Creating a Positive, More Energized Veterinary Team

Learnings from the Merck Animal Health 2023 Veterinary Team Wellbeing Study
Agenda

1. **KEY FINDINGS**
   - Background
   - Key Findings
   - Job Satisfaction Measures
   - Attitudes Toward the Profession

2. **DETAILED FINDINGS**
   - Wellbeing
   - Mental Health
   - Burnout

3. **ACTION STEPS**
   - What Veterinarians and Staff Can Do to Improve Wellbeing
   - What Employers Can Do to Improve Wellbeing

4. **CONCLUSIONS/Q&A**
About the Study

First comprehensive study of wellbeing, burnout, and mental health of veterinary practice team

Data collected September 11-October 9, 2023

Submitted for IRB Review

Large scale: nearly 2,300 respondents
Thank You to Collaborators

- North American Veterinary Technicians Association (NAVTA)
- Veterinary Hospital Managers Association (VHMA)
- Referrals from veterinarian respondents
- A large corporate practice owner
Respondent Profile

### Age
- 2023 (n=2263)
  - 9% 18-24
  - 44% 25-34
  - 28% 35-44
  - 12% 45-54
  - 6% 55-64
  - 1% 65+

### Generation
- 3% Baby Boomers (1946-1964)
- 16% Gen X (1965-1979)
- 56% Millennials (1980-1994)

Note: 0.05% were older than Baby Boomers

### Race/Ethnicity
- White: 89%
- Hispanic: 14%
- Black or African American: 4%
- Native American, Alaska...: 2%
- Asian: 2%
- Middle Eastern: 0%
- Pacific Islander, Hawaiian: 0%
- Other: 6%

Note: Responses to this question are non-exclusive

### Gender
- 79% Female
- 20% Male
- 1% Other/Declined

Note: All Respondents (n=2263)
Respondent Profile – Geographical Representation

SC5. In what state are you located?
SC6. How would you characterize the primary practice you work for – as mostly serving urban, suburban or rural clients?

Base: All Respondents (n=2271)
Respondent Profile – Roles, Practices

**Type of Staff**
- Veterinary Technician: 47%
- Veterinary Assistant: 24%
- Hospital Admin / Practice: 17%
- Receptionist: 10%
- Kennel Assistant: 1%
- Other: 1%

**Type of Primary Practice**
- General Practice: 40%
- Specialty Practice: 26%
- Emergency Practice: 17%
- Urgent Care Practice: 3%
- Wellness-only Practice: 2%
- Vaccination Practice: 2%
- Mobile Practice: 1%
- Other: 9%

**Type of Practice**
- Companion (Exclusive): 47%
- Companion (Predominant): 38%
- Mixed Practice: 5%
- Equine: 1%
- Food Animal (Predominant): 1%
- Food Animal (Exclusive): 1%
- Other: 6%
- N/A: 1%

SC2. Which of the following best describes your current position?
Base: All Respondents (n=2268)

SC4. Which of the following best describes the practice at which you work?
Base: All Respondents (n=2117)
1. Key Findings
Key Findings

- Veterinary team invested in and take pride in work
- Majority satisfied with their job
- There are notable differences in wellbeing among roles
- Significant financial stress is common among team members
- There are multiple steps individuals and practices can take to improve wellbeing
Veterinary Work Is Important and Meaningful to the Team

81% of respondents strongly agree/agree they are invested and take pride in their work.

- I am invested in my work and take pride in doing a good job: 50% Strongly Agree, 31% Agree, 11% Slightly Agree, 4% Slightly Disagree, 3% Disagree, 1% Strongly Disagree
- My supervisor treats me with respect and values my work: 27% Strongly Agree, 34% Agree, 20% Slightly Agree, 8% Slightly Disagree, 6% Disagree, 4% Strongly Disagree
- My work makes a positive contribution to other people’s lives: 26% Strongly Agree, 42% Agree, 21% Slightly Agree, 6% Slightly Disagree, 3% Disagree, 2% Strongly Disagree
- I have a warm, friendly, and supportive relationship with my coworkers: 21% Strongly Agree, 40% Agree, 26% Slightly Agree, 7% Slightly Disagree, 4% Disagree, 2% Strongly Disagree

