WSAVA is delighted to announce a major step forward with one of its key campaigns – to ensure that a nutritional assessment and recommendation is made on every patient during every visit to the vet.

We want this to become known as the 5th Vital Assessment (5VA), following the four vital assessments of temperature, pulse, respiration and pain, which are already routinely undertaken.

After a year of development work led by Dr Clayton MacKay, a Canadian veterinary consultant, the WSAVA Guidelines Development Committee has now finalised and launched its V5 Global Nutrition Guidelines which are aimed at helping veterinary surgeons and pet owners design a nutrition plan which is tailored to the needs of their specific dog.

The V5 Guidelines are available at, and are consistent with those produced by, the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA). We’re actively promoting their availability via member associations and the media. It is our goal that every teaching institution in the world should formalise this approach in their curriculum as soon as possible.

Now that the V5 Guidelines have been published, the committee is working on the next phase of activity. It has formulated a plan to build an alliance of global veterinary organisations to help healthcare teams and pet owners begin implementing the guidelines together on an international basis. These efforts will be coupled with the Veterinary Companion Animal Nutritional Consortium founded by AAHA, of which WSAVA is a charter member.

“We believe this project to be important given the influence of nutrition on every patient, whether to treating illness, preserving health or preventing future health problems,” comments Professor Jolle Kirpensteijn, President of the WSAVA. “It’s vital for companion animals as they’re often fed the same diet at every meal with little attention paid to the quality or suitability of the nutrition they are receiving. Just as we led a global effort to elevate pain to become the fourth vital assessment, we also see the need to elevate a nutritional assessment to become the fifth vital assessment in a standard physical exam. We believe a sound nutritional recommendation from a veterinarian is crucial because pet owners are exposed to a myriad of nutritional myths that if acted upon can actually be harmful to their pets. To help ensure the WSAVA V5 Global Nutrition Guidelines are assimilated worldwide, we’ll be working towards getting the guidelines published and encouraging other stakeholders to get involved. We hope that global veterinary organisations will join forces with us to encourage veterinary healthcare teams and institutions in their respective geographies to make nutrition a routine part of their recommendation procedures.”

The guidelines can be viewed on the WSAVA website at www.wsava.org. For further information on this project, contact wsavasecretariat@gmail.com.
Moving forward with pain management – introducing the Global Pain Council

Diagnosing pain and suffering in companion animals and prescribing appropriate measures to manage and relieve it is one of the most vital functions a vet can perform but, as in many areas of veterinary care, the range of approaches and techniques varies dramatically across the world.

The WSAVA, under the chairmanship of Professor Karol Mathews, is now moving ahead with an initiative to promote higher standards of pain management at a global level. The first step was the creation of a Global Pain Council (GPC) which has identified two initial activities:

- The collation of pain assessment and management information into a ‘Global Pain Treatise’
- The compilation of an inventory of pain management needs in regions around the globe.

Once these pieces of work have been completed, they will be used as a basis to help the GPC design and deliver targeted and customised educational (CE) programmes. The CE will be delivered in the regions, at WSAVA Congress, as part of WSAVA member association CE events, and through online CPD. Further phases of activity for the GPC are also planned but will be dependent on industry sponsorship. They include:

- The creation of a marketing plan and promotional materials to support the Global Pain Management Treatise and the CE programme
- Further work with regional academic institutions and associations to ensure progress towards self-sufficiency/reliance on continued regional Pain Management CE
- Further implementation of CE programme with a particular focus on academic institutions
- Regional lobbying for access to needed pain management medication
- Expansion into pet owner education.

For further information on this project, please contact wsavasecretariat@gmail.com.

Some words of appreciation

Professor Peter Suter

We’ve been saddened to hear of the passing of our illustrious colleague, Peter Suter. His family have prepared a brief eulogy which we thought you would like to share. He was a wonderful man and an exceptional vet.

Professor Dr. med. vet. Peter F. Suter, aged 80, passed away peacefully on Saturday, February 12th, 2011, in his home town of Affoltern am Albis following a brief but intense battle with pancreatic cancer. He leaves behind his loving wife of 51 years, Evelyn, his sons Martin, Chris and Roy, two daughters in law, five grandchildren and many close friends. Born and raised in Switzerland, Peter initially assumed he would step into the shoes of his father and take over the family farm. However at the age of twenty he decided to become a veterinary surgeon and graduated from the University of Zurich in 1955. He met his wife while working at his uncle’s flower shop to help fund his studies. They married in 1959 and moved to California to join the radiology department of the University of California, Davis, Veterinary School, where he worked as a Professor from 1969 until 1981.

His ground-breaking research, publications and passion for teaching cemented his reputation as one of the world’s leading radiologists. In 1981 Peter returned to Switzerland where he took over the position of Director of the Clinic for Veterinary Medicine at the University of Zurich. During the following fifteen years until his retirement in 1995, Peter was a key driving force helping to establish Zurich as a veterinary school and clinic of international stature.

Throughout his career, Peter was a prolific author, publishing numerous textbooks, many of which have become classics with both veterinary students and practicing veterinary surgeons alike around the world. A few examples include Canine Cardiology published together with Stephen J. Ettinger in 1970, Thoracic Radiography: A Text Atlas of Thoracic Diseases of the Dog and Cat published in 1984, and Praktikum der Hundeklinik republished over many years in numerous languages together with Hans Szogor-Niemann.

Peter Suter was honoured with life-time achievement awards for his significant contributions to the field of veterinary medicine by many international veterinary associations, among them the American Animal Hospital Association, the World Small Animal Veterinary Association, and the European Association of Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging. Peter was an avid gardener all his life, spending hours planting and tending his flowers, vegetables and fruit trees. After his retirement he spent a large part of his time with his beloved horse Bingo, riding a horse-drawn carriage together with his wife Evelyn in the forests and fields where he grew up.

Impressed with his academic achievements, teachers and colleagues encouraged Peter to pursue a full-time academic career in veterinary medicine. He was fascinated by the field of radiology, and soon moved his family to the USA to pursue his dream. He initially worked as an Assistant Professor in the radiology department at the Animal Medical Center in New York between 1967 and 1969. He then moved to California to join the radiology department of the University of California, Davis, Veterinary School, where he worked as a Professor from 1969 until 1981.

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