

NYHETSBREV Nr. 5

NAS

Norsk Atferdsgruppe for Selskapsdyr

Leder

Et nytt år er startet, og et årsmøtekurs nærmer seg med stormskritt. Per dags dato er det fremdeles noen ledige plasser, så meld dere på. Årsmøtet blir på søndagen klokken 16.00. Det skal velges nye styremedlemmer og vi skal vedta noen etiske regler. Se "årsmøtesaker" under.

En annen aktuell sak i tiden er den nye hundeloven. Vi er i ferd med å utarbeide et notat som blir sendt innen høringsfristen ()til Justisdepartementet. Dersom noen av medlemmene har noen kommentarer til forslaget om hundeloven, send dem til meg. Forslaget til hundelov ligger på nettet: [file:///C:/WINDOWS/Temporary Internet Files/OLK6330/JD - Høringsnotater.htm](file:///C:/WINDOWS/Temporary%20Internet%20Files/OLK6330/JD - Høringsnotater.htm)

Neste nyhetsbrev ventes i april-mai, og redaksjonen ønsker innlegg og forslag til stoff. Innlegg sendes innen 31. mars til: Norsk Atferdsgruppe for Selskapsdyr

v/Gry Ellingsen Eskeland

Svend Foynsgt 50

4016 Stavanger

e-mail: eeskelan@online.no

Redaksjonen forbeholder seg retten til å forkorte innlegg

Minner også på postadressen til gruppen, som fra årsmøtet blir forandret fra: Norsk Atferdsgruppe for Selskapsdyr, c/o Hans Petter Kjæstad, Waldemar Thranes gate 66 A, 0173 OSLO til min adresse, som over. Dette er kun midlertidig, til vi får en postboksadresse.

Årsmøtesaker

Årsberetningen

vil bli utdelt på årsmøtet.

Fastsettelse av medlemskontigent

Styret fremmer forslag om medlemskontigent til:

600,- for medlemmer

200,- for assosierte medlemmer

Valg

Valgkomiteen har etter hardt strev, tidkrevende undersøkelsesarbeide og hodejegervirksomhet kommet fram til følgende, som blir fremmet som forslag:

- Sylvi Engebretsen

- Odd Brunland (er ikke medlem nå, men søknad vil bli sendt med det første, han er sosionom med hovedfag i pedagogikk)

- Torunn Seland (under forutsetning at reise blir dekket)

- Frank Christiansen (under forutsetning at reise blir dekket)

Inkomne saker

Det er ikke fremmet saker under denne posten ved tidsfristens utløp 14.januar

Etiske Retningslinjer for Norsk Atferdsgruppe for Selskapsdyr, NAS

Innhold

1. Generelle bestemmelser
2. Virksomhet inkludert konsultasjons- og veiledningsarbeid
3. Om informasjon og taushetsplikt
4. Vedtakelse

1. Generelle bestemmelser

- I. Som medlem plikter du å overholde de lover, forskrifter og andre bestemmelser som til enhver tid gjelder for NAS. Dette innebærer også at alle må forholde seg til vedtak som er truffet.
- II. Som medlem av NAS er man selv ansvarlig for å gjøre seg kjent med og etterleve de gjeldende etiske retningslinjer. NAS skal sørge for at de gjeldende retningslinjer er lett tilgjengelige for sine medlemmer, for eksempel på nettsider, i medlemsblad/nyhetsbrev og ved utsending til nye medlemmer.
- III. NAS medlem som kommer på det rene med at disse etiske retningslinjene brytes, skal sørge for at bruddene opphører eller ta saken/anliggendet opp med styret i NAS.
- IV. Som medlem i NAS skal du ikke drive virksomhet som skader NAS sitt navn og rykte.

