

Editorial

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It is with great pleasure that we present this special issue of the Brazilian Journal of Veterinary Research and Animal Science dedicated to Collective Veterinary Medicine, emphasizing the advances and challenges this field has faced. This special edition was conceived to highlight the collaborative and multidisciplinary work of researchers, academics, and professionals at the forefront of innovative initiatives in this area.

Collective Veterinary Medicine (CVM) emerges as an essential approach in the current context, where animal and human health and environmental balance are inextricably linked. With the growing recognition of the importance of the “One Health” concept, it becomes evident that promoting the health of individuals, families, and communities depends on a holistic and collaborative vision, which must be reflected in public policies.

CVM was born from the convergence of various disciplines and practices, reflecting the evolution of the moral status of animals in society. Following the capture and elimination of dogs and cats for rabies control, the period culminated in developing programs for managing dog and cat populations with a mission to be ethical, humane, and sustainable. This differentiated management was the driving force behind creating the new specialty, Collective Veterinary Medicine. The appreciation of animal life has driven profound changes in veterinary practices and public health, with the legal prohibition of eliminating dogs and cats marking a significant historical milestone in these transformations.

The need for new practices and approaches to old problems related to the human-animal interface in public health has become urgent, as public authorities often ignore these issues. The recognition of animal abuse as a potential indicator of family disharmony or social vulnerability, primarily related to domestic violence, has awakened different sectors and professionals to the need for joint work based on the “One Health” strategy. Similarly, the importance of intersectoral and interdisciplinary work in addressing cases of people with animal and object hoarding disorders is highlighted.

Both problems intersect with Legal Veterinary Medicine, reinforcing the relevance of veterinarians in promoting comprehensive health and shaping more effective public policies.

Veterinarians play a fundamental role in primary health care, especially in multidisciplinary health teams and the Family Health Strategy. Their broad and interdisciplinary training, which includes knowledge in animal health, epidemiology, and zoonoses, allows them to contribute uniquely to promoting the comprehensive health of communities. In the context of family health strategy, veterinarians can act in zoonotic disease surveillance, monitoring and controlling diseases transmissible between animals and humans. Their expertise in animal welfare provides a differentiated perspective on caring for vulnerable populations, where animal health often reflects and affects family health. Veterinarians are also essential in health education, guiding communities on zoonosis prevention, animal care, and environmental management practices that directly impact public health. Their integration into multidisciplinary teams strengthens the intersectoral and collaborative approach central to the One Health concept, integrating human, animal, and environmental health holistically and sustainably.

Shelter Veterinary Medicine, which became necessary after the cessation of animal elimination practices, brought new challenges as dogs and cats began to remain in shelters for extended periods. Disaster Veterinary Medicine proved crucial and began to be refined, especially after the Brumadinho and Mariana disasters in Minas Gerais, Brazil. It brought a new dimension to the field, with particular attention to contingency plans that include pets and other animals, the technical rescue of animals during emergencies, the recovery and maintenance of animals post-event, and zoonosis control in disaster contexts.

Indigenous and Traditional Peoples Veterinary Medicine, which highlights respect for ancestral cultures and practices, has also become a relevant field for zoonosis control, integrating animal care into these peoples’ cultural and social context.

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Collective Veterinary Medicine integrates interfaces with these five major areas: Public Health, Indigenous and Traditional Peoples Veterinary Medicine, Disaster Veterinary Medicine, Shelter Medicine, and Legal Veterinary Medicine. Collective Veterinary Medicine opens doors to various veterinarian roles, offering multiple paths that converge toward building innovative and integrated solutions to promote health and well-being in complex contexts. It is about consolidating collaborative and interdisciplinary practices that transform veterinary medicine into a powerful tool to tackle contemporary social and health challenges. In addition to reflecting the transformation and expansion of public health veterinary practice, focusing on promoting comprehensive health through a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach, CVM presents itself as an emerging and essential specialty capable of effectively responding to communities' social and health demands, especially in vulnerable contexts.

In this special edition, we bring together articles addressing crucial topics related to the One Health strategy. The works explore the intersection of environmental conservation, dog and cat population management, public health, shelter medicine, animal welfare, and humane education. They

highlight the complexity of human and animal health challenges and their environmental interaction, proposing integrated and practical solutions. Each contribution was carefully selected to reflect the diversity and depth of contemporary research in Collective Veterinary Medicine.

Regarding dog and cat population management, the articles discuss the impact of these animals on ecological balance, the main reasons for abandonment, the use of roadkill as an indicator for monitoring public policies, and the role of intersectoral coordination in managing free-living cat populations. Concerning the management and welfare of working equids, one review explores effective and accessible contraceptive methods for the population control of these animals. In the field of The Link — which relates animal abuse to interpersonal violence — one article offers a tool to assess the risk of animal abuse in households with domestic violence, and another describes the development of an innovative app to record and diagnose cases of animal abuse. Another study points out the correlation between owner neglect and the poor health of animals seen in veterinary clinics. In shelter medicine, initiatives to increase adoption rates, improve shelter conditions, and monitor the health of sheltered animals are discussed, with a particular focus on identifying parasites and health issues in overcrowded environments.

We want to express our deep gratitude to the authors who shared their knowledge and experiences, enriching the content of this edition. In addition, we thank the reviewers and collaborators who, with their diligent work, ensured the scientific quality and relevance of the presented articles.

Finally, we hope this special issue inspires new debates, research, and practices that contribute to the continuous evolution of Veterinary Medicine and the promotion of integrated and sustainable health for all living beings.

We wish you all a productive and inspiring reading.