

IAHAIO at Tallinn University, June 2018

On 14th June 2018, IAHAIO contributed to a seminar on One Health, One Welfare, at Tallinn University. Here, Dr Elizabeth Ormerod, IAHAIO Vice President Membership and retired veterinarian, summarises the key points from each paper presented.



One Health One Welfare: The importance of research, education and cooperation

The seminar was opened by the Rector of Tallinn University Professor Tiit Land and by Dr. Prof. Marie-José Enders-Slegers, President of IAHAIO.

Professor Tiit, in his opening address, explained that Tallinn University utilises a multidisciplinary approach. This was very welcome to us as anthrozoology requires a multidisciplinary approach.

Professor Marie-José Enders-Slegers gave the opening paper *Human-Animal Interactions today, an overview*. The history of the field of anthrozoology and the beginnings of IAHAIO in 1992 were outlined. IAHAIO's goals and missions, its recent initiatives, symposia, conferences and achievements were explained. IAHAIO is a global body with a growing membership and IAHAIO serves to provide leadership to advance human-animal interactions. Closer links are being forged between researchers and practitioners to enhance quality. And IAHAIO provides collaborative opportunities for its members and dissemination of key findings.

The activities of IAHAIO include training and conferences; statements of best practices – its Declarations, White Paper and position statements. It has an open access online journal *People and Animals: the International Journal of Research and Practice (PAIJ)*. Its collaborative initiatives include an members' online forum and Task Forces. And it delivers online newsletters.

Professor Enders-Slegers encouraged delegates to get involved with IAHAIO through submitting an article to *People and Animals*, co-hosting an IAHAIO event and human-animal interaction organisations can join IAHAIO.

The importance of standardisation of definitions was stated and the appropriate use of the term therapist.

Documented benefits accruing from the human-animal bond were outlined. Attention was drawn also to the challenges of the human-animal bond which have received less recognition and which need to be addressed. These include The Link – the relationship between animal abuse and various forms of domestic violence; situations in which having a pet is not appropriate; lack of knowledge in animal keepers – of animal behaviour or of zoonoses; the consequences of breaking the bond – moving to supported living following death; and lack of professional involvement.

Professor Enders-Slegers highlighted some of the challenges that IAHAIO has identified in Animal-Assisted Interventions (AAI) include a lack of a multidisciplinary approach, for example, not involving veterinarians and animal behaviourists. Also, the need for adequate training of all handlers in animal behaviour, welfare and early recognition of stress signals in their animals. Sometimes animals are involved in situations wherein they may not be necessary. Programmes should work quality standards and adhere to their protocols.

Theoretical frameworks put forward in relation to human-animal interactions include the Biophilia Hypothesis (Wilson, 1984); Family systems theory (Entin 1986); Social support theory (Enders-Slegers 2000); Symbolic interactionist perspective (Irvine 2012); Attachment theory (Julius et al 2013); and the Enactive Perspective (Verheggen, Enders-Slegers & Eshuis 2017).

Researchers in this field face many challenges. There is a great diversity of disciplines involved, a wide range of client groups, and various species of animals. The quality of animal training is variable. There are currently no standardised quality standards or protocols. It can be difficult to recruit research populations. There can be ethical issues involving conflicts of interest between the wellbeing of humans and of animals. And are practitioners adequately educated in working with both people and animals?

Professor Enders-Slegers concluded with the necessary steps to advance the field. More methodologically sound research is required. Training in AAI is needed at tertiary level. Quality standards in AAI are needed to protect human and animal safety. AAI should be embedded in health care, as in Italy. More attention to animal welfare in AAI and for pet animals is essential. Best practices should be shared between organisations, individuals and countries.

Dr Tynke de Winkel's paper addressed *Measuring welfare in animal assisted interventions*.

Dr de Winkel is a researcher in the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences in the Institute for Anthrozoology, Open University, Heerlen, Netherlands.