WBS: Please indicate the degree to which you agree, or disagree, with the statements below
Base: All Respondents (n=2265)
Overall Team Is Generally Satisfied With Job

Vets and hospital admin more satisfied with their jobs than the general population or the other veterinary clinic staff types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Type</th>
<th>Extremely/Very satisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat satisfied</th>
<th>Not too satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[A] 2022 PEW General Population (n=5902)</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[B] Vets (n=4633)</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[C] Vet Tech (n=1075)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[D] Vet Assistant (n=536)</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[E] Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=378)</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[F] Reception/Client Service Rep/Other (n=279)</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Population data taken from PEW WB6. Overall. How satisfied are you with your job? Base: All Respondents
2. Detailed Findings
Wellbeing, Burnout, Mental Health
How Is the Team Doing?

3 Major Measures

**Wellbeing**
How people view their welfare level in terms of happiness, health, prosperity, and resources

**Burnout**
State of exhaustion (physical, mental, and emotional) resulting from prolonged stress

**Mental health**
Condition of an individual's mental and emotional state, including prevalence or absence of serious psychological distress
Wellbeing: A Measure of Happiness

- Wellbeing examines how an individual feels about how satisfied they were with their life compared with the best possible/worst possible or ideal life.

- More than 93% of respondents report medium to high levels of wellbeing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wellbeing Question</th>
<th>Wellbeing Scale and Points System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examination of wellbeing uses the Cantril ladder:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. On a 10-step ladder, on which step do you feel you personally stand at the present time (0 = worst; 10 = best possible)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses were indexed on a 10-point scale

- Flourishing - 7-10
- Getting by - 4-6
- Suffering - 0-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Clinic Staff</th>
<th>% of team Flourishing (high wellbeing)</th>
<th>% of team Getting by (medium wellbeing)</th>
<th>% of team Suffering (low wellbeing)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Wellbeing Varies Somewhat by Position**

- Vet assistants and receptionists/client service team members have lower wellbeing than other team types.
- Hospital administrators/practice managers have significantly higher wellbeing when compared with any other team type.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team Category</th>
<th>Wellbeing Index</th>
<th>Base: All Respondents</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Clinic Teams (n=2271)</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[A] Vet Tech (n=1074)</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[B] Vet Assistant (n=527)</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>56.9%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[C] Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=378)</td>
<td>52.3%</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[D] Reception/Client Service Rep/Other (n=278)</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:  
- **Green**: Flourishing  
- **Gray**: Getting By  
- **Black**: Suffering
Personality Affects Wellbeing, Burnout, Mental Health

The Big Five personality traits, also known as the five-factor model (FFM), are based on common language descriptors of personality.

- **Openness** to experience (inventive/curious vs. consistent/cautious). Appreciation for art, emotion, adventure, unusual ideas, curiosity, and variety of experience.

- **Conscientiousness** (efficient/organized vs. easy-going/careless). A tendency to be organized and dependable, show self-discipline, act dutifully, aim for achievement, and prefer planned rather than spontaneous behavior.

- **Extraversion** (outgoing/energetic vs. solitary/reserved). Energy, positive emotions, surgency, assertiveness, sociability and the tendency to seek stimulation in the company of others, and talkativeness.

- **Agreeableness** (friendly/compassionate vs. challenging/detached). A tendency to be compassionate and cooperative rather than suspicious and antagonistic towards others.

- **Neuroticism** (sensitive/nervous vs. secure/confident). The tendency to experience unpleasant emotions easily, such as anger, anxiety, depression, and vulnerability.

Respondents receive a score on each personality trait. Those with particularly strong scores for a given trait can be identified and compared.
Individuals Higher in Neuroticism More Sensitive to Stress

- Personality traits neither good nor bad
- Vet team members tend to be higher in neuroticism
- Also high in extroversion, which is a benefit in a service profession
Key Predictors of Wellbeing

**Positive predictors**
- Clinic culture
- Healthy activities
- Satisfaction with position, promotion opportunities
- Strategies to cope with stress

**Negative predictors**
- Long work hours
- Neuroticism
Burnout Assessment Tool (BAT-12) includes five measures of burnout: overall burnout, cognitive impairment, emotional impairment, exhaustion, and mental distance. Exhaustion is the major contributor to burnout for team members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Lower Burnout (1-1.99)</th>
<th>Medium Burnout (2-2.99)</th>
<th>Higher Burnout (3-3.99)</th>
<th>Very High Burnout (4-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burnout</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Impairment</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Impairment</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhaustion</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Distance</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Burnout Varies Among Vet Team Roles

