

## **Position Statement: High-Quality, High-Volume Spay-Neuter Programs**

*(Updated June 2021)*

The Association of Shelter Veterinarians believes that high-quality, high-volume spay- neuter (HQHVSN) programs serve a critical role in preventing reproduction and reducing subsequent animal overpopulation, shelter intake, and euthanasia.

HQHVSN providers should follow the most current *Association of Shelter Veterinarians' Veterinary Medical Care Guidelines for Spay-Neuter Programs*<sup>1</sup>. HQHVSN programs primarily focus on underserved communities and animal populations, including those that are free-roaming, reside within shelters or rescue organizations, or belong to owners otherwise unable to access veterinary care. These caregivers may not be able to access traditional veterinary services due to cost, transportation, scheduling, or other challenges.<sup>2,3</sup>

Public HQHVSN services improve animal welfare and keep pets in their homes, decreasing shelter intake and upholding the human-animal bond.<sup>2-4</sup> Both HQHVSN clinics and private practice veterinary clinics can thrive within a community, since HQHVSN clinics also serve as a gateway to veterinary care for those who would otherwise not take their pets to a veterinarian.<sup>2</sup> While some geographic areas in the country have made advances in reducing dog and cat overpopulation, many areas have not. In addition, community cat populations still pose a widespread challenge. For these reasons, the ASV believes that HQHVSN programs must continue to be supported in order to improve companion animal welfare.

### **References**

<sup>1</sup>Griffin B, Bushby PA, McCobb EC, et al. The Association of Shelter Veterinarians' 2016 Veterinary Medical Care Guidelines for Spay-Neuter Programs. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* 2016;249(2):165-188

<sup>2</sup>White S, Scarlett JM, Levy JK. Characteristics of clients and animals served by high- volume, stationary, nonprofit spay-neuter clinics. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* 2018;253(6):737-745

<sup>3</sup>Bushby PA. High-quality, high-volume spay-neuter: Access to care and the challenge to private practitioners. *J Feline Med Surg.* 2020;22(3):208-215



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<sup>4</sup>Houlihan KE. A literature review on the welfare implications of gonadectomy of dogs. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* 2017;250(10): 1155-1166

The mission of the ASV is to advance and support the practice of shelter medicine in order to improve community animal health and well-being.