II. Purpose of this Task Force Report

On April 14, 2007, the AVMA Executive Board took official action to establish the One Health Initiative by approving a recommendation by then-president Dr. Roger K. Mahr to establish a One Health Initiative Task Force (OHITF). The purpose of the task force was to study the feasibility of an initiative that would facilitate collaboration and cooperation among health science professions, academic institutions, governmental agencies, and industries to help with the assessment, treatment, and prevention of cross-species disease transmission and mutually prevalent, but non-transmitted, human and animal diseases and medical conditions.

Two key areas of study would include:

- Identify critical workforce shortages and global societal needs, and develop solutions in collaboration with key stakeholders
- Ensure that the nation has the infrastructure and resources to anticipate and respond to public health and animal health emergencies or disasters

The OHITF, comprising thirteen visionary individuals and communicators, was charged by the AVMA Executive Board with the task of defining the “One Health” concept, and with delivering recommendations and strategic actions that would support and expand the concept across multiple health professions.

In addition, Dr. Roger Mahr, Dr. Ron Davis, and Dr. Jay Glasser were appointed as liaisons representing the AVMA, American Medical Association (AMA), and American Public Health Association (APHA), respectively. The Task Force quickly acted to collaborate with key strategic partners including the AMA and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

American Medical Association (AMA)

In June of 2007, following the leadership of Dr. Ron Davis, President of the AMA, a resolution was introduced to the AMA House of Delegates by the American College of Preventive Medicine, American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, American Association of Public Health Physicians, and Academy of Pharmaceutical Physicians and Investigators calling for the AMA to support the One Health Initiative. The resolution was subsequently passed by unanimous vote.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

In her keynote address at the 144th Annual AVMA Convention held in July of 2007, Julie L. Gerberding, MD, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Administrator of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, urged veterinarians and physicians to present a seamless front to protect human and animal health in a shrinking global environment.

At the convention, Dr. Davis and Dr. Mahr participated in a joint press conference introducing the concept to the media and explaining the need for the One Health Initiative. Following the press conference they presented in a collaborative session, “One Medicine—Fly under One Flag.”

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were joined at this session by Jarbas Barbosa, MD, head of Health Surveillance and Disease Management of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

These activities greatly increased the visibility of One Health and provided the impetus for the action of the One Health Initiative Task Force (OHITF). The first One Health Initiative Task Force meeting was held November 27-28, 2007, and was followed by a second meeting in January, 2008. This report represents the culmination of discussions, ideas, and perspectives on One Health that were shared at those meetings and in subsequent discussions.

The Task Force’s best thinking and set of actions and priorities are reflected in this report, as are its recommendations to the AVMA Executive Board. The report will be presented to the Executive Board at its meeting in Schaumburg, Illinois, in June, 2008.