Although it has been known for decades that the presence of animals imparts benefits to humans, little is yet known about the impact upon the animals. Although there are risks and challenges, interactions can be beneficial for the animals also.

There are various definitions of animal welfare and many viewpoints depending upon the species and professions involved. There are also various theoretical models to describe human-animal relationships.

In the Patronage model humans are viewed as masters of animals and using animals is permitted in order to save and improve human living conditions. In the Friendship model friendships are with particular animals and there is a moral obligation not to harm animals without good reason. In the Partnership model people respect animals as equal partners, humans do not have predominance over animal interests. Hunting or killing animals only justified in extreme conditions or self-defence.

Dr de Tynkel explained that these moral attitudes may overlap and may not be adequate for all situations. She asked from which moral standpoint do we practice AAI? And stated that we need to care about animal welfare in AAI because this is an ethical and moral responsibility (Fine 2015); also,

we know more about the cognitive and emotional lives of animals (Bekoff and Pierce 2017; Broom 2014). It is also important to help ensure safety for humans and animals involved. And AAI is a professional working field of complementary therapy.

Welfare in AAI can be assessed through physiological measurement of heart rate, cortisol, oxytocin and other hormones. It can also be assessed through observation of stress associated behaviours and also by observing behaviours associated with animals feeling relaxed and happy. Pain, disease and injury should be absent.

Situations that can cause welfare issues include animals being left alone, or depending on the species - lacking companions of their own species or living with too many of their species. Animals can burn out through exhaustion; can be forced in uncomfortable situations; can be exposed to stressful conditions; can be denied rest; and so on.

Future directions were discussed, including being aware of our viewpoints. There should be universal guidelines about the ethics of human-animal interactions. There is a need for respect for the needs of animals and more education about different species and about their body language, emotions and cognition. And, reiterating Professor Enders-Slegers, the need for greater collaboration between researchers and practitioners from different disciplines.

There is also a need for a paradigm shift from dominance to respect for animals.

In conclusion Dr de Tynkel stated there is much work to do.

Importance of education, standards and co-operation

This presentation was delivered by Dr Anne McBride, University of Southampton and Chair of the ABTC Course Recognition Committee.

Dr McBride explained that there are diverse groups of animals kept for different reasons – as pets, assistance animals, laboratory animals, animals in zoos or on farms. All of these can be trained. They need to be trained for the safety of humans, for the welfare of the animal – and the welfare of in contact animals. Pets and assistance animals should be trained to improve their management, to facilitate veterinary treatments and for public safety.

There are different training methods. Traditional training is based on instilling anxiety and fear, the animal is compelled through fear of punishment. Associated training “aids” include check (choke) chains; prong collars; shock collars; spray collars; loud noises; jerking leashes; choking; kicking; Alpha roll; threatening behaviours. Punishment in horses includes, e.g. the use of whips. twitch and some bits.

Such positive punishment techniques are available to all and no education is needed. There is no requirement in the civilian or private sector for owners or dog trainers to have any education about what a dog is, about welfare or how animals learn. And when there is education it may not reflect current scientific understanding. Such approaches often lead to seriously detrimental outcomes for animal and human welfare.

Contemporary training is based on the science of Pavlov, Skinner and others. The animals wish to comply to get a pleasant reward. These can be food, toys, praise ... anything the animals like! Instead of positive punishment we have positive reinforcement. Animals co-operate instead of being compelled and the principles can be applied to all species. Dogs must be able to fit into human society; cope with changes; be appropriately physically and mentally stimulated. In other words, to be as healthy as possible and have interests. We unrealistically expect them to be perfect, but they are not dependable robots.

Problem behaviours in dogs is not just a legal issue. Behavioural problems, mainly aggression, are the leading cause of death in dogs less than three years of age. However, most problem behaviours including aggression are avoidable. Poor behaviour can be caused by a number of factors including

poor breeding; lack of socialisation; lack of training; poor advice on training/socialisation; traditional training methods.

