



## AVMA and Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Joint Statement on Veterinary Mental Health and Wellbeing

We believe that for veterinary professionals to realize their full potential and the global veterinary profession to remain sustainable, maintaining high levels of mental health and wellbeing for all members of the veterinary team is a priority.

Improving veterinary mental health and wellbeing has a positive impact on individuals, the profession at large and, ultimately, animal health and welfare, and public health. Our approach for supporting mental health and wellbeing within the veterinary profession includes the following:

**Prevent:** addressing the systemic issues that lead to poor levels of mental health, including the risk of suicide, and sub-optimal wellbeing across the veterinary team. This includes researching the issues, and developing and advocating policies and interventions that are supportive of positive mental health.

**Protect:** providing and promoting the skills and knowledge required by individuals and organisations to increase levels of wellbeing and improve mental health in veterinary medicine. Making such interventions evidence-based and widely accessible.

**Support:** ensuring suitable expert support is available to veterinary professionals who need it, provided in a confidential and safe environment, and accessible without fear of judgement.

Furthermore, we commit to ensuring that veterinary professionals with mental health issues are treated fairly and without discrimination.

We will reduce the stigma and prejudice around mental ill-health through education, advocacy and access to services. We will work to promote a safe and supportive culture in which individuals are able to seek appropriate help and, ultimately, flourish.

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\* 'Mental health' is used as defined by the World Health Organization, August 2014, i.e.: "a state of wellbeing in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community". [http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental\\_health/en/](http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en/)