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The benefits of giving back to the community

What better way to enhance your practice's exposure and strengthen relationships with existing clients than by giving back to the community? Getting involved in the local area can also present a wealth of exciting marketing opportunities and attract new clients. This article takes a look at the many ways veterinary practices can serve their local communities and the considerable benefits that come from giving something back.

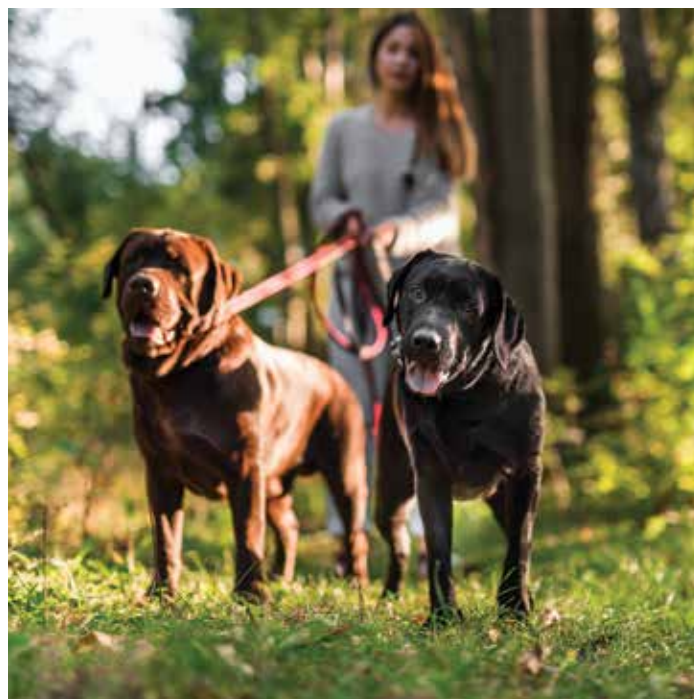
Share your knowledge

Giving talks about responsible pet ownership in the community can enhance your reputation as an authority on pet care and raise awareness of the work you do. Community partners – such as libraries, businesses, churches and museums – are some of the many groups that might like to work with your practice. Guiding and scouting groups, local primary schools and the Women's Institute (WI) may also welcome an informative talk or workshop.

The topic you choose to present should be based on the themes of responsible pet ownership and animal welfare. The subject may change depending on who you are talking to, or who is delivering the talk, but some ideas might be:

- what pets need to be happy and healthy
- general obedience
- looking after pets in the summer/winter
- the history of animals in war
- how to choose the right pet for your lifestyle
- animal body language
- careers in veterinary medicine
- a day in the life of your practice.

If you don't have the time or the availability of a staff member to deliver a talk, then why not share your knowledge through local newspapers and community newsletters? Many publications are likely to welcome content from local businesses – especially if it's relevant to the specific



issue or the time of year it is being published. Topics you might choose to write about include spotting the signs of dehydration in summer or keeping pets safe at Christmas. Remember to include your practice name and phone number at the end of the copy!

Donate to local charities

Donating is a brilliant way to benefit the area in which you are based, boost your practice's reputation and improve engagement amongst your employees.

In a recent study by Cone Communications, 74 per cent of respondents said they were more fulfilled when they were given opportunities to make a positive impact at work.

When deciding which charity to support, begin by selecting one that aligns with your practice values. This could be a local adoption centre, wildlife rescue organisation or a charity that trains assistance dogs – speak to your team and clients to find out which organisations they would like to support and why.

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**Suggested Personal & Professional Development (PPD)*

COMMUNITY