Interesting analogies were discussed about child rearing and education with that of dogs. The importance of careful early childhood education and the need for highly trained early years teachers is recognised. As is the need for ongoing education and for adult rehabilitation and extra support for some. A holistic approach is applied. A similar approach should be applied to dogs in society. However simplistic attitudes and a lack of consistent approaches are evident in what Dr McBride refers to as Common Canine Myths viz. anyone can run puppy parties and dog classes well; training pet dogs is easy; sorting dog behaviour issues is easy; vets can do behaviour therapy without additional training.

Although there is a proliferation of courses in canine and equine behaviour therapy there are no common standards of content or depth of training. Delegates are not always assessed or tested. Some courses advise that attendees will become a behaviour counsellor in a few weekends whilst others involve a year long post graduate programme. The result can be a decline in animal welfare and human safety.

What is required is a common and consistent frame of reference. A national framework needs to be established of knowledge and skills required for roles. The ethical context within which practitioners work should be supported by a code of conduct and regulatory body to whom the public can refer concerns.

For the professionalisation of trainers and behaviourists they must be knowledgeable and skilled. They must be regulated. There should be an umbrella organisation to provide objective authority and regulation and make the profession publicly accountable. The Animal Behaviour and Training Council (ABTC) is an organisation of organisations whose ethos is education, standards and co-operation.

The ABTC members decided the knowledge and performance skills required for each of the following roles

- Animal trainer: only works with the animal
- Animal training instructor: works with animals and owner/handler
- Animal behaviour technician: provides preventative advice and deals with some behaviour problems
- Clinical animal behaviourist: works with more complex behaviours, and all aggression case
- Veterinary behaviourist (veterinarian and trained companion animal behaviourist)

These roles are not hierarchical, there is specialist knowledge in each role. Each is recognised for its own important contribution. All have knowledge and skills in animal behaviour, welfare, animal learning, training and relevant legislation. Each role has additional requirements. The ABTC scheme enables personal development leading to professional recognition, transferrable to other organisations. The scheme enables improved welfare of all kept species through the governing body for training. The ABTC is self-regulating and represents all parts of the sector. It is recognised and highly regarded by the UK government. It is invited to working parties in UK and abroad. The ABTC can provide a template for other groups and countries.

The LINK between animal cruelty, domestic violence, elder abuse, child abuse, and other forms of interpersonal violence was then discussed by Dr. Prof. Marie-José Enders-Slegers, President of IAHAIO

The LINK has been confirmed by research in many countries. Pets are part of family systems. Their abuse by children is deviant behaviour and indicates potential victimization, developmental disorders, potential development of criminal trajectories. In every case intervention is needed.

Being present at abuse has negative consequences for children such as traumatization, imitation behaviour and developmental problems.

The role of pets is changing from companions to family members and in The Netherlands 59% of families have pets. Companion animals bring many documented benefits to families. However, in cases of domestic violence they mean extra vulnerability for the victims.

Animal abuse can be due to neglect, due to carelessness, callousness and ignorance; abuse: deriving satisfaction from dominance or from behavioural response; sadistic taking satisfaction from suffering animal; hoarding; sexual abuse; subcultural (dog fighting).

Animal abuse means suffering for family and family members. It can harm child development through trauma, imitation behaviour and impair development of empathy. It provides perpetrators with a leverage for pressure and blackmail.

It is also a marker for psychopathy – e.g. developmental disorder, antisocial personality disorder.

Animal abuse occurs more commonly than previously thought. A survey by Professor Enders-Slegers of 108 veterinarians in the Netherlands found that 60% had noticed or suspected animal abuse in 365 cases. However, only 40 cases were reported to the police.

Veterinarians report obstacles in reporting cases of abuse. They cite a lack of knowledge on the topic. They have a problem in bringing evidence. They are concerned about breaking client confidentiality, about damaging their relationship with clients and feel reporting would damage them economically. They are also worried about being subject to violence from the perpetrator.

