

IMPLEMENTING THE GUIDELINES 10 STEPS TO SUCCESS



Implementing the Guidelines: 10 Steps to Success is an easy-to-follow outline of how practice leaders can organize their team to implement the ***AAHA-AVMA Canine and Feline Preventive Healthcare Guidelines***. These steps are also outlined in the ***Focus Your Clinic on Preventive Pet Healthcare Webinar***. Use this document as reference notes for the webinar presentation or on its own for ideas on how you can focus your practice on implementing the Guidelines.

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STEP 1

PARTICIPATE IN A PARTNERS FOR HEALTHY PETS WEBINAR.

Step 1 will only take about an hour of your time and will help motivate you to keep going with the 10 Steps to Success outlined in this document.

To understand your role and the role of your practice in preventive pet healthcare, participate in a Partners for Healthy Pets webinar, offered at www.partnersforhealthypets.org.

Dr. Mike Paul leads a one-hour presentation on the why's and how's of inspiring healthcare teams to prioritize preventive pet healthcare and improve client relationships in practices everywhere.

As part of the webinar, you will:

- Watch a short inspirational talk by Dr. Andy Roark.
- Discuss the concept of passion and the importance of strong client relationships in successful preventive pet healthcare.
- Review with Dr. Paul the “10 Steps to Success” for implementing the Guidelines as outlined in this document.



STEP 2

SCHEDULE A SERIES OF STAFF MEETINGS TO TALK ABOUT PREVENTIVE PET HEALTHCARE, PRESENT THE GUIDELINES, AND EDUCATE ABOUT BETTER CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS.

Step 2 is relatively easy to do, but can be hard to stick to. It is, however, important to follow through with regular staff meetings to support your staff in implementing the Guidelines.

Meeting with the veterinary team is an important step in implementing the **AAHA-AVMA Preventive Healthcare Guidelines**.

These meetings will help your practice focus on preventive pet healthcare and understand WHY you are going through this process—*because we want to keep more pets healthy in our practice.*

Commit to meeting every two weeks for no more than one hour.

Schedule meetings that the entire team can attend, and focus on the information being presented without interruptions.

STEP 3

HOLD YOUR FIRST PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE TEAM MEETING.

This is the kickoff for your renewed focus on preventive pet healthcare in your clinic. Get excited about it! Use this meeting to inspire your staff. Act passionately!

At this meeting, introduce your team to the state of preventive care in your practice and in the industry:

- Present statistics for veterinary visits, sales of parasite products, etc.
- Discuss how clients perceive the profession and what clients want from their veterinary experience.
- Review why preventive pet healthcare needs and deserves to be made a priority.

Discuss with your team why they chose the veterinary field and the values that they share about pet healthcare.

Review your plans for preventive healthcare at your practice:

- Why are we here?
- Who will be involved?
- How will we move forward?

Finally, introduce the **AAHA-AVMA Preventive Healthcare Guidelines** to the team:

- Explain how the Guidelines will be implemented by the practice to help the team make preventive care an absolute priority for every client.



Use the **Implementing the Guidelines: Practice PowerPoint Presentation** (available on the *Partners for Healthy Pets* website) to present this information to your team.



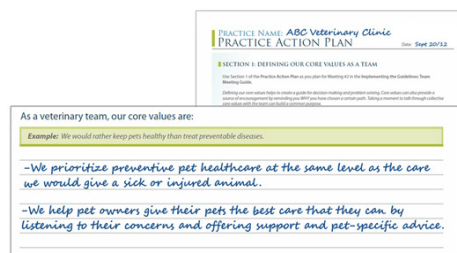
For more ideas on how to engage your team in making preventive pet healthcare a priority, access the **Implementing the Guidelines: Team Meeting Guide**, available on the *Partners for Healthy Pets* website.

STEP 4

COMPLETE SECTIONS 1-3 OF THE PRACTICE ACTION PLAN.

Step 4 asks you to step back and complete the first three sections of the Practice Action Plan, available from the Partners for Healthy Pets website. This will help you focus the feedback from your staff and create a plan that includes the team as you move forward.

Use the **10 Beliefs I Have About Our Practice & Preventive Pet Healthcare** worksheet (available in the **Implementing the Guidelines: Team Meeting Guide** on the Partners for Healthy Pets website) completed by the team members after Meeting #1, to create the foundation of the **Practice Action Plan**.



Section 1 of the **Practice Action Plan**:

- List the team's collective core values about preventive pet healthcare.

Section 2 of the **Practice Action Plan**:

- Identify one preventive care practice that the team does especially well and one practice that needs improvement.

Section 3 of the **Practice Action Plan**:

- Identify one client relationship-building action that the team does especially well and one action that needs improvement.

STEP 5

DEVELOP A PROTOCOL TO IMPLEMENT THE AAHA-AVMA GUIDELINES FOR YOUR PRACTICE, AND COMPLETE SECTION 4 OF THE PRACTICE ACTION PLAN.

Step 5 asks that you think through who will do what when, so that the Guidelines are consistently applied for all patients. It is important to ensure that everyone on the healthcare team is on the same page when executing his or her role and communicating with clients.

Reach a consensus about the preventive pet healthcare standards that will be adopted by your practice.

Review each guideline, and address any exceptions that the practice will adopt:

- For example, will this non-core vaccine be recommended to every patient?

Establish the roles and responsibilities of all team members (veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and receptionists) in your practice according to the Guidelines. Use Section 4 of the **Practice Action Plan** to record the team's roles and responsibilities.

