

Message from Dean Whiteley

Domestic violence intervention is not covered in the core curriculum of the DVM program, but it is a topic of growing importance for companion animal veterinarians.

Because of her interest in the role animals play in society, Dr. Rhonda Schulman, an internal medicine specialist in our Veterinary Teaching Hospital, has been helping Dr. Dianne Dunning to build the college's program in urban animal and shelter medicine. Currently, Dr. Schulman is partnering with social service and law enforcement agencies to organize a May 1 conference entitled "Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse: The Cruel Connection."

This groundbreaking conference in Urbana will address animal abuse, the dynamics of domestic violence, and how veterinarians and their staff can approach this sensitive topic with a potential victim. It will explain what kinds of injuries in veterinary patients are consistent with intentional abuse as well as what laws exist to protect patients, clients, and practitioners.

"Companion animal veterinarians have a responsibility as 'the other family doctor' to take an active role in all aspects of pet and family health," says Dr. Schulman. "We are thrust into dealing with problems like interpersonal violence, and this conference is a way to educate practitioners and veterinary staff on an issue that is truly a matter of life or death."

You can find out more about the conference on the Web at <http://www.cvm.uiuc.edu/ope/dvaa.html>.

Dr. Schulman's clinical interest centers on endocrinology. She is currently enrolling patients in a trial investigating the causes of hypertension in canine Cushing's disease. Patients may qualify for a free echocardiogram. You can reach Dr. Schulman for more information at rschulma@uiuc.edu.

And feel free to contact me at dean@cvm.uiuc.edu.--Herb