PRESS INFORMATION

FECAVA and WSAVA Mark Blue Monday with Commitment to Veterinary Collegiality

The Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations (FECAVA) and World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) have drawn up a set of guidelines outlining how veterinary professionals should conduct themselves among their peers.

Called 'Global Principles of Veterinary Collegiality', the document springs from discussions held during a VIP Summit at WSAVA World Congress in July 2019. During the meeting, veterinary leaders from around the world expressed concern at the additional stress caused to veterinarians by poor communication and collegiality within teams and among colleagues. They highlighted the additional pressures that this was placing members of a profession already challenged by well-being and mental health issues.

The document was launched on Monday January 18, known as 'Blue Monday', claimed to be the most depressing day of the year. While some country veterinary associations already have a Code of Conduct, many do not and FECAVA and WSAVA hope that their initiative will help all of their member associations to commit to a common standard of

behavior in order to support the profession as it works to achieve the ideals of patient care as set out in the WSAVA Veterinary Oath.

The Global Principles were authored by WSAVA Past Presidents Dr Shane Ryan and Dr Walt Ingwersen, and FECAVA Senior Vice President Dr Wolfgang Dohne. The document sets out the key principles of professional collegiality which they identify as involving equal and reciprocal relationships between veterinary individuals and groups.

Commenting, Dr Wolfgang Dohne said: “Poor collegiality and communication add to stress and frustration among veterinary professionals and hold back veterinary teams. Mutual respect, courtesy and support of especially junior team members, together with good communication, results not only in a better working environment, but also in better clinical outcomes. It improves animal welfare and encourages the concept of life-long learning. These goals are at the heart of FECAVA and its national member organizations and we are proud to be co-signatories of this document.”

Dr Shane Ryan added: “The mental and emotional well-being of the entire veterinary team and, consequently, our ability to ensure the health and welfare of our animal patients, can only be enhanced by practicing in a harmonious, collegial environment. The principles outlined in the document allow for courteous and respectful interaction with our fellow veterinarians to encourage a more productive and welcoming workplace. Strengthening collegiality is an important element of the WSAVA’s strategy to advocate for the profession globally to bring about positive change.”

The associations plan to follow up the Global Principles with an infographic for practical use in companion animal clinics. It will be unveiled during the joint WSAVA/FECAVA Online Congress which takes place in March 2021. The document and infographics will be translated into multiple languages.

Through its member associations, FECAVA represents more than 25,000 companion animal veterinarians in 39 European countries. FECAVA strives to improve the veterinary care of pets through professional development. It also provides a voice for

companion animal issues at European level and works closely with other European veterinary organizations and stakeholders.

The WSAVA aims to advance the health and welfare of companion animals worldwide through creating an educated, committed and collaborative global community of veterinary peers. It currently represents more than 200,000 veterinarians through 113 member associations. Its annual World Congress brings together globally respected experts to offer cutting edge thinking on all aspects of companion animal veterinary care.

For further information, please contact:

Rebecca George, George PR

Tel: 01449 737281/07974 161108/email: rebecca@georgepr.com

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