2. Virksomhet, inkludert konsultasjonsvirksomhet og veiledning

- I. Dyrets velferd skal alltid stå sentralt ved alt atferdsmodifiserende arbeid. NAS medlemmer plikter å avstå fra unødvendig bruk av straff og heller ikke gi råd om atferdsmodifiserende tiltak som i praksis ikke har vist seg å ha effekt.
- II. Som medlem av NAS plikter man å jobbe i tråd med det som er NAS hovedformål, nemlig "å stimulere til tverrfaglighet og samarbeid på tvers av tradisjonelle skillelinjer (samfunns- og naturvitenskapelige retninger) i studiet av atferd hos selskapsdyr, relasjonene mellom mennesker og dyr og i endringsarbeid knyttet til både selskapsdyrsatferd og til relasjonen mellom dyr og folk".
- III. Når en dyreeier eller annen person oppsøker hjelp og veiledning man ikke ser seg i stand til å gi, skal man vise til eller eventuelt selv innhente annet kvalifisert tilbud eller annen hjelp.
- IV. På oppfordring plikter man å gi korrekt informasjon med hensyn til egne kvalifikasjoner.
- V. NAS medlemmer bør arbeide for å høyne den faglige standard og for å høyne samfunnets forståelse og tillitt til de aktuelle fagområdene ved å:
 - Utvikle sine faglige ferdigheter
 - Holde seg faglig oppdatert, inkludert gjeldende lovverk
 - Være faglig forberedt til oppdrag, samt kjenne sine faglige begrensinger og ta disse i betraktning når han/hun påtar seg oppdrag

- Vise respekt for kollegaer og bidra til å heve egen og andres kompetanse ved faglig kollegialt samarbeid
- Ta ansvar for egen arbeidssituasjon og være bevisst sin egen fagkompetanse i tverrfaglig samarbeid og ovenfor andre profesjoner

VI. I sitt virke plikter man å vise respekt for brukeren/kunden og situasjonen. Man bør i sin fremferd og væremåte opptre lojalt, troverdig og faglig korrekt. Vurderinger skal baseres på faglig grunnlag og inkludere en helhetsvurdering av hva som i hvert tilfelle er formålstjenlig for den enkelte eier/familie/bruker, dyret selv og samfunnet forøvrig.

3. Taushetsplikt

- I. Man har taushetsplikt angående private eller på annen måte sensitive opplysninger man blir kjent med gjennom sin virksomhet, samt gjennom arbeid i eller for NAS.
- II. Taushetsplikten gjelder også etter at vedkommende eventuelt har avsluttet sitt medlemskap i NAS. Han/hun kan heller ikke benytte taushetsbelagte opplysninger i egen virksomhet eller i tjeneste/arbeid hos andre.

4. Vedtak

- I. Etske retningslinjer kan fremlegges ved årsmøtet til eventuell drøftelse og revisjon.
- II. Etske retningslinjer for NAS ble vedtatt første gang 25. februar 2001.
- III. Gjeldende retningslinjer ble vedtatt av årsmøtet 25. februar 2001.

Tverrfaglig samarbeid ved atferdsproblemer hos selskapsdyr

av Gry Eskeland

Etter hvert som konsultasjon for atferdsproblemer blir vanlig i Norge, vil det dukke opp et behov for profesjonalitet og spilleregler. Dette temaet er en av de prioriterte oppgavene for NAS fremover. Frem til den dagen nås når vi har en utdanning og en tittel som sier noe om hva vi står inne for, må vi kunne samarbeide med mennesker av ulike bakgrunn. Vi bør respektere de ulike erfaringene og prøve å lære fra den andre istedet for å rakke ned på vedkommende.

I Storbritannia er veterinærloven streng, og sier at det er kun veterinærer som kan ha ansvar for diagnose, rådgivning og behandling av dyr. I praksis betyr dette at atferdsproblemer skal henvises fra veterinær til atferdskonsulent i alle tilfeller. I Norge er loven mer svevende, og det er ikke påkrevet med slik henvisning. Jeg vil allikevel anbefale slik praksis, fordi en da får utelukket endel medisinske årsaker til atferdsproblemer. Dette medfører litt merarbeid på informasjonssiden både i forhold til kunden og til veterinæren, men desto mindre trenger en å bekymre seg for om det er et tilfelle av blærekattarr eller eliminasjonsproblem en har foran seg.

Jeg er i gang med å utforme et skjema som kan brukes i dette henseende, både mellom veterinærer og mellom veterinær og ikke-veterinær atferdskonsulent.

Den følgende artikkelen er en innleveringsoppgave til Diploma (Advanced Studies) Companion Animal Behaviour Counselling, og tar for seg positive og negative sider ved henvisningspraksis mellom veterinær og atferdskonsulent.

The Veterinary Act and Behaviourists

Introduction

The general rule in the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 is that only veterinary surgeons may diagnose, give advice based on diagnosis and give medical or surgical treatment to animals.

