Evaluation of Veterinary Education in the USA

Evolving Veterinary Education for a Safer World
12-14 October 2009

W. Ron DeHaven, DVM, MBA
Executive Vice President and CEO
American Veterinary Medical Association
AVMA Accreditation of Veterinary Colleges

- Overview of accreditation history
- Accreditation standards
- Accreditation process
- Commentary and conclusions
Accreditation in the US

- AVMA initiated *accreditation* process in 1921
- AVMA’s Council on Education (COE) recognized by US Department of Education as official accrediting agency for veterinary education in USA since 1952.
- Partnership with Canadian VMA
- Currently 42 colleges are accredited
  - 28 in US
  - 5 in Canada
  - 9 foreign
AVMA – COE Accreditation

Provides assurance that graduates of accredited veterinary medical programs are:

- Firmly based in the fundamental principles, basic knowledge, and physical & mental skills of veterinary medicine.
- Able to apply these fundamentals to solve veterinary medical problems in different species.
Council on Education

- Composed of 20 volunteer members elected by the AVMA House of Delegates
- Membership includes academicians, private practitioners, researchers, public health veterinarians, Canadian VMA representative, 3 public members
- One, non-voting liaison from the AAVMC (Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges)
Colleges of veterinary medicine are evaluated based on compliance with 11 standards. Educational programs are not compared across institutions but are evaluated by comparison to each standard.
Accreditation Standards

- Accreditation standards reflect the needs of society
  - Developed with input from many groups including the public, veterinary profession and academic veterinary medicine
- Standards are reviewed on a regular cycle for adequacy & relevancy
11 Accreditation Standards

- Organization
- Finances
- Physical Facilities and Equipment
- Clinical Resources
- Library and Information Resources

- Students
- Admissions
- Faculty
- Curriculum
- Research Programs
- Outcomes Assessment
Accreditation Procedure

- Self-study document prepared by the college
- COE site team visits the college
- Report of Evaluation prepared for consideration by full Council
- Classification of accreditation assigned for up to 7 years with annual reporting
Categories of Accreditation

- Reasonable Assurance
- Provisional Accreditation
- Full Accreditation
- Limited Accreditation
- Terminal Accreditation
The COE accreditation process is similar to those used in Europe, Australasia, and other areas with similar societal needs and expectations.

Common global accreditation standards cannot accommodate widely dissimilar societal needs.

Many countries may not be prepared for the application of global accreditation standards.

The AVMA *accreditation model* might be applied in multiple situations but the *accreditation standards* would have to be customized to the needs and expectations of the specific country or region where they are applied.
Conclusion

The AVMA:

- Endorses *minimum educational standards* to meet the need for effective national veterinary services in all countries
- Stands ready to assist in further development of this process

However:

We should not confuse *minimum educational standards* with *accreditation of colleges of veterinary medicine.*
Veterinarians
Doctors Protecting
The Health of Animals and People

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