



# August is Pet Dental Health Month

The Australian Veterinary Dental Society (AVDS) has been working hard to make an impact during August in celebration of AVA Pet Dental Health Month.

A major project supported by Hill's Pet Nutrition and iM3 has delivered a new instructional DVD for vets, nurses and students. Open up – a practical guide to improving pet oral health gives an overview of dental health in pets, along with some detailed how-to sections. It includes everything you need to know, with detailed images, instructions and diagrams, about basic assessment and cleaning, local anaesthesia, radiology, extraction techniques, as well as dental equipment and its maintenance. Tony Caiafa, current President of AVDS, and Christine Hawke demonstrate procedures and explain the importance of oral health for pets.

“The procedures in the DVD can be done by any veterinarian in their practices providing they have access to the right equipment. We're happy to advise any AVA member on equipment and other issues if they're keen to expand the dental services they provide,” said Tony Caiafa.

Members of AVDS will receive a free copy of the DVD as a member benefit. Everyone else should request a copy from a Hill's or iM3 sales representative. Free copies will be distributed by sales representatives to practices all around the country.

## From the horse's mouth

There's a special focus this year on equine dentistry. AVDS is targeting horse owners about the need to look after their horse's oral health with inserts in industry magazines, and articles on oral health in horse publications and website. Media releases will be

sent to horse industry media outlets.

A number of lay operators provide equine dental services, so the group is also emphasising the level of service provided by veterinarians. Their advanced training and ability to prescribe and administer anaesthesia make veterinarians the best choice for equine dental services.

Victoria's Shannon Lee is leading the charge on this aspect of Pet Dental Health Month. “We hope that this focus will encourage more vets to improve their equine dentistry skills. AVDS will be running workshops in regional areas over the next year so all equine practitioners can be confident their knowledge is up to date,” he said.

## Hear me roar?

Coincidentally, during the Board's planning day in June, AVA Treasurer David Clarke was called to Taronga Zoo to repair the broken tooth of one of the zoo's male lions.

“Thankfully the zoo vets handled the anaesthesia before I tackled the lion's fractured left maxillary upper canine. Two centimetres of tooth crown had broken off and the pulp exposed. I placed calcium hydroxide over the pulp stump and covered it all with a composite restorative,” David said. The lion received antibiotics and pain relief afterwards.

Immediate Past President Diane Sheehan went along for the ride. “It was a thrill to see behind the scenes at the zoo. I was able to provide a bit of help to David, but it was mostly just look and learn,” she said.

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