WSAVA Appoints First Chief Learning and Development Officer

New Chairs Announced for WSAVA Clinical Committees

The World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) has appointed its first Chief Learning and Development Officer (CLDO) to spearhead its efforts to bring high quality, accessible and topical continuing education (CE) to its global membership. It has also announced new chairs for two of its clinical committees. Comprised of experts from around the world, the WSAVA’s 12 clinical committees each focus on a specific area of companion animal practice, creating WSAVA Global Guidelines and other educational resources in support of the WSAVA’s goal to set global standards for companion animal veterinary practice.

Chief Learning and Development Officer

Debbie Gray is the WSAVA’s first CLDO. In this role, she is responsible for the development, planning and implementation of the WSAVA’s Learning and Development (L&D) strategy and for ensuring that all of its L&D activities reflect the association’s strategic objectives. She will also work with the WSAVA’s Scientific Committee to develop the scientific program for the WSAVA’s flagship annual Congress, WSAVA World Congress. In 2024, the Congress will take place in Suzhou, China, from 3-5 September.

Debbie Gray qualified as a registered veterinary nurse in the UK and gained experience in small animal practice before moving into lecturing and other education-based roles. She holds a Diploma in Leadership and Operational Management and is currently studying for a Master’s in Business Administration. She sits on a variety of veterinary education boards.

New Chair for WSAVA Animal Wellness and Welfare Committee (AWWC)

British veterinarian and Dean of the school of veterinary medicine at the University of Central Lancashire, UK, Dr Heather Bacon has been appointed chair of the AWWC, which aims to make animal welfare an everyday consideration for small animal veterinary teams. Dr Bacon works with charities, veterinary and political organizations to develop global veterinary educational initiatives, with a focus on improving the welfare of captive and free-ranging wildlife and free-roaming dogs. She takes over from Dr Natasha Lee.

New Co-chairs for WSAVA Therapeutics Guidelines Group (TGG)
Dr Fergus Allerton and Dr Jennifer Granick have been appointed as co-chairs of the TGG which leads the WSAVA’s work to improve access to veterinary medicines in all parts of the world and to reduce the inappropriate use of antimicrobials.

Dr Allerton is a diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Medicine and works at Willows Referral Service in the UK. He is an active member of the European Network for Optimization of Veterinary Antimicrobial Treatment (ENOVAT) which works to optimize veterinary antimicrobial use. Dr Granick is an associate professor of small animal internal medicine at the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine, USA. Her research focuses on clinical antibiotic use in companion animals and antimicrobial stewardship.

Dr Allerton and Dr Granick succeed Dr Paulo Steagall and Dr Luca Guardabassi, the inaugural chairs of the TGG.

Commenting on the new appointments, WSAVA President Dr Ellen van Nierop said: “We’re delighted to welcome our new CLDO, Debbie Gray. She’ll help us harness new technologies and the latest learning approaches to ensure we deliver an exceptional educational experience to our members and equip them with the clinical and non-clinical skills they need to build rewarding careers and engage effectively with their colleagues and clients.”

She added: “We’re also delighted to welcome our new committee chairs and look forward to working with them towards our goals of setting global standards of care for companion animal practice and campaigning for change on key issues affecting our members, such as the inequity in access to veterinary medicines around the world.”

The WSAVA represents more than 200,000 veterinarians worldwide through its 116 member associations and works to enhance standards of clinical care for companion animals. Its core activities include the development of WSAVA Global Guidelines in key areas of veterinary practice, including pain management, nutrition and vaccination, together with lobbying on important issues affecting companion animal care worldwide.

**Note to editors:**

The work of the WSAVA Animal Wellness and Welfare Committee is kindly supported by the Purina Institute.

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