Healthy Shelters

It Takes More than Medicine
Have you ever witnessed illness at your shelter?

What was the disease?
What is one important thing you currently do to keep your shelter healthy?
“Learn how to see. Realize that everything connects to everything else.”

Leonardo da Vinci
Animals Shelters are Systems
Example:

Intake
- Delayed vaccine

Shelter
- Puppy breaks with parvo virus
- Disease spreads

Outcome
- Many puppies die in care
- Lower live release rate
Example:

**Intake**
- Found litter of underage kittens
- Offer kitten bottle feeding kit
- Provide vaccines

**Shelter**
- House when space available
- Stays healthy

**Outcome**
- Adopted quickly
- Raises live release rate
Primary Goal for Healthy Shelter System

- Manage Intake
- Minimize Stay
- Maximize Live Outcomes
Sounds simple enough....
How to do with your current resources?
First: Get a Map

“If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there.” – Lewis Carroll
Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters = THE MAP
Shelter Practices

Ideal or Best

Must or Should

Unacceptable
Example:

• “Cages or crates intended for short-term, temporary confinement or travel are *unacceptable* as primary enclosures and are cruel if used as such.”
• What is the *best* practice here?
• What is the *ideal* practice here?
• How does this practice affect the shelter system?
“If you have put cage on top of cage, as long as the animal’s living, isn’t that the whole thing? You can’t let interior decorating get in the way.”
Example:

• “Animals **must** be vaccinated at, or prior to, intake with core vaccines.”
• What is the **best** practice here?
• What is the **ideal** practice here?
• How does this practice affect the shelter system?
Example:

• “Enrichment **should** be given the same significance as other components of animal care and **should not** be considered optional.”

• What is the **best** practice here?

• What is the **ideal** practice here?

• How does this practice affect the shelter system?
Second: Build a Strong Foundation

“The important thing is that you’ve got a strong foundation before you start to try to save the world or help other people.” -- Richard Branson
Lied Animal Shelter, Nevada

- Adoption: 41%
- Died: 8%
- Medical Euth: 30%
- Euth in extremis: 21%

Total: 59%
Cat housing now at Lied Animal Shelter: focused on welfare
The Five Freedoms

- from Hunger and Thirst
- from Discomfort
- from Pain, Injury or Disease
- to Express Normal Behavior
- from Fear and Distress
Five Freedoms

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
   by ready access to fresh water and diet to maintain health and vigor

2. Freedom from discomfort
   by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.

3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease
   by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment

4. Freedom to express normal behavior
   by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal’s own kind

5. Freedom from fear and distress
   by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering

ASPCApro poster: free to download
A Life Worth Living

• The higher standard for animal welfare
## A Life Worth Living

### Quality of life

| A good life | A life worth living | A life not worth living |

### Poor Welfare

### Good Welfare

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Policy intention</th>
<th>Balance of good and poor welfare</th>
<th>Needs and wants met?</th>
<th>Banner’s principles met?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good quality of life</td>
<td>Clearly beyond minimum legal standard</td>
<td>Good substantially outweighs poor welfare</td>
<td>All vital needs, all mental needs and most wants</td>
<td>Completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socially acceptable quality of life</td>
<td>Proposed minimum legal standard in Britain</td>
<td>Good outweighs poor welfare</td>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable quality of life</td>
<td>Avoidance of unnecessary suffering</td>
<td>Poor to bad welfare dominates</td>
<td>Few or none met</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vital needs only, few or no mental needs or wants</td>
<td>Few or none met</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Activity Time

Assess how well each shelter scenario addresses the “Five Freedoms” of animal welfare by rating each scenario on a scale of:

- 5 = A High Quality of Life
- 4 = Good Quality of Life
- 3 = Borderline Quality of Life
- 2 = Poor Quality of Life
- 1 = A Life Not Worth Living
Municipal Animal Control-Dog Housing
Municipal Animal Control–Cat Housing
Limited Admission Cat Shelter
Emergency Cat Sanctuary
Canine Rescue
Foster Home
Example: Population Welfare Rounds

• Manage the individuals, monitor the population
• How do population welfare rounds differ from daily medical rounds?
• How do such rounds influence the shelter system?

- Action needed:
- Assigned to:
- Accountability: when to report results
Monitor welfare for staff and volunteers, too!

“Put your oxygen mask on first.” -- Commercial Airlines
Third: Know Your Data

“It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data.” – Sherlock Holmes
Tennessee Shelter Data Comparison: Shelter Animals Count

https://shelteranimalscount.org/data/Explore-the-Data
Basic Data Matrix
Shelter Animals Count

https://shelteranimalscount.org/data
Basic Data Matrix Doesn’t Calculate Rates

WHY???
Get cozy with numbers and reports

- LOS and ALOS
- Time to Event (ie S/N, RTO, Transfer, EU)
- Capacity for Care (staff and housing)
- Incidence/Prevalence of Diseases
- Intake Profile
- Outcome Profile (ie LRR, AR, TR, EUR, etc)
GIS Mapping Study
Funded by ASPCA

Total Annual Animal Intake Denisty

Legend
- Study Area
- Total Animal Intake Per Half Mile
  - 1 - 3
  - 4 - 8
  - 9 - 15
  - 16 - 25
  - 26 - 35
  - I-75
- Major Roadways
- Rivers
- Lakes

Intake data extracted from Alachua County Animal Services
Base map data obtained from the Florida Geographic Data Library FGL.org 2017.
Adults and juveniles
Adults and juveniles
Compared to other mapped data from community
Fourth: Communicate

“Strangely enough, I really think that shoes are a communication tool between people.” – Christian Louboutin
There’s an SOP for that!

- Sanitation & Environment
- Physical health
- Behavioral health
- Spay/Neuter
- Housing, Handling & Transport
- Public Health
- Record Keeping
- Population Mgmt
- Euthanasia
SOP: Spot Cleaning

- Put on disposable gloves and apron
- Close port hole to keep cat on one side of cage
- Remove soiled disposable litter pan and replace with fresh pan and clean litter.
- Freshen cage, replace any soiled newspapers, towels, or toys
- Brush away spilled litter and food with hand broom and dust pan
- Wipe walls and doors with on disposable Rescue wipe for one minute.
- Open port hole, encourage cat to opposite side with treats. Repeat on opposite side.
- Leave fresh food and water.
- Change gloves before next cage.
Communicate with the public, too.

Fifth: Keep Learning and Growing

“Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.” -- Maya Angelou
Special Report

The Association of Shelter Veterinarians veterinary medical care guidelines for spay-neuter programs

As efforts to reduce the overpopulation and euthanasia of unwanted and unwanted animals continue, many animal welfare organizations have turned to spay-neuter programs as a solution. These programs aim to reduce the number of unwanted and unwanted animals that enter shelters and are eventually euthanized. A key component of these programs is the provision of veterinary medical care to support the health and well-being of the animals involved.

Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff

Edited by Lila Miller and Stephen Zawistowski

WILEY-BLACKWELL

Animal Behavior for Shelter Veterinarians and Staff

Edited by Weiss • Heather Welsh-Gibbons • Stephen Zawistowski

WILEY Blackwell
Online Graduate Certificate in Shelter Medicine

Online MS Concentration in Shelter Medicine

http://onlinesheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/
Things change. So should we.

- How do we change the shelter system? - With facts.
Healthy Shelters: More than Medicine.

1. A Map
2. A Strong Foundation Built on Welfare
3. Knowing your Data
4. Good Communication
5. Continual Learning, Growing, and Change
Getting Real

What can you do tomorrow with what you know today to improve shelter health?