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Cost-Effective Care

Why generic and bio-equivalent drugs are an important part of cost-effective care





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Bringing Comfort to Your Clients

By Dr. Amir Shanan

Animal hospice and palliative care has much to offer for veterinary practices willing to invest in bringing it to their clients.

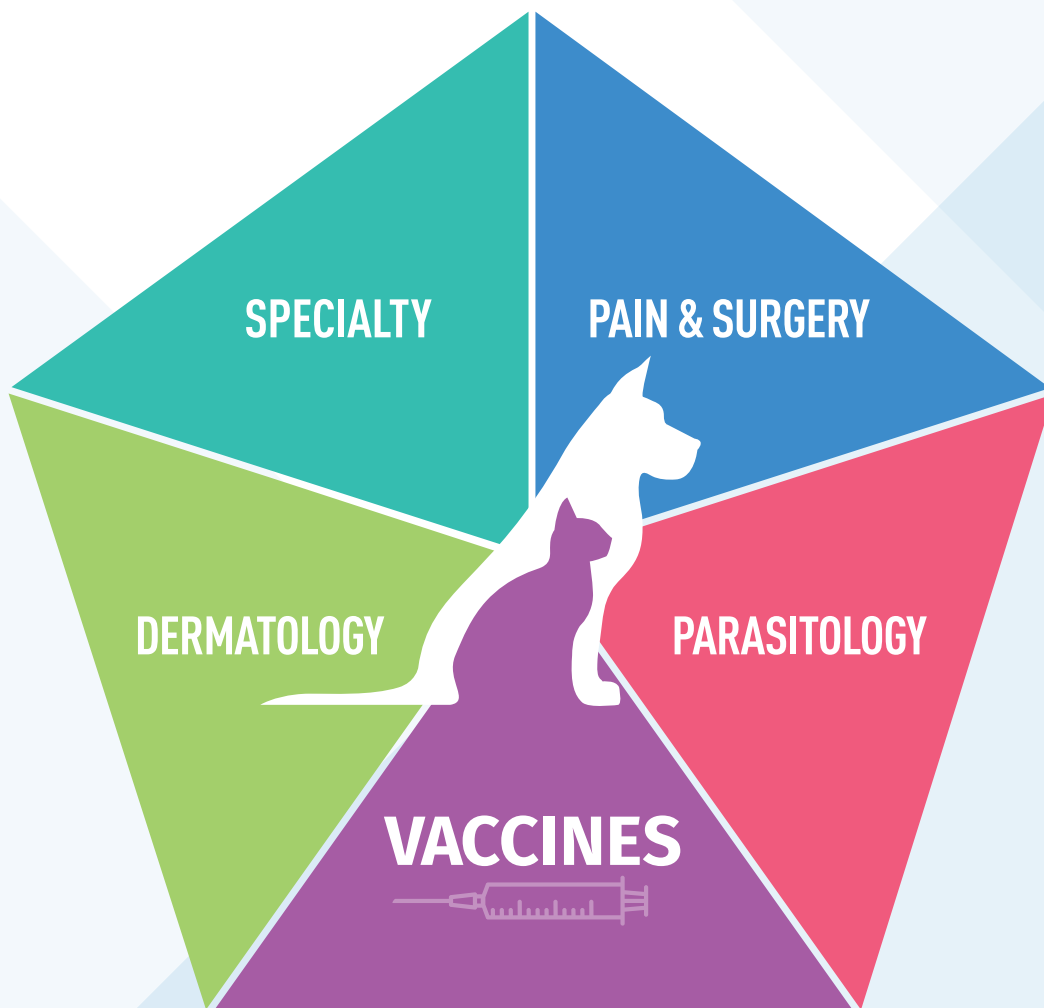
For pet owners, the process of caring for a seriously ill and dying animal in its final days is a tremendously emotional experience. Yet earlier in my career as a veterinarian, I also saw how impersonal the clinical approach could be. Clients had limited options of where the procedure took place, and little communication, assurance or guidance leading up to the procedure. It was clinical, but it wasn't comforting.

