrets, snakes, and lizards. They diagnose illnesses and perform many in-office medical procedures such as chiropractic care.

A small number of vets work as equine veterinarians treating horses. Other veterinarians may work as food animal vets with farm animals that are raised to become food sources. Some food animal vets specialize in food safety and inspection. They check livestock for illnesses that animals can transmit to humans. Others are research veterinarians who study human and animal health conditions.

There are also veterinary specialists who have completed additional training in a specific area of veterinary medicine. These specialties include surgery, dentistry, anesthesia, emergency care, nutrition, ophthalmology, sports medicine, pathology, and preventative care.<sup>1</sup>

## **Veterinarian Duties & Responsibilities**

Veterinarians provide medical care for animals. The primary responsibilities of a veterinarian include:<sup>2</sup>

Advising clients on care of their pets

Administering immunizations

Conducting physical examinations

Providing emergency care

Performing surgery and dental procedures

Prescribing medication

Euthanizing animals

In addition to being able to diagnose and treat the animals, veterinarians also communicate effectively with the animals' owners. This often includes explaining diagnoses and treatments in down-to-earth, common language.

It is essential for veterinarians to keep up with the latest developments in animal medicine. They do this by reading professional journals and attending conferences. This allows them to make sure their patients are receiving the best care available.

## Veterinarian Skills & Competencies

In addition to formal training, to be successful as a veterinarian, you need specific qualities you won't learn in school. These are called soft skills.

**Compassion:** Vets must show concern toward their patients and owners.

**Critical thinking:** This skill aids in choosing appropriate treatment methods.

**Interpersonal skills:** These "people skills" allow vets to work with animal owners to provide the best care possible.

**Problem solving skills:** It is essential to be able to identify problems as quickly as possible.

**Scientific aptitude:** The study and treatment of animals is a science and requires professional research methods and skills.

**Analytical skills:** Since animals can't explain what ails them the way people can, veterinarians need to be able to interpret all of the information available to them and decide on a course of action based on that interpretation.

## Job Outlook

The demand for veterinarians is expected to grow at a rate of 18% between 2018 and 2028, almost three times the average predicted growth for all occupations combined, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.<sup>4</sup> People are expected to spend more money on their pets and this will drive the higher demand for veterinary services.

## Work Environment

Veterinarians' work in veterinary clinics or hospitals, either their own or someone else's. Those who treat farm or other large animals must travel to their patients. Vets who work for zoos are part of a team that studies and cares for the animals at the facility.

## Work Schedule

Vets in private practice see household pets during regular business hours, as well as on weekends and evening when their owners can bring them in. They may also have to respond to emergencies.

Protecting the health of animals and society

Employment opportunities for veterinarians include such diverse areas as clinical practice, teaching and research, regulatory medicine, public health, and the uniformed services.

## **Private or corporate clinical practice**

In the United States, approximately two-thirds of veterinarians work in private or corporate clinical practice, providing veterinary care for a wide range of species. Many treat only traditional or exotic pets such as dogs, cats, birds, small mammals (e.g., hamsters, guinea pigs), reptiles, and fish. Some veterinarians exclusively treat horses. Others treat a combination of species. Some veterinarians limit their practice to the care of farm/ranch animals and advise owners on production medicine and protecting our nation's food supply from farm to fork.

## **Teaching and research**

Research veterinarians employed at universities, colleges, governmental agencies, or in industry are finding new ways to diagnose, treat, and prevent animal and human health disorders. These veterinarians have made many important contributions to human health. For example, veterinarians made discoveries that helped control malaria and yellow fever, solved the mystery of botulism, produced an anticoagulant used to treat some people with heart.

The value of both medical and veterinary science for human survival are shrouded, a matter of conjecture, to be adjudicated by the indifferent but inviolable dictate of biology: adapt or die. The Hippocratic oath has moral (if questionable) survival value, but the Declaration veterinary graduates are required to make on entering the profession is at best delusional since its principle claim – to champion the welfare of animals – cannot be substantiated.

I should conclude that these observations are analytical, not judgmental. Polemic challenges to conventional philosophical positions or the adaptive value of both professions are rare indeed. As humanity plunges towards maladaptation and therefore extinction, facilitated by our scientific and technical proficiency, perhaps a profound and penetrating discussion would be both pertinent and prudent.

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