Research by Professor Enders-Slegers also found that in the Netherlands 55% of women in shelters said the partner had injured the animal. 15% reported an animal had been killed. 33% reported that they were coerced by their partner threatening to kill the animal. 11% stated their partner tried to get animal to attack them. 41% of the women postponed fleeing from their partners because they were unable to bring their pets to safety.

Relationships among different forms of abuse are correlational, not causal. I.e. domestic abuse, child, elder and animal abuse can co-occur. Animal abuse is an indicator of other abuse. Readers are encouraged to sign up for the monthly newsletters on The Link prepared by Phil Arkow.

<http://nationallinkcoalition.org/resources/link-letter-archives>

Various developments in the Netherlands to address the issues were described. These include

- Training for veterinary students, forensic veterinarians and Animal Cops
- Code of Conduct for veterinarians
- Mandatory reporting of child abuse
- Interdisciplinary cross reporting
- Co-operation between health and social care professionals, monthly meetings
- Refuge for pets in foster family network and in women's shelters
- A number of initiatives to raise awareness
- Forensic Institute at University of Utrecht

We can learn about best practices from the Netherlands and the USA. This is a difficult subject, but one we must acknowledge and address. Early intervention for young perpetrators is key.

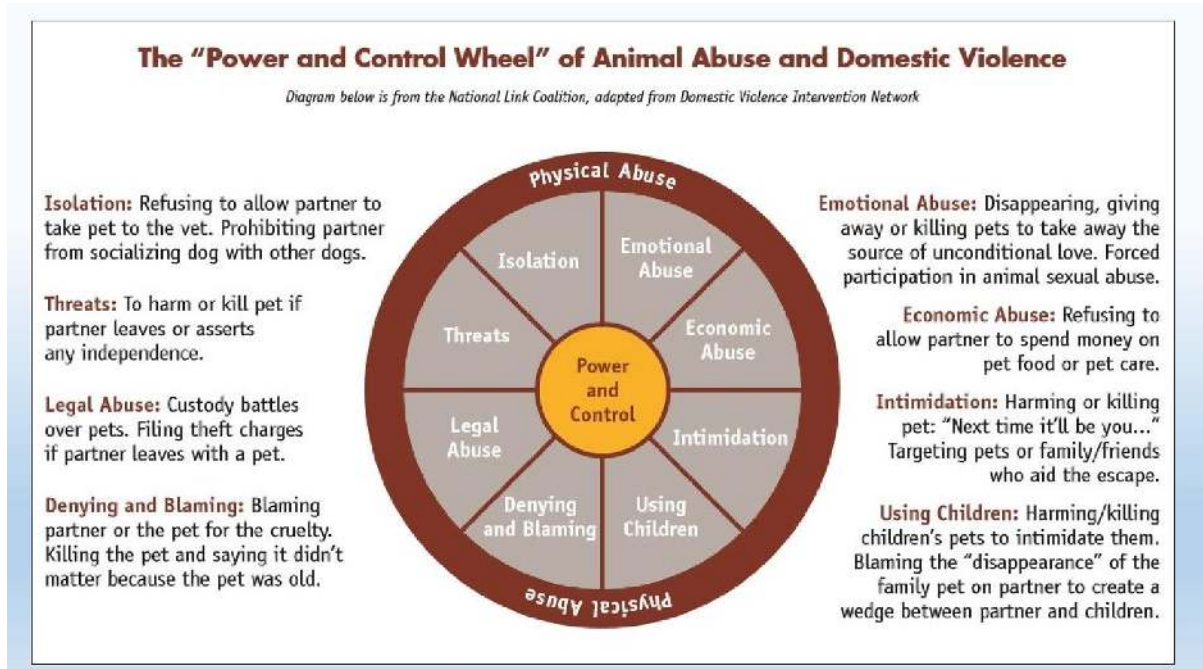
Shapiro 2004 AniCare Child: an approach to the assessment and treatment of children who abuse animals Model of Treatment for Animal Abuse. Protecting Children 19(1), 24-28

Experience in Sweden making the LINK

Nathalie Nordén, Secretary of European LINK Coalition

This presentation provided the Swedish experience where 20% of women experience domestic violence during their life. 100,000 women are victims of domestic violence annually. 25% cases are reported to police.

