

## **Telemedicine Task Force Final Report SWVS 2018**

### **CHARGE:**

1. Review the 2017 AVMA *Final Report on Telemedicine* and propose a TVMA position on each of the recommendations included in the report
2. Review the current state law and regulations and their impact on the use of veterinary telemedicine in Texas
3. Review the current use of telemedicine in veterinary medicine in Texas and other states
4. Gather input from TVMA members regarding telemedicine through surveys and other means
5. Guidelines on use by paraprofessionals in the veterinary profession
6. Make recommendations regarding possible future state legislation and regulations on telemedicine, if appropriate
7. Develop a report to present findings and recommendations to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors

### **TASK FORCE MEMBERS:**

- Dr. Brandon Dominquez
- Dr. Bud Pearce
- Dr. Lori Teller
- Dr. Aaron Rainer
- Dr. John Bruker
- Dr. K. Glenn
- Dr. Doug Posey
- Dr. Michelle Boatright
- Dr. Stacy Eckman
- Dr. Will McCauley
- Dr. Dixon Bain
- Dr. Steve Pittenger
- Chris Copeland
- Liz Choate

- Stevie Willett, LVT
- Kristi Ely, LVT
- Dr. Jodi Long, chair

Telehealth/Telemedicine is a burgeoning field within veterinary medicine. As such, this topic can be seen as a polarizing issue. Within the field, we have individuals that have fully embraced the opportunity that telehealth has provided and have fully immersed themselves. While other colleagues want nothing to do with this growing field.

This is subject that will require continued oversight and review during the next weeks, months and years. Telehealth will continue to grow and change as client needs and demands change. It will also change with the development and improvement of technology and with the involvement of non-veterinary entities.

Over the past 12 months, the members of this task force (TF) have taken into consideration the charge of the task force, referenced supporting documents along with a survey of our membership regarding telemedicine. The following are our conclusions:

1. Review the 2017 AVMA *Final Report on Telemedicine* and propose a TVMA position on each of the recommendations included in the report.  
***The TF agreed with the AVMA position.***
2. Review the current state law and regulations and their impact on the use of veterinary telemedicine in Texas.  
***The TF recommended continuing with current regulations and that all telemedicine applications should be practiced under the current definition of VCPR as referenced in the practice act; however, further consideration may be warranted regarding multi-doctor practices as well as within the realm of population medicine and the role of LVTs in the future.***
3. Review the current use of telemedicine in veterinary medicine in Texas and other states  
***See comments under #4***
4. Gather input from TVMA members regarding telemedicine through surveys and other means  
***In general, the TF felt that:***
  1. ***It was very apparent that better definitions would be of benefit for members & non-members. See attached presentation for further information.***
  2. ***There is a general interest to be able to legally provide & charge for telemedicine.***

3. ***The membership feels that TVMA should take an active role in defining the use & scope of telemedicine in Texas.***
  
5. Guidelines on use by paraprofessionals in the veterinary profession  
***The TF felt that any service should be performed under the defined role of VCPR with appropriate veterinary supervision. The consensus of the TF is that a defined role for LVTs can be established with the current practice act. An example of a potential situation is for triage with large animal patients. An LVT can go into the field & communicate with the DVM using the veterinarian's preferred method of communication to determine if the patient can be treated according to veterinary recommendation in the field, or if the patient should be seen in person by the DVM at the clinic or in the field. At this stage there is too much variability in abilities & no consistent method for oversight for non-licensed support staff.***
  
6. Make recommendations regarding possible future state legislation and regulations on telemedicine, if appropriate.  
***The TF recommended:***
  - a. ***Development of CE or other educational opportunities to inform veterinary professionals regarding the appropriate use of terminology and the many multifaceted Telehealth applications.***
  - b. ***Review the definition of VCPR in relation to the following:***
    - i. ***Multi-doctor practices***
    - ii. ***Population medicine (large animal, food animal & shelter medicine)***
      1. ***Telemonitoring***
      2. ***Telesupervision***
  - c. ***Develop or approve AVMA guidelines to help practitioners select a telehealth platform to integrate within their practice***
  - d. ***Further explore the role of LVTs in the application***

**Supporting Documents:**

- a. AVMA Telemedicine HOD Approved Policy
- b. AVMA Telemedicine Final Report
- c. AVMA VCPR chart by State
- d. TVMA Telemedicine Report 2017
- e. AAVSB Telehealth Talking Points
- f. Human Telemedicine Statutes And Regs 3-2017
- g. Texas Med Telemed SB 1107

- h. Rules Pertaining to the Practice of Veterinary Medicine-Texas  
Administrative Code
- i. Texas Veterinary Licensing Act