



THE ROLE OF PRIVATE VETERINARIANS IN RABIES ELIMINATION

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BIOGRAPHY

Dr René Carlson was in private veterinary clinical practice for 35 years in the United States, working in large and small animal hospitals in both rural and urban referral and emergency centers. Dr Carlson served on the AVMA's Council on Education and then as the 2011-2012 President of the American Veterinary Medical Association. She is currently the Director of International Affairs for the AVMA. In 2014 she was elected President of the World Veterinary Association for the 2014-2017 term.

SUMMARY

The World Veterinary Association (WVA), which represents over 500,000 veterinarians around the world, recognises dog-mediated human rabies as a neglected, under-reported fatal, yet preventable disease that needs the full attention of the international veterinary (and non-veterinary) community. Many of the services necessary for effective rabies prevention are already described by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC), and Partners for Rabies Prevention (PRP) and are provided by a variety of groups. These services include mass canine vaccination programmes, dog population management, surveillance and monitoring, and public education for rabies awareness. However, many times the varied services are independently provided and many times provided on a temporary or intermittent basis.

Engagement of private sector veterinarians has been difficult, possibly due to lack of workforce, lack of resources, general apathy, or perceived or real competition from freely donated services from outside volunteers. Barriers to the successful engagement of the private sector of veterinarians must be identified and resolved so as to fully engage community veterinarians and paraprofessionals in a One Health community approach for sustainable progress in the global fight to end the needless suffering and deaths by rabies in both humans and animals.

This presentation will introduce the concept for regional WVA Member veterinary associations taking a leadership role in coordinating a comprehensive approach with needed private–public partnerships in such a way as to engage and coordinate a long-term sustainable community-based canine rabies prevention programme.