



The Veterinarian and the Public Health

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The veterinarian is considered by many to be just a dog and cat doctor. However, today, this has been shown to be different. It is known that the occupation area of a veterinarian is very wide, since he acts for the health and well-being of animals and human beings and for the environment sustainability.

The work of veterinarians goes far beyond veterinary clinics and offices, intended for pets: they work in activities related to the production of animal foods that arrive at the consumer's table; play a fundamental role in Brazilian agriculture; they can work as consultants, technical officers, teachers and criminal, judicial and administrative experts; perform activities in laboratories for soil analysis, water analysis and household cleaning; conduct research on food; participate in the production of vaccines and medicines for animal use; among many others [1].

The World Health Organization (WHO), recognizing the importance of veterinary medicine in relation to human health, defined in 1951 the Veterinary Public Health: "Veterinary public health comprises all the community efforts influencing and influenced by the veterinary medical art and science applied to the prevention of disease, protection of life, and promotion of the well-being and efficiency of man" [2].

The veterinary doctor joins the group of health professionals very easily because he is used to protecting the population against collective illnesses. The type of training received by the veterinarian is in harmony with the concept of public health, which considers all the factors that determine collective health, without being limited to the individual's needs [3].

The Veterinary Doctor has its basic principles strongly grounded in the biological and social sciences, being able to link agriculture, animal health, education, the environment and human health itself to protect and improve the health of the population as a whole. By studying the basic sciences, the veterinary doctor is able to develop activities related to epidemiology, or to research laboratories and institutions specialized in the preparation and control of biological products and medicines. Likewise, studies in ecology allow this professional to act in environmental control programs, in sanitation and in the preservation of the fauna [4].

The WHO widely recognizes the role of the veterinarian in the Public Health teams, emphasizing that the knowledge of biology and epidemiology of zoonoses that this professional has is of vital importance for the planning, execution and evaluation of any prevention, control or eradication program that will be adopted [5].

Thus, the veterinarian has the responsibility to provide better environmental conditions, dissemination of information and guidance to the human population regarding basic health principles, especially in the current context of Single Health, which translates the inseparable union between environmental, human and animal health.

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