This essay will firstly discuss how this might relate to the field of companion animal behaviour counselling, and secondly explore what influence the Act should have on the role of non-veterinary behaviourists.

Some definitions

Veterinarian- A veterinary surgeon educated at a veterinary college, no or little further education in companion animal behaviour counselling.

Veterinary behaviourist- A veterinary surgeon educated at a veterinary college, with or without further education in companion animal behaviour counselling. The criteria compared to the above is that he/she is interested in the field and will spend time in the veterinary surgery with behaviour consultations.

Non-veterinary behaviourist- Anyone (excluding veterinarians) spending time doing companion animal behaviour counselling in the interest of changing the behaviour of the animal. The behaviourist may or may not have formal education in the field, but the definition is not including the advice given by one pet owner to another, except in the case where the "pet owner counsellor" spends time with several pet owners and pet behaviour problems on a daily basis.

Field of companion animal behaviour counselling- The total activity of companion animal behaviour counselling, including the academic and non-academic, the veterinary and non-veterinary activity. The counselling will both deal with normal undesirable behaviour, behavioural signs due to organic disease, disorganisation of neural chemistry or nervous system pathology. All of these categories can in some contexts be called problem behaviour. In addition the field includes preventative behavioural counselling and pet selection counselling (Hart & Hart, 1985)

Discussion

Objectives of the Act

The objectives of the Act were and still are to protect the animals. Compared to the human medical field, the veterinary surgeon will with the Act have primary care for the patient even if the animal is referred on to chiropody, physiotherapy, acupuncture, homeopathy or companion animal behaviour counselling. This is to ensure the welfare of the animal (Sarah Heath, 2000)

A person's ability to differentiate between emotional/psychological and medical problems is quite reasonable, when self-examination is in question. Even when parents or other adults experiences changes in children's behaviour it is quite plausible that the differentiation is clear, which is the reason for the fact that psychologists do not need referrals from doctors. On the contrary, pet owners are generally not well enough educated in the species-specific normal behaviour, and definitely not in abnormal behaviours (Parker, 1989), so the veterinarian is the most competent to differentiate between organic and behavioural problems in their patients.

In the 30-40 years since the Act, a wealth of knowledge has arrived, and hence the specialisation within professions. The field of small animal veterinary surgery has increased enormously over these years, and the field of companion animal behaviour counselling even more so. Companion animal behaviour counselling has been introduced to the veterinary undergraduate curriculum only the last few years, which tells us that the general veterinary practitioner has relatively little knowledge in this field.

The Consequences of the Act

In practice the result is that even if the Veterinary surgeons Act states that veterinarians are the only ones to diagnose, give advice and give medical and surgical treatment, the veterinarians are not necessarily competent to diagnose behaviour problems to the extent of what is expected by the general public. The general treatment of "put to sleep" for the diagnosis "behaviour problem" is no longer acceptable.

The Act is therefore interpreted in a way that is practical. The veterinary surgeon's job is to differentiate between a diagnosis of organic origin and behavioural origin and treat the medical and surgical diseases, while referring the behavioural cases to a specialist in the field, i.e. the companion animal behaviour counsellor.

Negative Consequences of the Act

The Act was made over 30 years ago, and the pet world has dramatically changed over these years. The pet owners and society have changed views of how to keep animals, for instance more pets are kept in the house and they are expected to conform to our lifestyles and housing arrangements. The society require the keeping of pets to be environmentally friendly, i.e. depositing faecal and urine material away from peoples whereabouts as well as being less tolerant to dogs' barking and cats' howling compared to earlier. Veterinary care for pets has improved, and other caring facilities like boarding kennels and behavioural therapy consultations are improved. This influences how the Veterinary Act relates to the field of companion animal behaviour counselling.

It has become clearer that veterinarians are not the best advisors on matters concerning the mental health of pets. There is possibly an argument for changing the Vet Act, so that not just veterinary surgeons can have primary care for animals. Pet behaviour counsellors that either have experience or education to be able to differentiate between organic and behavioural disorders could be included as primary caretakers.

