RVT News
Credentialing as a VTS Gaining in Popularity

Many veterinary technicians are taking on increased responsibilities in the clinic as the level of care offered in veterinary medicine continues to advance. Consequently, veterinary technology specialization is growing.

Veterinary technician specialists (VTSs) bring a high level of expertise and experience to their practices, ensuring that patients receive the best possible care. Veterinary technicians can become credentialed specialists in four areas: emergency and critical care, anesthesia, dentistry, and internal medicine. Within internal medicine, there are subspecialties of small animal medicine, large animal medicine, cardiology, and oncology.

The credentialing process for veterinary technician specialists is challenging and has many requirements, including demonstrating advanced skills and knowledge under the supervision of board certified veterinarians or other specialists, taking continuing education classes, having a specified work experience, submitting case logs and case reports, and passing written exams.

Veterinary technician specialties are recognized as Academies by the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA). NAVTA’s Committee on Veterinary Technician Specialties (CVTS) is the governing body for granting specialty status. CVTS has developed guidelines to assist groups petitioning NAVTA for specialty recognition and has been recognized by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) as the body to oversee the development of veterinary technician Academies.

In 1997 NAVTA recognized the first specialty group, the Academy of Veterinary Emergency Critical Care Technicians (AVECCT) and today AVECCT is the only Academy with Full Academy Status, which is attained after 10 years. Provisional Academy Status was granted in 1999 to the Academy of Veterinary Technician Anesthetists (AVTA), in 2003 to the Academy of Veterinary Dental Technicians (AVDT), and in 2006 to the Academy of Internal Medicine for Veterinary Technicians (AIMVT).

VTS (Internal Medicine) – The Newest Veterinary Technician Specialty
The most recent Academy/area of specialization, AIMVT, was formed in 2003 and recognized by NAVTA in 2006. In 2007 AIMVT recognized 35 charter members of the Academy and in 2008, 10 candidates successfully passed the first AIMVT certifying examination.

“The AIMVT will promote the interest in and advance the skills of veterinary technicians within the disciplines of veterinary internal medicine by providing cutting edge continuing education, working with veterinarians to advocate superior patient care, client education and consumer protection,” the mission statement of the AIMVT reads. “The AIMVT will further the recognition of credentialed specialty technicians as leaders in the profession of veterinary internal medicine nursing.”

AIMVT was formed by a diverse group of technicians from universities, specialty practices, referral practices, general practices, and research facilities. AIMVT-certified technicians work in primarily non-surgical practices.

“We welcome all veterinary technicians with the desire to gain a better understanding and skill level in internal medicine to consider joining us as we grow,” the organization states on their web site.

As an example of VTS exam prerequisites, the AIMVT requires:

- A minimum of three years with 6,000 hours of experience as a credentialed veterinary technician in the field of Internal Medicine. All experience must be completed within five years prior to application.
- A minimum of 40 hours of continuing education (CE), with a minimum of 70% of the hours within a particular subspecialty. All CE must be completed within five years prior to application.
• Advanced Skills Requirements
• Advanced Knowledge Requirements
• Case Log Requirements – a minimum of 50 cases must be recorded, which show mastery of advanced nursing skills.
• Case Report Requirements

Additional information can be found at the web sites for each the veterinary technician specialties:

**Academy of Veterinary Emergency Critical Care Technicians (AVECCT)**
www.avecct.org

**Academy of Veterinary Technician Anesthetists (AVTA)**
www.avta-vts.org

**Academy of Veterinary Dental Technicians (AVDT)**
www.avdt.us

**Academy of Internal Medicine for Veterinary Technicians (AIMVT)**
www.aimvt.com