Most vet clinic team members experience at least a moderate level of burnout. Vet assistants experience the highest level of burnout compared with other groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Low Burnout (1-1.99)</th>
<th>Medium Burnout (2-2.99)</th>
<th>High Burnout (3-3.99)</th>
<th>Very High Burnout (4-5)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Clinic Staff (n=2271)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[A] Vet Tech (n=1074)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[B] Vet Assistant (n=527)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[C] Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=378)</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[D] Reception/ Client Service Rep/ Other (n=278)</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QBO1.** The following statements are related to your work situation and how you experience it. Please state how often each statement applies to you.

**Base:** All Respondents
Vet Team Burnout Higher Than General Population

- Vet team more likely to experience exhaustion
- Managers tend to have less burnout than rest of team

QBO1. The following statements are related to your work situation and how you experience it. Please state how often each statement applies to you.

Base: All Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lower Burnout (&lt;3)</th>
<th>High/Very High Burnout (&gt;=3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[B] USA General Population (n=30392)</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[C] Managers/Admin (n=378)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[D] Other Staff (n=1890)</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exhaustion

- Overall
  - [B] USA General Population (n=30392) | 68%                | 32%                          |
  - [C] Managers/Admin (n=378)        | 38%                | 62%                          |
  - [D] Other Staff (n=1890)           | 28%                | 72%                          |
Characteristics Correlated with Low Burnout

Positive predictors
• Work-life balance
• Satisfaction with position, promotion opportunities
• Clinic culture
• Strategies to cope with stress

Negative predictors
• Neuroticism
• Long work hours
• Negative work environment
• Student debt
4 out of 5 Show No Signs of Serious Psychological Distress

- Kessler 6 is a six-question framework for establishing a person’s emotional state and is recognized as a method for identifying individuals suffering from psychological distress or mental illness.
- Around 80% of respondents did not score in the serious psychological distress category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kessler 6 Question</th>
<th>Kessler 6 Scale and Points System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During the past 30 days, how much of the time did you feel each of the following…</td>
<td>All of the time – 4 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• nervous</td>
<td>Most of the time – 3 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• hopeless</td>
<td>Some of the time – 2 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• so sad nothing could cheer you up</td>
<td>A little of the time – 1 Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• worthless</td>
<td>None of the time – 0 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• restless or fidgety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• that everything was an effort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of team **suffering** from serious psychological distress:
- All Clinic Staff (n=2271): 20.5%

% of team **not suffering** from serious psychological distress:
- 79.5%
### Serious Psychological Distress Varies by Position

- Around 90% of Hospital Admin and Practice Managers are not distressed
- Around 75% of Vet Assistants are not distressed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Distressed</th>
<th>Not Distressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Clinic Staff (n=2271)</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>79.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[A] Vet Tech (n=1074)</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[B] Vet Assistant (n=527)</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>73.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[C] Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=378)</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>89.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[D] Reception/Client Service Rep/Other (n=278)</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>76.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MH1. Results based on results of Kessler 6.  
**Base:** All Respondents
Characteristics Correlated with Lack of Psychological Distress

Positive predictors
• Strategies to cope with stress
• Healthy activities
• Work-life balance
• Satisfaction with position, promotion opportunities

Negative predictors
• Neuroticism
• Negative work environment
• Long work hours
• Student debt
Team-reported Significant Challenges

Of 14 issues, compensation was single most important, followed by stress.

- Poor compensation for veterinary practice employees: 68% Critically Important, 20% Moderately Important, 9% Minor, 3% Not an Issue
- Stress levels of veterinarians and staff: 66% Critically Important, 24% Moderately Important, 8% Minor, 3% Not an Issue
- The suicide rate among veterinarians and staff: 66% Critically Important, 21% Moderately Important, 10% Minor, 4% Not an Issue
- Shortage of qualified veterinary support staff: 62% Critically Important, 24% Moderately Important, 10% Minor, 3% Not an Issue

**ISSUE1.** Listed below are several issues you may or may not consider to be significant challenges faced by the veterinary profession today. Please rate each issue using the scale below.

