

GLOBAL PRINCIPLES OF VETERINARY COLLEGIALITY



WSAVA
Global Veterinary Community



FECAVA
Federation of European Companion
Animal Veterinary Associations



GLOBAL PRINCIPLES OF VETERINARY COLLEGIALITY

As veterinary professionals, no matter our discipline or field of practice, we have as fundamental responsibilities the health and welfare of the animals entrusted to our care. As a profession, we are also committed and obligated to protect human society and its members through our engagement in the One Health paradigm and our interactions with animal owners, carers, and guardians.

To discharge these obligations and to ensure we meet the expectations of the societies we serve, it is essential that the veterinary profession is both trusted and respected. To maintain and support the high regard the veterinary profession has achieved within our communities, our members need to act in a respectful and collegial manner towards all fellow veterinarians.

All veterinary interactions must prioritise the welfare and well-being of our animal patients and be pursued in an ethical and dignified manner. The principles below are intended to outline appropriate collegial interactions, so we, as individual veterinarians and as a profession, can strive to achieve the ideals of patient care set out in the WSAVA Veterinary Oath¹.

¹ Also referred to as the WSAVA Veterinary Affirmation

PRINCIPLES OF COLLEGIALITY AMONG VETERINARY PEERS

- Professional collegiality involves equal and reciprocal relationships between veterinary individuals and/or groups. Collegiality is based on mutual trust and respect, and on interacting with colleagues politely, fairly, and supportively.
- Discrimination of any kind whether in the workplace or within the profession, on the basis of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religious or political belief, age, marital status, disability, socio-economic status, or any other characteristic is unacceptable and contrary to the principles of collegiality. Such discrimination may negatively impact an individual's or a veterinary team's ability to provide optimal animal health and welfare.
- Collegiality requires open, honest, yet respectful communication and the recognition of our own and our colleagues' skills and areas of expertise, but also the technical or professional areas where support may be required.
- Constructive feedback is essential to productive communication. We should assist colleagues as they strive for clinical competence and confidence, and provide appropriate support and supervision if requested or needed.
- Clear and concise communication between members of the veterinary team is critical to patient health and well-being. Referral to colleagues within or outside the veterinary practice necessitates the timely, transparent, and full sharing of all relevant clinical patient information, in a manner that upholds client confidentiality (when applicable), and that respects all governing legislation and laws.

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- Collegiality requires awareness of the health, well-being, and safety of our colleagues. Veterinarians who have genuine concerns regarding a colleague's behaviour, well-being or fitness to practice should be at liberty to alert, in confidence, a senior co-worker or the appropriate health or regulatory authorities, without the fear of personal or professional repercussions.
 - Colleagues seeking to comply with legislation or codes of conduct should receive our full support. However, a veterinary colleague should never be denigrated before a client, a member of the public or other colleagues.
 - Conflict resolution in a collegial manner requires open, honest, and respectful communication and/or mediation. The use of impartial arbiters such as professional representative associations or veterinary statutory bodies may be useful in resolving conflicts.
 - Commitment to continuing professional education and related social interactions provides not only opportunities to refresh and update professional knowledge, but also increases dialogue and engagement with colleagues and helps develop a culture of respect and learning.
 - Collegiality recognises that a unified veterinary profession can speak with one voice on behalf and for the benefit of all veterinary team members. Professional societies inform the public on matters relating to animal health and welfare, help promote the value and status of the veterinary profession within communities, and engage, on behalf of all veterinarians, with regulatory authorities and commercial entities. Membership and active participation in such societies promote collegiality and serve to benefit all members of the veterinary profession.

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FECAVA

Through its member associations, Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Association (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 organisations and stakeholders.



WSAVA

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 110 member associations. Its annual World Congress brings together globally respected experts to offer cutting edge thinking on all aspects of companion animal veterinary care.