Since the mid-90s, I have made house calls to help clients through the difficult decisions they face as their beloved pets near the end of their lives. The core of this service is a conversation offering support and guidance, aiming to "meet clients at their model of the world." I have found it gives them a certain peace they may not otherwise have had. It has also brought me closer to my clients, who are appreciative in having someone to ask questions to and just talk to as they find a way to say goodbye to a beloved pet.

What was novel two decades ago has become essential to veterinary practices wishing to provide the best care for pets throughout every stage of life. Animal hospice and palliative care has taken off as a field of its own. With the publication last fall of the AAHA/IAAHPC End of Life Care Practice Guidelines, it's now mainstream veterinary practice – an integral component of progressive, up-to-date, best patient and client care.

Animal hospice and palliative care has much to offer for veterinary practices willing to invest in bringing it to their clients. The benefits to the veterinary practice include well-served patients, improved client relations, increased client retention, veterinary team participation and satisfaction, and increased practice revenue.

I encourage TVC Owners to consider ways of offering hospice and palliative care to their client base. One resource is a textbook "hot off the press" [April 2017], *Hospice and Palliative Care for Companion Animals: Principles and Practice*. [Editors A. Shanan, J. Pierce and T. Shearer] You can find it on Amazon. The book invites veterinary teams to ponder and to buy into some fresh ideas, including respect for the animal patient's preferences and a collaborative approach to end of life clinical decision-making. The book draws on the most up to date research in fields from animal cognition to human psychology, nursing and medicine to document the benefits of these concepts; and presents their practical adaptation to providing care for companion animals as they approach the end of their lives within the capabilities of real-world veterinary practice.



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Information on recent cyberattack at Royal Canin: [Letter 1](#) [Letter 2](#) [Letter 3](#)

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Cost-Effective Care

Why generic and bio-equivalent drugs are an important part of cost-effective care

There's no getting around it. Care – and its cost – go hand in hand in

providing the best veterinary medicine to today's pet owner. Although recent trends seem to indicate that clients are willing to spend more on their pets' veterinary care, price-conscious consumers will still want to scrutinize the final bill.

Which means independent veterinary practices have to offer cost-effective treatment, and options for treatment, for the clients. One category of care is medication, and within that category, generic or bio-equivalent drugs.

TVC Owner Eddie Garcia, DVM, the Veterinary Medical Clinic, Inc. in Tampa, Fla., says that in some cases, generic or bio-equivalent drugs can “provide a more cost-effective treatment for our clients. The rising cost of medications is a constant hurdle for treatment plans on our patients.”

The life cycles of drugs

Those rising costs are often linked to the life cycle of medications.

First, a manufacturer creates a drug and makes a lot of money while it is patented. When the patent falls off, generics come along and take over the marketplace. The legend company may stop making the product because it can't make enough money off it. At this point there may be two or three generics in the marketplace.

So Phase 1: Legend drug

Phase 2, Generics come into market

Phase 3, Legend brand disappears

In Phase 4, the competition among generics is fierce, and we're finally left with two in the market. But one decides it's no longer worth it to produce. When that happens, the remaining generic manufacturer becomes the de facto legend manufacturer because there is no one else in the market. They can even raise the price and everyone is stuck paying that price.

If the price gets too high, several years later someone may decide to get back into the market. The problem is they have to go through the drug approval process again, which is very expensive. The price has to be high and the drug sold at a large volume to influence a company to go through the process. Usually there is an alternative newer drug that can be used instead.

Find the savings sweet spot

When drugs are in phase 3 or 4, you have no choice but to use the drugs. However, it's in phase 2, pricing will be competitive, and clients could see price savings on the medications they use for their pets.

How much? Well, it depends on the medication. The Veterinary Medical Clinic offers more than a dozen generic or bio-equivalent medication options for clients, including

The OTC spend

The American Pet Products Association (APPA) released its annual industry-wide spending figures. In the pet industry spending breakdown, supplies and over-the-counter medications made up \$14.28 billion in 2015, and \$14.71 billion in 2016 – a 3 percent growth. This was the third-highest source of spending, behind veterinary care (second) and pet food (first). It was estimated by the APPA that pet owners would spend \$14.93 billion on supplies and over-the-counter medications this year.