Perpetrators can use animals to threaten, coerce, intimidate and punish victims.



It is not known how many victims remain in violent situations due to lack of refuges accepting animals. However, three quarters of refuges report women being unable to leave because of pets. Only 20% of women's refuges currently accept pets.

Progress is being made. In 2008 an organisation VOOV, veterinary care of victims of domestic violence, was founded. It became a national organisation in 2014. Social workers and animal welfare officers have received training on The Link. Undergraduate training has been introduced for veterinary and animal welfare students. Post graduate veterinary training will soon be delivered and is based on The Links Group in the UK. Guidelines for veterinarians for cases of suspected animal abuse and domestic violence were created.

Cross reporting is being introduced, but not in a uniform way. The strategy in Vastmanland county involves an alert being sent to social services in all cases of suspected animal welfare or animal abuse if there is a child at the address. Up to 30 children annually who are neglected or abused have been found who would otherwise not have been identified. Other counties are considering this approach.

Challenges in Sweden include:

- Lack of knowledge about the Link
- Lack of research and statistics in Sweden
- Lack of funding for animal-related costs
- Domestic violence legislation not solving the problem
- Animal welfare legislation not included in domestic violence situations

Solutions will come with better understanding of the Link. Education about this is needed to drive change. There needs to be political will for change.

One Health One Welfare and the Human-animal Bond

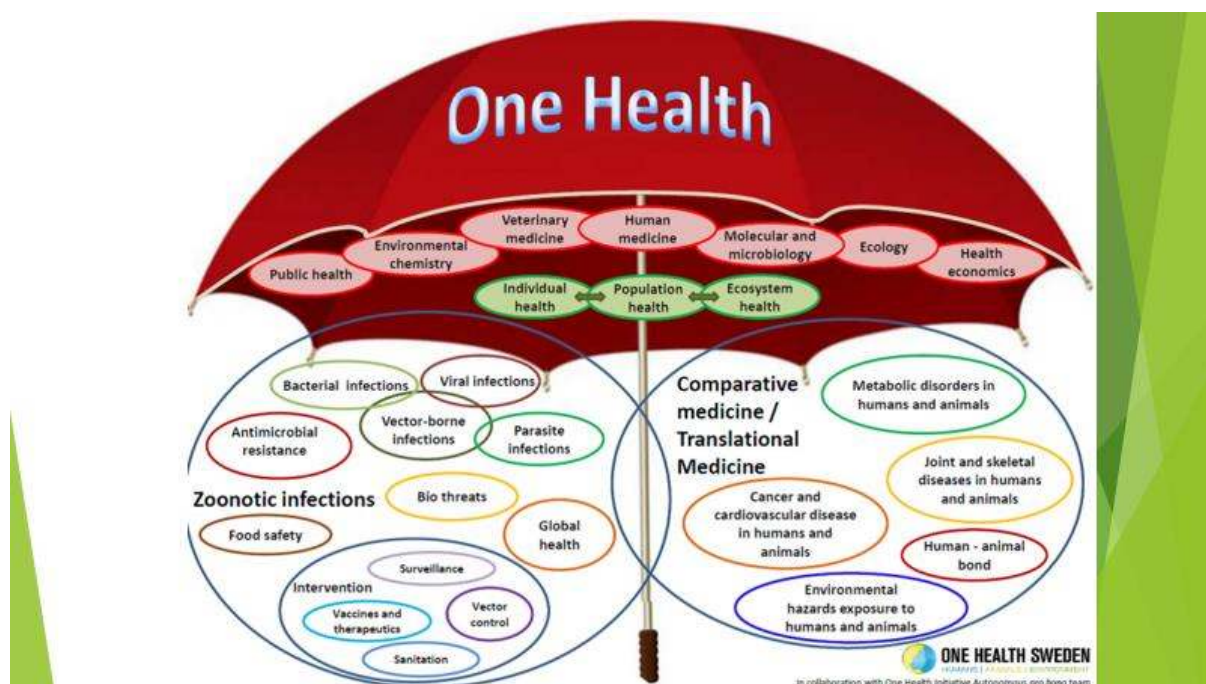
Dr Elizabeth Ormerod is a Vice President of IAHAIO, a trustee of SCAS and Founder of Canine Partners, UK assistance dog programme. She is a retired veterinarian.