STEP 6

HOLD YOUR SECOND AND THIRD PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE TEAM MEETINGS.

Keep up your enthusiasm! Your second and third team meetings can be just as inspiring as your first. Be excited about what you have started and the work your clinic has already put in.

At the second meeting, present the team's core values, strengths, and limitations in preventive care and client relationships:

- Celebrate strengths, and initiate a team discussion about ideas for making improvements.

Present the **AAHA-AVMA Canine Preventive Healthcare Guidelines** to the team:

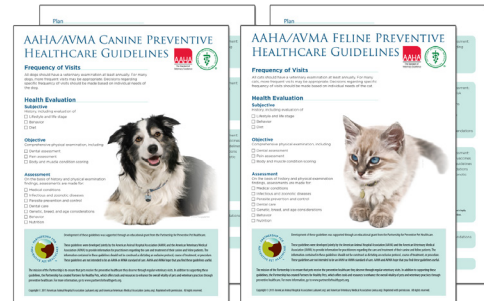
- Review each guideline with the team.
- Outline the practice protocol for implementing the Canine Guidelines, and identify the specific roles and responsibilities of each team member.
 - Present any exceptions that the practice will adopt (e.g., "We will give dogs the following non-core vaccines because...").
 - Remember to discuss WHY your practice recommends the preventive care practices it does.

Encourage a team discussion about the Canine Guidelines to generate ideas for refining the protocol.

At the third meeting, present the **AAHA-AVMA Feline Preventive Healthcare Guidelines** to the team:

- Review each guideline with the team, and present any exceptions that the practice will adopt (e.g., "We will give the following non-core vaccines because...").
 - Remember to discuss WHY your practice recommends the preventive care practices it does.
- Explain the practice protocol for implementing the Guidelines.
 - Be specific in outlining everyone's role and responsibilities for all sections of the Feline Guidelines.

For more ideas on how to get your team thinking about implementing the Guidelines, access the **Implementing the Guidelines: Team Meeting Guide**, available on the Partners for Healthy Pets website.



STEP 7

REVIEW THE WORDS THAT WORK VIDEOS.

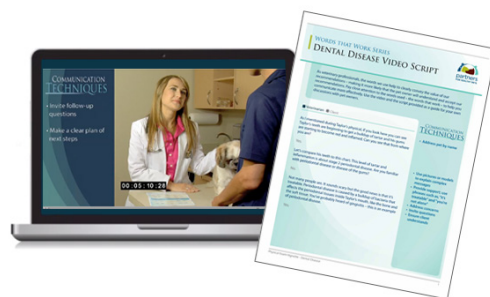
You are well on your way to implementing the AAHA-AVMA Guidelines. The second part of your plan for preventive pet healthcare in your clinic is to improve client relationships. Step 7 introduces you to resources that will help your team communicate better with clients and focus on advocating for pets.

These videos are available on the Partners for Healthy Pets website.

As you review them, think about how the words that we use can:

- Improve client perception of value
- Improve client experience
- Improve adherence to our recommendations
- Improve pet health through advocacy

The scripts for these videos are also available for downloading.



STEP 8

HOLD YOUR FOURTH PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE TEAM MEETING.

Step 8 is your fourth meeting, which will focus on client communication and relationship building. It is important for you to create an open environment where your team members feel safe to ask questions, present challenges, and role-play client conversations.

Share a **Words That Work** video with the team, and lead a discussion about how the veterinarian in the video interacts with the client. Have the team take note of the key phrases she uses.

Talk about communication techniques, and using the script for the **Words That Work** video, have team members role-play the scenario.

For more ideas on how to get your team thinking about implementing the Guidelines, access the **Implementing the Guidelines: Team Meeting Guide**, available on the Partners for Healthy Pets website.

STEP 9

COMPLETE SECTION 5 OF THE PRACTICE ACTION PLAN.

Step 9 is all about the process of setting goals for your team. This is a cyclical process where goals should be created, reviewed, and celebrated. The Partners for Healthy Pets has created a goal-setting template in the downloadable Practice Action Plan to help you create defined goals for your team.

By now, you should have a good sense of the areas of preventive care and client relationships that your team finds challenging.

Use the *Goal-Setting Template*, available in the *Implementing the Guidelines: Practice Action Plan* on the Partners for Healthy Pets website, to create some goals for your team.

Start by making one goal that focuses on preventive care and one that focuses on client relationships.

Identify specific actions that will help the team achieve the goals.

| Actions for Achievement | Person Responsible | Due Date | Expected Challenges | Desired Outcomes |
|---|--------------------|--------------|--|--|
| Organize a lunchtime presentation on heartworm. | Jessica | October 2012 | Funding a time everyone is available is available - Keeping the information relevant | - Better understanding of heartworm prevention by team - Improved comfort level when answering client questions |

STEP 10

KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING!

Step 10 asks you to remain committed to the Guideline implementation plan you've created in your practice. If you have followed the 10 steps, you will have been working on preventive healthcare in your practice for about two months. Good habits have been formed. It is essential that as a leader you stay positive and have a "we cannot fail" attitude.

Continue to refine and create goals for your practice as you improve the preventive care and health of your patients.

Review what is working and what is not; discuss solutions at future team meetings.

Celebrate successes, and encourage your team to share challenges; these challenges may become future goals.

For more ideas on future preventive care team meetings, access the *Implementing the Guidelines: Team Meeting Guide*, available on the Partners for Healthy Pets website.