Bayer's Quellin (Carprofen) soft chews, a generic bio-equivalent to Rimadyl. Dr. Garcia says that in general, the savings from generic medication can range from 15 percent to 130 percent, depending on the medication.

If a client has a concern with a cost of a generic medication, he will reference the cost of the proprietary medication to show the value in the generic.

Concerns over efficacy may come up as well. But here, veterinarians can remind clients about the generic human drugs consumers choose over legends or brands at their own pharmacy for things like ibuprofen or allergy medicine. The reality is, when a drug is tested by the Food and Drug Administration, the

Use These?	Manufacturer	Try a TVC partnered alternative!	Manufacturer	Veterinary Use
Activyl, Activyl Tick Plus	Merck	Vectra 3D	Ceva	Flea and Tick Protection
Scalibor Protector Bands				
Bravecto	Merck	Nexgard	Merial	Flea and Tick Protection
C.E.T. Enzymatic Oral Hygiene Chews	Virbac	Clenz-a-dent Rawhide Chews	Ceva	Oral Hygiene
		DentaHex Oral Care Chews	Vetoquinol	
Convenia/Clavamox	Zoetis	Veraflox	Bayer	Oral Antibiotic for Cats
Denamarin	Nutramax	Vetri Liver chews	Vetri-Science	Liver Support
Mal-a-ket Shampoo	Dechra	Chlorhexidine 4% PS Shampoo	Ceva	Antimicrobial
Rimadyl	Zoetis	Vetprofen	Vetoquinol	Pain, Arthritis, NSAID
		Quellin	Bayer	
Tumik K	Virbac	Renal K+	Vetoquinol	Potassium Supplement

And many others! Go to the TVC Switch tables to see more!

generic company has to prove through the manufacturing process (whether overseas or here in the states) that the drug mimics the variation one might find in a legend drug. That means that to the extent you believe the FDA is doing its job, the drug has been tested and approved for use. The same holds true for the legend brand.

Ultimately, the veterinary practice is invested in the right treatment plan for the patient no matter what medication is chosen.

Dr. Garcia says that he doesn't intentionally start a conversation in

Ultimately, the veterinary practice is invested in the right treatment plan for the patient no matter what medication is chosen.

regard to generic medications when dispensing the medication. However, if the product is not working well for the client, he won't hesitate to switch back to the proprietary drug.

"If a patient isn't responding as well as I would expect, then I will discuss switching to the proprietary medication to see if recovery improves."

The important thing is to have the option available in the first place.

Dr. Garcia says the biggest reason practices should consider offering generics comes down to the cost savings it could bring to the client.

"However, from a private practice standpoint, it is a way to make us more competitive with corporate run veterinary practices by decreasing our overhead." ■

Profender® Topical Solution (emodepside/praziquantel)

Cats love Profender®. Worms don't.

Choose Profender® — the most complete feline dewormer.*



Profender® is the first and only topical dewormer that treats and controls **tapeworms**, as well as both adult and larval stages of **roundworms** and **hookworms** in a single dose.

- **Easy-to-use** topical solution - no pillling necessary
- **No injections** or messy pastes
- **One easy application** controls tapeworms, roundworms and hookworms†



Tapeworms



Roundworms



Hookworms



*Based on label comparison for intestinal parasites

†Reinfection due to exposure may require repeat dosing. Profender® can be reapplied after 30 days.

Federal law (U.S.A.) restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian. Children should not contact application site for twenty-four (24) hours.

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Fill the Work Slots

A different approach to viewing your labor needs

Edward L. Blach, DVM, MS, MBA, ed@dr-ed.com, www.IsMyPracticeHealthy.com

There is frequent discussion about how practices and employers must change to accommodate a new generation of workers. Most of those conversations focus on putting a young employee with different priorities and needs into a work model that quite frankly isn't a good match. That typically will not result in a positive outcome for the practice or the employee.

