



Press Information

WSAVA Calls for Veterinary Clinics to be Classified as 'Essential Businesses' Globally

The [World Small Animal Veterinary Association](#) (WSAVA) is calling on governments and veterinary authorities globally to ensure that veterinary hospitals and clinics are classified as 'essential businesses' and are able to continue to offer all necessary care to patients during the COVID-19 emergency.

As governments seek to introduce risk mitigation measures that may involve the closure of non-essential businesses, the WSAVA is concerned that veterinary hospitals and clinics may also be forced to cease operating. Such a move says the WSAVA will jeopardise the welfare of countless animals, many of which are vital companions to people who are at risk of suffering increased stress and loneliness because of the need to self-isolate.

WSAVA President Dr Shane Ryan says: "We fully support the risk mitigation measures being introduced as part of the global fight against COVID-19, but we are concerned at reports from some of our members that they have been asked to close their doors. Veterinarians and their teams deliver essential medical care for animals, ensure animal health and welfare, and support the human/companion animal bond by protecting these deep and important relationships.

"As part of our continuing responsibility to care for our animal patients and their owners, we call on governments to recognize all veterinary hospitals and clinics as essential businesses in any situation in which non-essential businesses are asked to close for COVID-19 risk mitigation."

The WSAVA represents more than 200,000 veterinarians worldwide through its 113 member associations. Its core activities include the development of WSAVA Global Guidelines in key areas of veterinary practice, including pain management, nutrition and vaccination, and the provision of continuing education.

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