



Nephrology and urology recognized as veterinary specialty organization

By Katie Burns

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A veterinary specialty in nephrology and urology, first envisioned more than 30 years ago, finally has become a reality.

The AVMA American Board of Veterinary Specialties recently granted provisional recognition to the American College of Veterinary Nephrology and Urology.

“The clinical scope of urinary disease, embodied in the disciplines of nephrology and urology, has advanced in vision, complexity, and delivery of care,” according to the ACVNU’s 2021 petition for recognition by the ABVS.



Dr. Larry D. Cowgill instructs trainee Dr. Lucy Kopecny on the delivery of advanced extracorporeal therapies. (Courtesy of ACVNU)

“These advancements, based on scientific research and a deeper understanding of the pathophysiology of urinary diseases, have been translated into innovative new directions in the diagnosis and management of numerous urinary tract diseases. These include, but are not limited to chronic kidney disease, acute kidney injury, glomerular diseases, urolithiasis, urinary tract infection, incontinence, and urologic neoplasia,” the petition stated. “The evolution of sophisticated techniques including extracorporeal therapies and endourology have become the advanced standards-of-care for many urinary diseases.”

Dr. Larry D. Cowgill, ACVNU president and a professor of medicine and epidemiology at the University of California-Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, said the training program for the new specialty has some unique aspects.

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The next unique aspect of the training program is that the ACVNU is providing a virtual core curriculum of more than 250 contact hours over two years as a training aid to help provide a consistent foundation across residency programs.

The third distinction is that the ACVNU will provide an indirectly supervised, virtual training alternative with an off-site mentor for candidates who cannot relocate to a traditional training center.

Dr. Cowgill said another feature of the training program is that candidates will take topical examinations on an ongoing basis, culminating in the final examination.

The ACVNU will confer two certifications: diplomate and affiliate member. Candidates who have a background in patient care will become diplomates of the college. Candidates who have a background in another discipline, such as pathology, will become affiliate members.

Dr. Cowgill said, "The advances we will make in nephrology and urology as a specialty will translate to other specialty groups and into general practice and will establish new baselines for the diagnosis and management of disease, so it will have broad reach and effects across the entire profession and for the public—like every other specialty."

After a minimum of four years but no more than 10 years under provisional recognition, the ACVNU may submit a request for full recognition to the ABVS.

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