One solution is to change the way you view your labor needs. Instead of viewing an open veterinarian or staff position as just that, one open position, perhaps it should be viewed as unfilled work slots with specific requirements. How is this a different approach?

In viewing it as an open position, you automatically look for one person to fill the position. When your recruiting pool contains mostly candidates for whom the open position isn't a complete fit, you end up with an unhappy employee and an unhappy employer.

In contrast, if you view the opening as open work slots that you need to fill, you can begin to look for people with appropriate qualifications who can contribute to filling the open slots. It's not an all or none situation. You might fill a portion of the open slots with one candidate, and another portion of the open work slots with another person.



Remember that many younger workers prefer flexibility and control of their schedule more than they value money or other incentives. So, multiple workers sharing what used to be one position might result in more team depth, happier employees, and a positive result for the practice.

This approach also matches the increasing demographic of more female veterinarians in the work force. With this trend, practices will experience more maternity leave situations and part-time employees might become the standard for filling the open work slots that result.

Remember, an open position isn't always best filled with one person. It might take multiple people to deliver the services you need. ■



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Canine influenza back in the South

According to *CBS News*, Florida health officials say they have confirmed at least a dozen cases of canine influenza. The H3N2 virus is believed to have spread last month among animals at dog shows in Florida and Georgia. The number of cases is small, but some Florida officials recommend pet owners have their dogs vaccinated. According to dvm360, the American Kennel Club (AKC) has issued a statement to all dog show exhibitors in the southeast warning that there are reports of sick dogs from Georgia and Florida dog shows. The AKC is recommending that if a dog seems at all ill, it should not be exposed to other dogs and should see a veterinarian concerning the possibility of influenza. The North Carolina Veterinary Medical Association is also warning dog show participants about the outbreak because the dog show schedule rotation may place potentially exposed dogs in their state next.

Global pet care market tops \$100 billion

According to a *Petfood Industry* report, the global pet care market cracked the US\$100 billion sales ceiling in 2016, thanks to a healthy 4.7 percent increase over the year before. Euromonitor International projects that growth to continue, with sales for all pet products and services globally reaching US\$117 billion by 2021, a compound annual growth rate of 2.4 percent at constant prices. Pet food will maintain its significant contributions; it accounted for US\$75.25 billion of the 2016 sales (at 4.8 percent growth), or nearly 73 percent of all pet care.

Study: Health benefits for older adults who have dogs

For older adults, owning a dog increases the likelihood of achieving World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended levels of physical activity, according to a recently published study highlighted by *Pet Product News*. Physical activity is known to reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, multiple cancers and depression. This research adds evidence to show that owning a pet dog can help support health as people age.

Vet tech charged with stealing opioids from veterinary practice

According to Boston, Mass.-based WCVB, a veterinary technician has been charged with stealing 7,800 opioid pills and trying to cover her tracks by changing clinic records. Police said Rebecca Renaud, 39, of Southbridge, Massachusetts was caught stealing Tramadol, a prescription pill used to treat pain in pets and humans. Renaud had worked at the Spencer Veterinary Hospital, where she was responsible for ordering medications for six years. According to court documents, Renaud's boss questioned her in May after co-workers reported that she was not checking the medications in compliance with protocol.

Topical Solution **profender** (emodepside/praziquantel)

For the treatment and control of hookworm, roundworm, and tapeworm infections in cats and kittens that are at least 8 weeks of age and weigh at least 2.2 pounds (1 kg).

Brief Summary:

Before using PROFENDER Topical Solution, please consult the product insert, a summary of which follows:

CAUTION:

Federal law (U.S.A.) restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

Product Description:

PROFENDER Topical Solution is a ready-to-use solution, packaged in single unit dosing applicator tubes for topical treatment of cats. Emodepside, a semi-synthetic molecule is a cyclic depsipeptide. Praziquantel is an isoquinoline cestocide.

