



Veterinary Social Work

Veterinary Social Work is a new field of practice that attends to the human side of the human - animal bond.

Veterinary Social Workers can work with vet's, vet nurses, animal support staff, vet clients and the community.

We understand the unique and special relationship between people and animals.

Social workers use a holistic, person-centred and client driven approach to support anyone who works with or loves animals.

What can Vet Social Work offer?

Social workers can provide assistance to improve the wellbeing of Vet's, staff and clients.

Veterinary social workers utilise knowledge, theory and skills regarding human behaviour, social structures, systems and processes, and work within the AASW Code of Ethics (2010).

Vets and staff support

Debriefing, education and/or counselling offered for:

- Compassion fatigue management & self care strategies
- How to provide emotional support for clients; information on the human-nonhuman animal bond, grief and loss, and mental health and wellness
- Communication skills & managing conflict
- Individual or group sessions

Education

- The link between animal and human violence, and animal abuse issues
- Collaboration / networking with other services to further support clients, such as child protection, mental health services, financial counsellors, social programs, community supports, etc.
- Resources and referral pathways for external services
- Flyers and resource lists to make available to clients

Services for your clients

Vet social workers can provide the extra time to professionally support clients with treatment and end of life decisions in a non-judgemental space.

Bereavement support

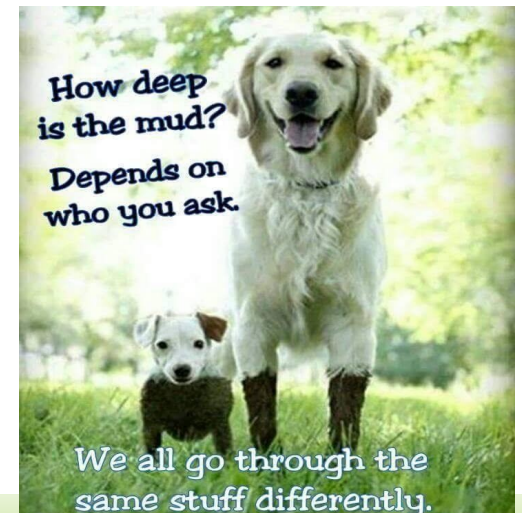
- Information and support with companion animal grief & loss
- Cremation and memorialisation services locally available
- Pet loss support group facilitation within the vet practice or community setting

Euthanasia

- Resources such as Quality of Life scales, End of Life Values and Goals worksheets, etc

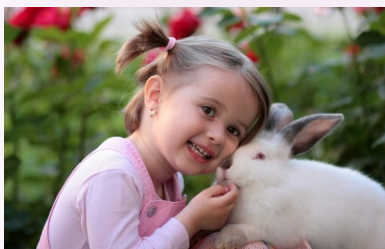
Continuing support

- Follow-up phone calls
- Individual / family counselling



4 Areas of Vet Social Work

- Compassion fatigue management
- Animal related grief and bereavement
- The link between human and animal violence
- Animal-assisted interventions



Further support

For more information on sourcing support for your staff and/or clients:

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Email: wendy@merakiservices.com.au
Website: merakiservices.com.au
Facebook: www.facebook.com/VetSocialWorker

About Wendy

With an ambition from a little girl to help animals, I began life training to be a Vet at Murdoch University in Perth, WA. I left this degree unfinished, deciding I could not reconcile the ethical dilemmas involved in practice.

I later trained as a Social Worker and undertook the Certificate of Veterinary Social Work through the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

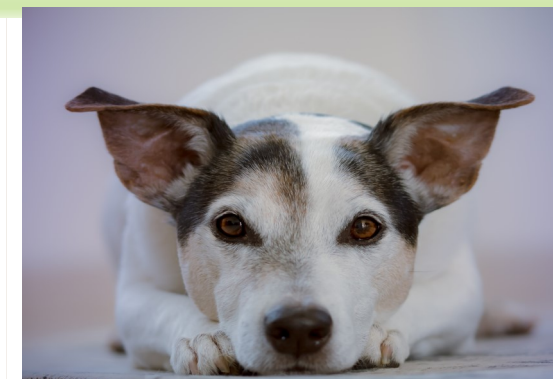
I have an interest in the health and wellbeing of anyone who works with companion animals and their humans.

With an awareness of the unique challenges within veterinary practice, I am collaborating with others in this area to research and explore better ways to facilitate staff and client wellness.

Wendy Till

Veterinary Social Worker

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What is it?

