Quality of life assessment in pet cats and dogs using the five welfare needs

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OBJECTIVES

A novel practice-based scheme monitors quality of life (QOL) in pets by assessing the five welfare needs using a 'traffic light' system and identifying improvement actions that owners can implement. The change in QOL of cats and dogs between first and second assessment consultations was analysed.

METHODS

Data from assessment consultations for cats and dogs were collected at 51 PDSA Pet Hospitals. All animals had

a first consult (PW1) and some had a second (PW2). Data included the score (red, amber or green) for each of the welfare needs categories - environment, diet, behaviour, companionship and health. Improvement actions advised during the consultation were also recorded. The frequency of each score per category was calculated for all PW1 and PW2. Scores from individuals with both PW1 and PW2 were translated into a positive, neutral or negative change in QOL. A proportion of improvement actions was analysed.

RESULTS

Data from PW1 consultations with 42647 cats and 14315 dogs were available. PW2 was recorded for 8% of cats and 9% of dogs. Overall, a higher frequency of green scores and a lower frequency of red and amber scores was reported at PW2 compared to PW1. For individuals with both consultations, 53% of cats and 40% of dogs had a positive overall change. The category with most improvement actions suggested across PW1 and PW2 was 'health'.

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

QOL indicators improved between the two assessment consultations for both species. This information can assist in promoting the scheme to veterinary practices and owners.

What should happen during dog and cat vaccination consultations?

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OBJECTIVES

Few data are available describing what happens during dog and cat vaccination consultations or what owners and veterinary surgeons think about their content. The aim of this study was to investigate the attitudes of owners and veterinary surgeons towards the content of dog and cat vaccination consultations.

METHODS

During August 2016, veterinary surgeons in small animal general practice in the United Kingdom and owners whose dog(s) and/or cat(s) had attended a preventative healthcare consultation during the previous 3 months

were recruited. Semi-structured qualitative telephone interviews were conducted to explore experiences of, and attitudes towards, preventative healthcare consultations. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and thematically analysed to identify key themes. This abstract reports the theme: 'Expectations of vaccination consultation content'.

RESULTS

Twenty-nine interviews were conducted with 14 veterinary surgeons and 15 owners. Primary vaccination course consultations were described to have a relatively consistent structure which met owner expectations. In contrast, perspectives on what should be included in adult pet vaccination consultations ranged widely amongst both owners and veterinary surgeons. All veterinary surgeons and several owners described tensions that had occurred during these consultations. Time pressures, mismatched expectations and unexpected findings on clinical examination appeared to be important, and potentially modifiable, sources of owner-veterinary surgeon friction.

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

This research identifies mismatched expectations of what should happen during vaccination consultations. We recommend that the focus and content of adult dog and cat vaccination consultations be urgently reviewed to ensure they meet the needs and expectations of owner, pet and veterinary surgeon.