**Base:** Veterinary Staff (n=2226)
Less Satisfied With Finances Than Job

- 73% of Veterinary Staff report they have a mid to high level of job satisfaction
- Nearly 60% of Veterinary Team feel unsatisfied with their income and financial situations

### All Vet Clinic Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Satisfied ( Completely, Very)</th>
<th>Mid (Somewhat)</th>
<th>Not Satisfied ( Little, Not)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal income</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial situation</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WB4.** How satisfied are you with each of the following?
**Base:** Veterinary Staff (n=2232)
1 in 4 Work a Second Job; Many Have Student Debt

**Jobs Outside of Vet Practices**

- **26%**: [A] Vet Tech (n=1073)
- **25%**: [B] Vet Assistant (n=534)
- **22%**: [C] Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=375)
- **18%**: [D] Reception/Client Service Rep/Other (n=279)

**Mean Student Debt**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Type</th>
<th>Mean Student Debt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vet Tech</td>
<td>$14,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vet Assistant</td>
<td>$15,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin/Manager</td>
<td>$14,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Service/Other</td>
<td>$12,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DEM9. In addition to your regular job at the veterinary practice(s), do you work a second job?  
Base: All Respondents
Avg. US Credit Card Interest Rate in 2023 is 21.19%

- 47% of credit card holders carry a balance from month to month*

**Credit Card Management**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pay off entirely</th>
<th>Carry balance</th>
<th>Don't use credit cards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[A] Vet Tech (n=1075)</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[B] Vet Assistant (n=536)</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[C] Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=378)</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[D] Reception/Client Service Rep/Other (n=279)</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Source: Bankrate survey 2023

QDEM13. Do you pay off your credit card balances in a typical month, or do you carry them over from month to month?

**Base**: All Respondents
3. Action Steps
Creating a Positive, More Energized Veterinary Team
1. Create a More Constructive Clinic Culture

- Good clinic culture is a significant contributor to wellbeing, mental health, and reduced turnover
- Out of all staff, veterinarians indicate higher levels of satisfaction in their practices

### Respondents Answering “Great Extent”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A: Veterinarians (n=3476)</th>
<th>B: Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=377)</th>
<th>C: Other Staff (n=1885)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong sense of belonging to the team</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient time allotted for high-quality patient care</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High degree of trust in the organization</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candid and open communication among team members</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Showing “Great Extent”

CLINIC3. Please indicate how well each of the following describes your practice.

**Base:** All Respondents
2. Improve Psychological Safety

1. Healthy, frequent discussion removes feelings of isolation
2. Create opportunities for safely discussing mental health
3. Use team meetings to highlight wellbeing resources offered to your employees
4. Discussing challenges and highlighting positives from the past week can help alleviate stress in your team

Our practice openly discusses wellbeing and mental health in team meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Great Extent</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Create Opportunities for Advancement

- Utilize personnel to the best of their capabilities and training
- Provide learning opportunities to grow skills of team members
- Create a career path with growth and compensation opportunities
- Provide schedule flexibility
- Promote autonomy in the workplace
4. Employee Assistance Program and Insurance Coverage

Hospital administrators/practice managers are the most likely to have an Employee Assistance Program for mental health needs and health insurance to cover mental health treatment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice has an Employee Assistance Program</th>
<th>Health Insurance Covers Mental Health Counseling or Treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[A] Vet Tech (n=1075)</td>
<td>[A] Vet Tech (n=1075)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| [B] Vet Assistant (n=536)                  | [B] Vet Assistant (n=536)                                   |
| 60%                                        | 51%                                                        |
| 9%                                         | 12%                                                        |
| 31%                                        | 7%                                                         |

| [C] Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=378) | [C] Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=378)               |
| 82%                                        | 75%                                                      |
| 11%                                        | 6%                                                       |
| 7%                                         | 16%                                                      |

| [D] Reception/client service rep/Other (n=279) | [D] Reception/client service rep/Other (n=279)               |
| 56%                                        | 55%                                                      |
| 8%                                         | 8%                                                       |
| 37%                                        | 7%                                                      |

MH13. Does your practice or employer offer an Employee Assistance Program (a program that helps assist employees with personal problems and/or work-related problems that may impact their job performance, physical or mental health, or emotional wellbeing)?

