CONCLUSIONS

Using the '7 steps' process helps vets and nurses provide great care for the owner as well as the pet.

Quantifying telephone customer care in the veterinary profession: data collection drives significant improvement

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INTRODUCTION

The telephone is the first and most regular point of practice contact: a superior customer experience here is vital and has been overlooked both in terms of significance and value. A large national UK database of approximately 4500 small animal practices has been developed that allows comparison of telephone call handling between local competitors, different regions and also enables changes to be plotted over time. Variations in customer experience by time and day can be measured, and differences recorded according to practice size and ownership (corporate groups or independents).

OBJECTIVES

To assess if practices collecting data deliver a better customer experience than those who do not.

METHODS

Every month, calls are made to around 1,500 small animal practices in the UK and Ireland.

As a result each quarter, every practice in the country is called by a researcher asking for advice and information as a potential client. Practices are rated on key criteria and then awarded an overall score. Practices that elected to receive this data for a period of at least a year were compared to those that did not.

Prospective evaluation of concerns in new-graduate veterinary surgeons performing canine ovariohysterectomies (COVH) over the first year of general practice.

Collecting accurate and detailed insight into real behaviours leads to positive behaviour change and an improved customer experience.

RESULTS

Data from January 2014 to August 2014 from practices receiving monthly reports (Dataset A) and using its insight to improve the customer experience, was compared to those that did not. (Dataset B). The figures shown in Table 1 are the overall scores.

	Dataset A	Dataset B
Business basics	60.97%	49.2%
Engagement levels	67.17%	58.92%
Information provided	53.35%	31.4%
Asked animal's name	31%	3%
Appointments offered	65%	24%
Overall score	61.94%	39.08%

Table 1.

There was a positive impact of the Call Coaching programme.

Detailed call analysis found that the highest customer experience ratings were recorded on Monday between 9–11am, whilst the lowest were found on Friday between 1–3pm. Through the week, the customer experience in the East Midlands improved by 2%, whilst in the North it decreased by 9%.

Newark was the best-performing town, with appointments offered to 29.41% of callers in dataset B practices, whilst in Plymouth this figure was just 4.55%.

CONCLUSIONS

The data identified a better performance from practices that receiving monthly reports when compared to those that did not.

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AIM

To document veterinary practitioners' causes of concern during COVH at three time points: one month before graduation and after 6 and 12 months of clinical practice.