

Veterinary Oral Medicine: An Emerging Subspecialty.

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BACKGROUND

Veterinary dentistry is part of the practice of veterinary medicine and encompasses all aspects of oral health care, including the cleaning, adjustment, filling and extraction of teeth, as well as the surgical treatment of oral neoplasia.¹ Veterinarians receive basic training in dentistry as part of the curriculum of colleges of veterinary medicine and individuals may then pursue advanced residency training in Dentistry and Oral Surgery as well as fellowship training in oral and maxillofacial surgery (OMFS).² Although oral mucosal diseases can affect animals, there are wide knowledge gaps in the field, and Veterinary Oral Medicine is not a recognized subspecialty.



Fig.1 Canine Chronic Ulcerative Stomatitis.

CASE REPORT

The Thomas P. Sollecito One Health Fellowship in Oral Medicine was designed to support the One Health concept, fostering interdisciplinary interactions in human and animal medicine, specifically between Oral Medicine specialists at the University of Pennsylvania and veterinary dentists interested in oral medicine and dedicated to life-long learning. Veterinary dentists and Oral Medicine specialists apply to the program if they have a research interest in companion animal oral medicine. Fellows experience a two-week immersion program in clinical oral medicine, including active participation in clinical rounds and have an opportunity to discuss and design a research topic. Fellows complete didactic lectures in human and animal medical history and physical examination techniques, oral mucosal diseases (Figs 1, 2), odontogenic and bony pathology and principles of cone-beam computed tomography given by respective faculty experts. Clinical rotations focus on evaluation and management of human oral mucosal diseases, orofacial pain disorders, temporomandibular disorder and salivary gland diseases. Fellows are required to attend seminars correlating veterinary and human oral mucosal diseases and developing a personalized research project suitable for presentation at a national scientific meeting. To date, one Fellow started the program, but was unable to finish due to circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSIONS

Veterinary Oral Medicine is an emerging subspecialty and the Thomas P. Sollecito One Health Fellowship in Oral Medicine is the first program of its kind to train providers in this area of veterinary medicine.

REFERENCES

1. Veterinary Dentistry. American Veterinary Medical Association. <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/avma-policies/veterinary-dentistry>. Accessed March 9, 2022.
2. Anderson JG, Goldstein G, Boudreaux K, Ilkiw JE. The State of Veterinary Dental Education in North America, Canada, and the Caribbean: A Descriptive Study. *J Vet Med Educ.* 2017; 44(2):358-363.



Fig.2 Erythema Multiforme in a Canine.