

# DR. Bob Murtaugh Galvanizes Focus -Veterinarian & Veterinary Technician Shortage/Advancing Vet Tech Careers/Telemedicine

*TIME TO AGGRESSIVELY DELIVER NEW SOLUTIONS TO CRITICAL ACCESS TO CARE CHALLENGES*

PALM SPRINGS, CA, UNITED STATES, April 18, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Dr. Bob Murtaugh, Candidate for AVMA President-Elect 2023, announces the paradigm shifts to solve the national veterinarian and veterinary technician shortage, provide opportunities for veterinary technician career growth, and spur increased usage of [telemedicine](#).



Dr. Bob Murtaugh is a Candidate for AVMA President-Elect 2023. He now serves as Chair, Veterinary Medicine Academy, National Academies of Practice."

*BOB MURTAUGH DVM, MS, DACVIM, DACVECC, FCCM*

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Just 60 or 70 years ago, all veterinarians were everything to everyone. However, looking back historically, significant changes have occurred in our industry. The 1970s brought emergency clinics for small animals. The 1980s through 1990s brought the creation of specialization and those

specialists moving from academia to provide specialty services in private practice. In the early 2000s, we saw the development of Shelter-based High Volume Spay Neuter services. All these paradigm shifts were initially met with some trepidation and fear in the profession but are now all essential parts of our fabric.

Today, we stand at the cusp of needing additional paradigm shifts to create solutions to critical Access to Care challenges that must be addressed aggressively. We are paying the price for 35 years (1978-2013), where we opened only one new veterinary college and did not grow US veterinary school graduate numbers in the face of a U.S. population growth of nearly 100 million people.

## THE GROWING SHORTAGE OF VETERINARIANS AND VETERINARY TECHNICIANS

There is a growing need for more veterinarians and veterinary technicians in the United States.

We currently graduate only 4000 veterinarians and 5000 veterinary technicians annually in the US. Per Indeed, there are 15,000 job openings for veterinarians currently. The demand for companion animal veterinary services will continue to grow in the coming years as pet parents will own more and more pets. This increase will lead to a continuing rise in the number of people seeking veterinary care for their pets.

Several factors are driving the need for more veterinarians and veterinary technicians:

1. The demand for veterinary services increases as the pet population grows. According to the Forbes ADVISOR, via data source: American Pet Products Association, more than 69 million pet dogs and 45.3 million pet cats are now in the United States. This number is expected to continue to grow in the coming years.

[https://www.forbes.com/advisor/pet-insurance/pet-ownership-statistics/#:~:text=at%20a%20Glance-.70%25%20of%20U.S.%20households%20\(90.5%20million%20homes\)%20own%20a,fish%20\(11.8%20million%20households\).](https://www.forbes.com/advisor/pet-insurance/pet-ownership-statistics/#:~:text=at%20a%20Glance-.70%25%20of%20U.S.%20households%20(90.5%20million%20homes)%20own%20a,fish%20(11.8%20million%20households).)

2. More Veterinary and Veterinary Technician Schools and Colleges need to be developed and funded to meet not only the companion animal needs, but also the veterinary demand in equine, production medicine, regulatory functions, academia and more.

3. With existing Veterinary Technician Programs and Schools and Colleges of Veterinary Medicine...we must aggressively increase the class sizes to help solve the shortage!

4. The retirement of veterinarians (1/3 will be 60 or older by 2024) also is a substantial contributor, projected to be at least 2000 or more per year thru 2030, to the looming shortage in the veterinary workforce. These veterinarians will leave a significant void in the workforce as they retire and at least 50% (conservatively) or more of the current graduate pool will be required to backfill those roles.

#### COMPELLING FACTS

- There are 15,000 job openings for veterinarians in the US on the job board

Reference: Indeed

- 40% of Shelters are without consistent vet services



DR. MURTAUGH GALVANIZES HIS FOCUS ON THE NATIONAL VETERINARIAN AND VETERINARY TECH SHORTAGE, ADVANCING VET TECH CAREERS & TELEMEDICINE

- Only 38% of cats get to a veterinarian annually
- 500 Counties, and increasing, in rural locales with limited to no proximate veterinary services
- Emergency Hospitals routinely pause intake, and full closures are happening
- We need more specialists for private practice and especially in academia

## STUDY FINDINGS

- The ~25,000 new graduates expected over the next 10 years will still leave a shortage of nearly 15,000 companion-animal veterinarians by 2030—an overall shortfall of approximately 16%.
- Based on current U.S. educational capacity, it would take more than 30 years of graduates to meet the 10-year need for credentialed veterinary technicians
- Despite the growing number of specialists, a clear shortage exists. For the specialties considered, the number of job openings at the five corporate practices considered markedly exceeded the total number of anticipated job market entrants, ranging from 1.7 open positions for each entrant to as high as 4.1

Reference, Study Highlights: Mars Veterinary Health/ Jim Lloyd, DVM, PhD of Animal Health Economics <https://vmae.org/2022/03/02/banfield-mars-veterinary-workforce-study/>

## THE IMPORTANCE OF VETERINARY TECHNICIANS AND THE NEED FOR MID-LEVEL PRACTITIONERS

In recent years, we have seen a dramatic increase in the demand for veterinary services. This has led to a need for more licensed veterinary technicians across the country. As a result, it is more important than ever to support veterinary technicians with title recognition and protection across all 50 states as well as in achieving the satisfaction of working at the top of their license on all veterinary teams.

Additionally, we need to be providing an additional career path for our veterinary technicians toward the strongly needed Mid-Level Practitioner in Veterinary Medicine! Our colleagues in Human Health have been supported by Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants for decades; it is time for the veterinary profession to acknowledge that it will benefit from a Veterinary Professional Associate (Mid-Level Practitioner) role, helping meet access to care by relieving the pressure of the national veterinary shortage.

## THE BENEFITS OF TELEMEDICINE

Telemedicine has many benefits, such as using technology to deliver veterinary medical care remotely. This can be especially beneficial for rural, shelter, or underserved areas with limited access to care providers. It can also be helpful for pet owners who have difficulty getting to a veterinarian's hospital or clinic, such as those with transportation issues or disabilities. I am sure that cat owners will enjoy a full-fledged telemedicine option.

Telemedicine can improve access to care by making it more convenient. It can also reduce appointment wait times and allow people to receive advice and care from the comfort of their homes. Sometimes, it could improve the quality of care by providing more timely diagnosis and treatment. Telemedicine, employing a virtual route for initial veterinary contact (initiation of the

veterinary client patient relationship) instead of requiring in-person visits to diagnose and prescribe, can help us provide better access to care for our patients while addressing the challenges of the veterinarian shortage.

Steven May

SLM

stevenlmay59@gmail.com

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/628474555>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.