

Healthcare documentation certification launches for veterinary professionals

First-of-its-kind program developed by VCA Animal Hospitals and the Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity (AHDl)

Summary:

- Today, veterinarians spend an average of two or more hours daily typing medical notes from patient visits. The role of veterinary scribes has emerged as critical support. They can help expand access to care by improving medical record documentation efficiency. This allows more time for patient and client interaction with veterinarians and the care team.
- VCA Animal Hospitals and the Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity (AHDl) have developed a new healthcare documentation program and certification. The Certified Veterinary Healthcare Documentation Professional (CVHDP) credential opens a path for more people interested in helping animals and expanding access to care.

LOS ANGELES (August 9, 2023) - VCA Animal Hospitals and the Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity (AHDl) launched today the first healthcare documentation program and certification explicitly for veterinary healthcare professionals. Training programs and credentialing exams have long been accessible to scribes and other healthcare documentation professionals in human healthcare. Now, the same is true for veterinary medicine.

The landscape of veterinary healthcare documentation is changing. The medical scribe's role is emerging as a key support for veterinarian and hospital teams. Medical scribes play an integral role in allowing healthcare providers to focus directly on patients. Today, many veterinarians spend two or more hours daily typing medical notes from patient visits - taking time out of their days to see other pets and, for many doctors, impacting valuable time outside of the hospital with family and friends.

"The field of veterinary medicine has embraced medical scribing in recent years, but there hasn't been a way to certify a scribe's qualifications other than to look at their prior experience," said Marie Kerl, DVM, MPH, MBA, DACVIM, DACVECC, Chief Medical Officer for VCA Animal Hospitals. "The program also provides a clear avenue for current veterinary care providers or those interested in the veterinary field to get involved by supporting patient care. This will expand career opportunities across the board."

Certification in veterinary healthcare documentation positively impacts patients whose care depends on precise documentation, employers seeking highly qualified and trusted healthcare documentation professionals, and individuals who demonstrate a commitment to upholding industry standards and continued learning. Participants in this new Certified Veterinary Healthcare Documentation Professional (CVHDP) program, students and practitioners alike, will learn about the role of a scribe while preparing for certification—and ultimately success—in their careers through this new program.

The CVHDP credential earned through AHDl is valid for three years and may be renewed. The re-credentialing process and continuing education requirements reassure employers, clients, and the public of continued professional competence in the documentation of patient

health care. VCA Animal Hospitals provided expertise for the veterinary healthcare documentation educational program, which prospective applicants can complete to prepare for the CVHDP exam.

"Technology and artificial intelligence are often touted as solutions for creating medical records, but the value of the healthcare documentation professional or scribe cannot be underestimated. With superior knowledge of medical terminology, anatomy and physiology, disease processes, labs and studies, treatment modalities, etc., and an unrivaled attention to detail, accuracy, and ability to think critically, these often-unseen advocates help to ensure that medical decisions can be made based on the highest quality documentation possible," said Sheila Guston, CHDS, CHDP-A, CHDP-S, AHDI-F, Interim CEO at AHDI.

To learn more about this program and certification, please visit www.ahdionline.org.

About VCA Animal Hospitals

A leader in veterinary care, VCA Animal Hospitals is committed to caring for the future of veterinary medicine. We are a family of hometown animal hospitals determined to positively impact pets, people, and our communities. From general practice to emergency and specialty care, VCA delivers world-class medicine to more than four million pets each year. Our national network of hospitals invest in cutting-edge tools, training and technology that enables our Associates to lead the industry today and into tomorrow. Among our talented 35,000 Associates are nearly 7,000 veterinarians - including 430 who are board-certified specialists - nearly 4,000 credentialed technicians and over 10,000 veterinary assistants - all dedicated to giving pets the very best in medical care.

As part of the Mars Veterinary Health family of brands, VCA is committed to the Mars Petcare Purpose—A Better World for Pets™. To learn more about VCA, visit: www.vca.com

About AHDI

The Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity (AHDI) is a not-for-profit association representing individuals and organizations in healthcare documentation. AHDI leads, educates, and advocates for professional excellence and integrity in all aspects of healthcare documentation practices worldwide. They envision a future where optimal healthcare outcomes are supported by complete and accurate patient health stories. Learn more about AHDI by visiting their website, www.ahdionline.org.

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