



A Collaborative Web Portal for Veterinary Medicine Practitioners

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The National Library of Medicine (NLM, www.nlm.nih.gov), the National Agricultural Library (NAL, www.nal.usda.gov), the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA, www.avma.org) and the United States Agricultural Information Network (USAIN, <http://www.usain.org>) are exploring the development of a Web portal for veterinary medicine practitioners in clinical settings who may have limited access to information resources and library services or who may be unaware of the resources and services available to them. Focus groups with practicing veterinarians will be held in Washington DC in July 2007 in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). These focus groups will be an opportunity to explore participants' experience of needing and seeking information and to gather feedback on a prototype of the site.

Preliminary discussions in the development of the portal have addressed a number of issues, including the following:

- The need for collaboration with the Medical Library Association (MLA) Veterinary Medical Library Section (VMLS), the Agricultural Network Information Center (AgNIC, www.agnic.org) and other possible partners. A wireframe representing the portal's possible content will be shared at the VMLS business meeting on May 21.
- It is expected that an editorial board comprised of representatives from the collaborating organizations will influence the ongoing development of the site's design and content. The editorial board would also establish arrangements for obtaining advice and comments from representative users.

Preliminary content of the portal is envisioned to include:

- A new PubMed (<http://www.pubmed.gov>) search feature for veterinarians, with options to limit retrieval to veterinary titles or by topic. ALTBIB (Bibliography on Alternatives to Animal Testing, <http://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov/altbib.html>) and PubMed's "clinical queries" (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query/static/clinical.shtml>) and "special queries" (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/special_queries.html) are examples of what might be developed for veterinarians. The ideal interface would make it easy for the user to incorporate issues/topics that commonly arise in veterinary practice as part of a search. These might include search dimensions such as species and common clinical needs such as diagnosis and therapy.
- Links to free information resources, such as those available from NAL, NLM and Cornell University (Consultant, <http://www.vet.cornell.edu/consultant/Consult.asp>) as well as fee-based resources, such as CABI's VetMed Resource (<http://www.cababstractsplus.org/veterinarymedicine/>) and Veterinary Information Network (VIN, <http://www.vin.com/>).
- Links to professional organizations representing veterinary medical practice, including national and state-level organizations and relevant content from their sites.
- Links to the Web-based information available from schools of veterinary medicine and their libraries.

Guided by feedback obtained from partnering organizations, the focus group and other representative users, the portal may also include:

- A site search feature.
- A federated search feature, building on the success and experience of ToxSeek (<http://toxseek.nlm.nih.gov>) and Science.gov (<http://www.science.gov>).
- A feature for submitting a suggestion for the site.
- A forum or discussion space to support questions and answers posted by users.
- Links to reference services provided in various forms.

It is expected that the prototype site will be demonstrated at the AVMA meeting in Washington, DC in July 2007 and feedback from that demonstration and the focus groups will help to improve the usefulness of the portal.

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