

Presentation Title: "Stayin' Alive: CPR Training for the Veterinary Team"

Presenters/Facilitators:

Alyssa Mages, BS, CVT

Chief Visionary Officer (CVO) – Empowering Veterinary Teams®

Philadelphia, PA

Proceedings Notes:

The "Stayin' Alive: CPR Training for the Veterinary Team" presentation aims to equip veterinary professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to handle cardiopulmonary arrest (CPA) in animals. This session emphasizes that CPA can occur unexpectedly in any practice setting, and preparation is key to improving patient outcomes. With the RECOVER guidelines at the core, the presentation highlights the importance of structured protocols, mental preparedness, communication, and teamwork during a code.

The presentation begins by exploring the different scenarios in which CPA can occur. Whether during a routine procedure, an emergency situation, or in a critical care environment, understanding the contexts where CPA may arise allows veterinary professionals to stay vigilant and ready to respond quickly. Emphasis will be placed on recognizing early signs of CPA and the importance of monitoring patients closely during high-risk moments.

Next, the discussion moves toward protocols specific to each practice setting. Veterinary professionals will learn how to develop protocols tailored to their environment, from small animal clinics to emergency hospitals. Key considerations include the types of resources available, the skills of the team, and the specific layout of the practice. These protocols ensure that everyone knows their role during a code, which can reduce stress and improve efficiency in emergency situations.

To address the intense pressure that accompanies CPA, the presentation covers both the physical and mental preparedness needed to perform CPR effectively. Participants will learn techniques for staying calm, focused, and ready to act during high-stress moments. The importance of routine CPR drills will be discussed as a method of building muscle memory and maintaining composure during actual emergencies.

A major component of the presentation is the introduction and application of the RECOVER (Reassessment Campaign on Veterinary Resuscitation) Initiative, a set of evidence-based CPR guidelines developed specifically for veterinary medicine. Veterinary professionals will gain insight into the core principles of RECOVER, including chest compression techniques, ventilation, and drug administration protocols. Understanding and implementing these guidelines helps standardize the practice of CPR across veterinary teams, ensuring consistency and increasing the chances of patient survival.

Another critical aspect of the presentation is the focus on communication and teamwork during a code. Effective CPR requires clear, concise communication among team members, with everyone aware of their roles and responsibilities. Attendees will be encouraged to practice closed-loop communication and delegation of tasks to ensure that the team functions efficiently and cohesively during a stressful CPA event.



Finally, the presentation emphasizes the importance of regular training to maintain CPR competency. Veterinary professionals will learn how to implement training schedules within their practices, ensuring that every team member is prepared to respond to a CPA situation. Routine training builds confidence, keeps skills sharp, and fosters a culture of preparedness within the practice.

Learning Objectives:

1. How, when & where CPA can occur:
 - a. Understand the various situations where cardiopulmonary arrest may arise in veterinary patients, allowing for proactive monitoring and early intervention.
2. What types of protocols to have in place dependent upon the practice setting:
 - a. Learn how to develop customized CPR protocols that take into account the unique layout, resources, and team structure of each veterinary practice.
3. How to be prepared – both physically & mentally – to address a patient in CPA:
 - a. Develop strategies for staying calm, focused, and ready to perform CPR under pressure, recognizing the importance of both mental and physical readiness.
4. Understand the RECOVER Initiative & how to apply its principles:
 - a. Gain a foundational understanding of the updated RECOVER guidelines and their application in veterinary resuscitation, including compression techniques, ventilation, and drug administration.
5. Recognize the importance of communication & teamwork when running a code:
 - a. Appreciate the value of clear communication and structured teamwork during CPR, ensuring that all team members know their roles and can contribute effectively during a code.
6. Implement a training schedule to ensure consistency & competency in performing CPR:
 - a. This will maintain CPR competency and preparedness, ensuring that all team members are up to date on the latest guidelines and ready to act in an emergency.