MH14. Does your health insurance provide coverage for mental health counseling or other treatment?

Base: All Respondents
Corporate Practices More Likely to Provide Coverage, EAP

61% of corporate practices offer an Employee Assistance Program.

MH13. Does your practice or employer offer an Employee Assistance Program (a program that helps assist employees with personal problems and/or work-related problems that may impact their job performance, physical or mental health, or emotional wellbeing)?

MH14. Does your health insurance provide coverage for mental health counseling or other treatment?

Base: All Respondents
5. Provide Access to Resources Useful to Team

- Mental health experts such as veterinary social workers
- Financial advisors
- External peer support groups
- Continuing education on professional skills
How Team Members Can Reduce Stress and Improve Quality of Life
1. Healthy Coping Methods Reduce Distress

"I have a healthy method for dealing with stress in my life"

[A] 2023 Vets (n=4636)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Effective

- I take comfort in the belief that problems will work themselves out.
- I accept the situation without getting caught up in the emotions.
  - I distract myself with TV, computer games, etc,…
- I take care of problems that cause stress.
- I make changes to my life to reduce stress.

Not Effective

- I try to forget about it and hope it would go away.

MH15 Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: I have a healthy method for dealing with stress in my life.

Base: All Respondents
### Avoid Excessive Time on Social Media

More than one hour per day associated with serious psychological distress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Less than 10 minutes/day</th>
<th>10 – 30 minutes/day</th>
<th>30 – 60 minutes/day</th>
<th>1 – 2 hours/day</th>
<th>More than 2 hours/day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (n=2260)</strong></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[A] Vet Tech (n=1074)</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[B] Vet Assistant (n=527)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[C] Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=378)</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[D] Reception/Client Service Rep/Other (n=278)</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DEM10. Approximately how many hours per day, if any, do you spend on social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)?  
**Base:** All Respondents
3. Engage a Financial Advisor

• A financial advisor can help
  • Reduce credit card debt
  • Manage student debt
  • Stretch your budget

• Resource:
  • National Association of Personal Financial Advisors
    https://www.napfa.org/find-an-advisor

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Financial Planner

- **[A] Veterinarians (n=4596)**
  - Have a financial planner: 49%
  - Do not have a financial planner: 51%

- **[B] Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=369)**
  - Have a financial planner: 29%
  - Do not have a financial planner: 71%

- **[C] Other Staff (n=1861)**
  - Have a financial planner: 19%
  - Do not have a financial planner: 81%
### Manage Work-Life Balance Effectively

#### Socializing with friends and family especially important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spend time with family</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read for pleasure</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking, walking, sports, or similar activity</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep at least 8 hours a night</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time on a hobby</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialize with friends</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel for pleasure</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditate</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How often do you do the following…**

P3. Approximately how often do you do each of the following, if at all…

**Base:** All Respondents
5. Seek Counseling When Needed

Tele-behavioral health widely available, easily accessible

Resources: [https://www.betterhelp.com](https://www.betterhelp.com) [https://www.talkspace.com](https://www.talkspace.com)

### Needed Mental Health Treatment or Therapy but Didn’t Get It

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distressed</th>
<th>Yes, in the past 12 months</th>
<th>Not Distressed</th>
<th>Yes, in the past 12 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[A] Vet Tech (n=212)</td>
<td>31% No</td>
<td>69% Yes</td>
<td>49% No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[B] Vet Assistant (n=139)</td>
<td>21% No</td>
<td>79% Yes</td>
<td>48% No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[C] Hospital Admin or Practice Manager (n=39)</td>
<td>23% No</td>
<td>77% Yes</td>
<td>53% No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[D] Reception/Client Service Rep/Other (n=63)</td>
<td>19% No</td>
<td>81% Yes</td>
<td>47% No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MH5. Was there ever a time when you wanted mental health treatment or counseling for yourself but didn’t get it?

Base: All Respondents
4. Conclusions/Q&A
Conclusions

1. Veterinary team members find their work meaningful and important
2. Most are satisfied with their job
3. Wellbeing and mental health are lower than the general population; burnout is higher
4. Personality plays a role, as does poor financial health
5. The research shows that there are many things individuals and practices can do to improve wellbeing and reduce burnout