Askew (1996) states that it is seldom that disease processes or metabolic disorders are found to be causal in behaviour problems. Other states that the percentage is about 4-10 % (Mills, 1991). By requiring behavioural cases to go through veterinary referrals only, the increased cost and time spent may result in fewer cases coming to the companion animal behaviour counsellor. This will result in more pets being euthanased, and the general welfare of pets is decreased. An alternative is to have a policy that says if things are not improving within a certain time limit, then a referral to the veterinarian should be tried.

Another problem with seeing the veterinarian first, is that they generally know too little of organic problems occurring in conjunction with behavioural signs. All organic diseases have behavioural symptoms, and if the vet is not aware of what to look for, he/she is likely to miss the disease that is responsible for the aberrant behaviour. In addition the veterinarian may give advice that is oppositional to the behaviourists advice, which means that it will take longer or require more effort to convince the pet owners of what the behaviourist think is the right advice. It is generally still so, that the veterinarian carries more authority than the companion animal behaviour counsellor does.

Positive consequences of the Act

The aims and consequences of the Act are described above as if it was an ideal world. Unfortunately this is not so. A "companion animal behaviour counsellor" is not a protected title, which means that everybody can call himself or herself one. The non-veterinarian companion animal behaviour counsellor can be a psychologist, veterinary nurse, DipCABC candidate from Southampton University, dog club trainer or a grandmother who has had dogs for 30 years. Hence the title says nothing of the competence of the title-holder. In the situation where a "companion animal behaviour counsellor" is a protected title, the education leading towards the title involves learning both about organic disease and behavioural disease, involves clinical years as in the veterinary college and require several years to complete, then there may be a reason to change the Act. As of today, where these requirements are not met, the Act must stay the way it is.

In contrast to the papers referred to earlier Overall (1997) states that 50% of their cases have underlying medical complications that need to be treated, behaviour problems that require medication or both conditions. It is important to sort these things out before the behavioural programme is started, and by veterinary referral of cases this is most likely to be done. In addition if the behaviourist and veterinary surgeon can work closely together we can aim for an ideal pet-owner relationship to the mutual benefit of man and animal (Sarah Heath, 1993).

Behaviour modification takes time, and if we would allow the behaviourist to take primary care, it is likely that in some cases euthanasia will be decided for cases that could have had medical treatment. Owners of problem pets are generally impatient, and expect some improvement within the first few weeks. If a medical diagnosis is missed, then the time it takes for it to be sorted may be too long, and as a consequence the animal may be euthanased. As an example there is the story of a cat that was urinating in the house, which turned out to have the diagnosis diabetes mellitus. Another case is the collie cross that suddenly started to get aggressive if people stroked its head. He developed this to the level where strangers could not come near him at all, before getting the

diagnosis foreign body in his ear canal. Even in cases where the underlying problem is poor management it has been shown that the chemistry of the brain changes. In some cases psycho-pharmaceuticals can be used to help with the behaviour modification programme of these patients. An example is the dog that is afraid to be home alone, that emerged because the owners were not aware of the importance of "home alone" training, resulting in the problem behaviour of destruction. If the companion animal behaviour counsellor is not aware of the availability of drugs for certain cases, then more cases may be lost to the black bin bag.

A positive point for the companion animal behaviour counsellor and the current Veterinary Act is the fact that if something goes wrong, it is the primary caretaker that has the responsibility. This also means, of course, that there must be a relationship of trust between the veterinarian and the behaviourist.

Conclusion

In practice this means that the behaviourist and veterinary surgeon must communicate, and refer patients both ways. The behaviourist will have to refer back to the veterinarian in the case where psycho-pharmaceuticals are needed, and in the case where the behaviourist after a thorough examination/history-taking still thinks that there may be an organic underlying problem (Overall, 1992).

Non-veterinary behaviourists

The role of non-veterinary behaviourists in the field of companion animal behaviour counselling is (with the Veterinary Act of 1966) to help and co-operate with the veterinarian on cases where the main problem is behavioural. The behaviourist should refine the diagnosis of the behaviour problem and treat with behaviour modification techniques. In practice this means to work on veterinary referrals only, and refer back to the veterinarian in the cases where medical treatment is needed, either due to a medical disease or due to the use of psycho-pharmaceuticals. This requires a good two-way communication.