INDICATIONS:

PROFENDER Topical Solution is indicated for the treatment and control of hookworm infections caused by *Ancylostoma tubaeforme* (adults, immature adults, and fourth stage larvae), roundworm infections caused by *Toxocara cati* (adults and fourth stage larvae), and tapeworm infections caused by *Dipylidium caninum* (adults) and *Taenia taeniaeformis* (adults) in cats.

HUMAN WARNINGS:

Not for human use. Keep out of reach of children.

To prevent accidental ingestion of the product, children should not come in contact with the application site for twenty-four (24) hours while the product is being absorbed. Pregnant women, or women who may become pregnant, should avoid direct contact with, or wear disposable gloves when applying, this product. Studies performed in rats and rabbits suggest that emodepside may interfere with fetal development in those species.

PROFENDER Topical Solution may be irritating to skin and eyes. Reactions such as facial, tongue and hand swelling have been reported in humans in rare instances. Avoid contact with the application area while it is wet and wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water after handling. People with known hypersensitivity to butylhydroxyanisole, emodepside or praziquantel should administer the product with caution. If the product accidentally gets into eyes, flush thoroughly with water. May be harmful if swallowed. In case of accidental ingestion or if skin or eye irritation occurs, call a poison control center or physician for treatment advice.

For customer service or to obtain product information, including the MSDS, call 1-800-633-3796. For medical emergencies or to report an adverse reaction, call 1-800-422-9874.

PRECAUTIONS:

Safe use of this product has not been evaluated in cats less than 8 weeks of age or weighing less than 2.2 lbs (1 kg), in cats used for breeding, during pregnancy or in lactating queens. The effectiveness of this product when used before bathing has not been evaluated.

Use with caution in sick or debilitated cats. Oral ingestion or exposure should be avoided. Use with caution in heartworm positive cats.

ADVERSE REACTIONS:

In a controlled, double-masked field safety study in which owners administered PROFENDER Topical Solution, the most common adverse reactions reported by the cat owners included licking, excessive grooming, scratching treatment site, salivation, lethargy, alopecia, agitation/nervousness and vomiting.

POST APPROVAL:

The following adverse events are based on post-approval adverse drug experience reporting. Not all adverse events are reported to FDA CVM. It is not always possible to reliably estimate the adverse event frequency or establish a causal relationship to product exposure using this data. The following adverse events are listed in decreasing order of reporting frequency in cats: Application site reaction (hair loss, dermatitis, pyoderma, edema, and erythema), hypersalivation, lethargy/depression, vomiting, ataxia, anorexia, trembling/twitching, diarrhea, mydriasis, fever, hyperactivity/nervousness. In some cases, death has been reported as an outcome of the adverse events listed. For a complete listing of adverse reactions for Profender Topical Solution reported to the CVM see: <http://www.fda.gov/ADREports>.

The listing includes Adverse Events reported to CVM for products, such as Profender, that contain the combined active ingredients emodepside and praziquantel. Listings by active ingredient may represent more than one brand name.

ANIMAL SAFETY:

In a field study, PROFENDER Topical Solution was used in cats receiving other frequently used products including: analgesics, anti-fungals, non-steroidal anti-inflammatories, anthelmintics, antimicrobials, flea and tick products, sedatives, anesthetics, cardiac medications, anxiolytics, hormonal treatments, steroids, otic and ophthalmic preparations, and vaccines.

General Safety Study in Kittens: PROFENDER Topical Solution was topically applied at 0X (vehicle control), 1X, 3X and 5X the maximum dose to 48 healthy 8-week-old kittens every two weeks for six doses. One 5X kitten experienced salivation and tremors and another 5X kitten experienced salivation on the day of dosing. A third 5X kitten experienced tremors the day after dosing. Three cats vomited within 24 hours of dosing, one each in vehicle control, 3X and 5X groups.

Profender is protected by the following U.S. Patents: 5 514 773 and other patents pending.

Made in Germany

NADA 141-275, Approved by FDA

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