Dr Ormerod gave an overview of why and how the health of the people is connected to the health of animals and the environment. She gave this definition of the bond:

The human-animal bond is a beneficial, dynamic relationship between people and animals influenced by behaviours essential to health and well-being of both. This includes emotional, psychological and physical interactions of people, animals and the environment. The veterinarian's role is to maximise the potentials of this relationship between people and animals. (AVMA)

IAHAIO has issued a series of Declarations pertaining to how the human-animal bond should be applied to improve health and welfare. These have been developed for local and national governments and other bodies to consider and implement. In 2013 IAHAIO issued the Chicago Declaration pertaining to One Health

Companion animals play a role in One Health through the documented health and social benefits of the human-animal bond, through the role of service/assistance animals and through exchanging information on the etiology and treatment of naturally occurring disorders in companion animals and humans. Interactions between companion animals and humans can have a positive influence on human and animal health through similar processes.



It was stated that One Welfare complements One Health and recognises the interrelationship between animal welfare, human well-being and the environment. (Pinillos et al, 2016). The transdisciplinary nature of One Health and One Welfare provides unique opportunities for multiple disciplines and stakeholders to collaborate locally, nationally, globally to achieve optimal health for people, animals and the environment. (IAHAIO, 2018). One Health and One Welfare are relevant to Animal Assisted Interventions, the goals of which are similar: the improvement of human health, wellness and functioning (IAHAIO 2018). Known health and social benefits accruing from the bond were referred. It was also stated that companion animals could play a role in preventing and in

mitigating many of causes of the chronic diseases affecting people of middle and older age through encouraging exercise, providing social support, structure to the day and companionship.

Cardiovascular disease, diabetes, arthritis, osteoporosis, depression, cancer and diabetes have common predisposing factors including lack of exercise, obesity and loneliness.

Assistance/service dogs have now been trained to assist people with many kinds of disability or health problems. Whilst the abilities of the dogs is astounding their human partners state that the emotional support provided is as important as the freedom and independence achieved.

Dr Ormerod outlined the benefits accruing from animal-assisted interventions by having accredited resident or visiting animals in care facilities. Very careful planning is required using a multidisciplinary approach – including veterinarians and animal behaviourists as well as human care specialists and ethicists. Careful matching of the animals to the environment and to the client group is key. Provided programmes are carefully planned and operated with well- considered protocols risks from injury and zoonoses are low. Animal welfare must be paramount and people must be trained to detect early stress signals in the animals. Dr Ormerod cautioned that if facilities had no regulated provision for animal contact that residents may make their own provision – encouraging stray and wild animals. Such interactions expose residents to risks from zoonoses and injury. The need to nurture is strong and should not be denied.

The teaching of Humane Education also involves a One Health One Welfare approach. Dr Ormerod explained she found this a memorable, absorbing and fun method to teach about people, animals and our shared environment. She developed a curriculum to teach comparative preventive medicine, comparative nutrition and comparative behaviour. The lessons can be delivered in a workshop format.

Recent demographic changes, increased lifespan, smaller families and high levels of divorce, mean that there are more older people living alone. Bond relationships with companion animals become more important. Feeling lonely is associated with negative health outcomes. However, companion animals can mitigate against loneliness, isolation and depression. Sadly in the UK many housing providers prohibit pets. It is within the gift of governments to enact positive pets in housing legislation. This would improve human health, reduce animal welfare problems. Create social capital and result in significant fiscal savings.