In the cases of a training problem, there may be less need for a prior consultation at the veterinary surgery. In this case a training problem is defined as a management problem caused by normal behaviour that is undesirable, with symptoms that cannot or are unlikely to be misinterpreted from medical disorders. As examples are dogs that do not come when called, pull on the leash, roam in the neighbourhood or dig in the garden. For cats it would be things like travel problems, furniture scratching or vocalisation. In the case of cats spraying or urinating in the house (which can be considered normal behaviour) it is not included as a training problem, due to the possibility of misinterpretation of symptoms. In the training cases the non-veterinary behaviourist can work independently from the veterinary surgeon.

Upon till recently it has been the dog trainers and handlers that has done the work of companion animal behaviour counselling (Overall, 1997). They have done it in an earnest way, but with varying degree of success. It is important to acknowledge the people that has had success and shown that they are able in the field of companion animal behaviour counselling. However, it is just as important to increase the field's legitimacy by standardising requirements for the title "companion animal behaviour counsellor". In the U.S.A. it is a board-certified discipline with the titles "Applied Animal Behaviourist" and "Associate Applied Animal Behaviourist" (Overall). In the U.K. there is no certification, but some universities and colleges have academic courses on behaviour counselling, like the Diploma/MSc in Companion Animal Behaviour Counselling at the University of Southampton or the MSc at DeMontfort University. It is important to notice that this is not a professional or vocational education (Student Handbook, 1998) which means that it doesn't carry a guarantee that the Diploma/MSc holders will be successful in treating behavioural cases. The conclusion must be that education is required, both for veterinary and non-veterinary behaviourists. Even cleaners have formal education today (Norway), so the question of whether education is required or not should be easily argued. The role for the uneducated non-veterinary behaviourist will hopefully in the future be disappearing, not because they loose interest, but because they will see interest in certification and more knowledge.

There may be quite a range of possible ways for the non-veterinary and veterinary part of the field to co-operate. One example is in the case where a pet owner comes to the veterinary surgeon for euthanasia due to problem behaviour. It would be simple to employ a policy where the local behaviourist was contacted before euthanasia was performed. There may be more difficulties in the co-operation between the veterinary behaviourist and the non-veterinary behaviourist. These two groups are real competitors to the same market, and could possibly develop a rather unfriendly/hostile relationship. The positive way of building a relationship would be to find the strengths of each behaviourist and refer the "specialist cases" to the appropriate behaviourist. As a specific example we have a non-veterinary behaviourist that comes from a background as dog trainer and is good at telling people techniques for training, help with timing and special shaping techniques like clicker-training. He/she likes

to work with groups of people and in a class environment. In the same area there is a veterinary behaviourist that is more used to consultations on a one to one basis, and are good at listening. He/she may be better at explaining changes in daily routines, changes in the relationship between owner and pet than specific training techniques.

We should acknowledge that having a different background than ourselves, may be an advantage in the solving of some behaviour problems, and not claim superiority whether we are educated or not. From the human literature it has been shown that when success is measured after behaviour therapy, the formal qualification of the "helper" is not relevant (Egan, 1994). More important are personal communication skills, which are difficult to teach students (Davis & Fallowfield, 1991). An important factor in the communication between veterinarians and non-veterinary behaviourists are in organisations like CABTSG (Companion Animal Behaviour Therapy Study Group), APBC (Association of pet behaviour counsellors) and NAS (the Norwegian equivalent to CABTSG). There is definitely a role for both the veterinary and non-veterinary behaviourist in the field of companion animal behaviour counselling

Conclusion

To conclude, the main points of the discussion will be listed:

- Behaviour consultations should go through veterinary referrals only, except "training problems"
- A future aim should be that companion animal behaviour counsellor becomes a separate profession with a protected title, with possibility of having primary care of the pet in question. This would not rule out the need for communication between the veterinarian and non-veterinary behaviourist.
- Education in the field is required for both veterinarians and non-veterinary behaviourists
- The role of the non-veterinary behaviourist is to help and co-operate with the veterinarian, refine the diagnosis of the behaviour problem and treat with behaviour modification techniques. In some cases referral back to the veterinary surgeon may also be needed.
- There should be communication between veterinary and non-veterinary behaviourists, both on a local and national level.

References

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Framtidige kurs/ledige stipendiater

Årsmøtekurs: Norsk Atferdsgruppe for Selskapsdyr

Sted: Norges Landbrukshøgskole

Dato: 24-25/2/2001

Kostnad lørdrag: 1200,- (medl) 1500,- (ikke medl)

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