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VHMA'S 2017 COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS SURVEY IDENTIFIES FACTORS THAT DRIVE MANAGERS' SALARIES

ALACHUA, FLORIDA---The *2017 Survey of Compensation and Benefits for Veterinary Managers* is a member service provided by the Veterinary Hospital Managers Association (VHMA) and the Veterinary and Emergency Critical Care Society (VECCS). The biannual survey examines the level of compensation and benefits provided to Veterinary Managers as well as the factors that can influence those levels.

About the 2017 Survey

VHMA's *Survey of Compensation and Benefits for Veterinary Managers* is conducted at two year intervals to ensure timely information about compensation levels and to isolate the factors that effect salary. Last administered in 2015, the 2017 survey was distributed to 3,084 VHMA and VECCS members. A total of 652 managers completed the questionnaire, for a response rate of 21%.

The Results

In general, the 2017 results show a rebound in salary and hourly wages for office managers. Practice managers report no change and hospital administrators registered an increase in both salary and hours worked.

Between 2015 and 2017, the median salary for practice managers remained static, but the median salary for office managers increased by 9% and hospital administrators saw a 4% salary increase. This is good news for office managers who saw a 1 % decrease in median salary between 2013 and 2015.

SALARY (\$)	Median 2015	Median 2017	Percentage change	Percentage of 2017 respondents By position	
Office Manager	37,000	40,000	8%	7%	
Practice Manager	50,000	50,000	0%	58%	
Hospital Administrator	67,000	70,000	4%	35%	

Differentiating the positions

Respondents identified job tasks related to their positions. The most often identified tasks by position are listed below:

Office managers: purchasing or supervising supplies purchases, liaison to clients concerning complaints, taking direct action to deal with complaints and managing daily work assignments

Practice managers: taking direct action to deal with complaints, liaison to clients concerning complaints, mediating personnel disputes and managing daily work assignments.

Hospital administrators: mediating personnel disputes, ensuring compliance with laws and regulations, taking direct action to deal with complaints and conducting staff meetings.

For the tasks identified, all respondents, regardless of position, report spending the same number of minutes per week on the tasks, with the exception of office managers who spend less time than their colleagues preparing financial information and conducting staff meetings and more time mediating personnel issues. Hospital administrators devote less time to accounts receivable and more time than their colleagues to preparing and supervising hospital accounting and dealing with complaints.

Factors that impact salary

Approximately 45% of all respondents, regardless of position, received a university degree. Hospital administrators were most likely to have earned the CVPM (33%), followed by 18% of practice managers.

The median salary of a hospital administrators with a CVPM is approximately \$8,800 higher than the median salary. Practice managers with a CVPM or PHR/SPHR certification earn between \$8,000 and \$11,000 above the median salary. Office managers who are credentialed technicians increased their median earnings by approximately \$4,000.

Offices managers working in specialty and emergency practices earn more than their counterparts in exclusively small practices.

For practice managers, those in feline practice managers report the lowest salaries. Emergency and specialty practice managers command salaries about the median.

Hospital administrators in specialty practices earn about \$17,000 above the mean salary, and those in mixed practices brought home about \$10,000 below the median salary.

Median annual hours worked by position ranged from 36 hours per week for office managers, 37 per week for practice managers and 41 hours per week for hospital administration.

As the number of facilities and the number of staff members managed grew, so too did median salary.

Although the majority of veterinary managers are not bound by an employment contract, those who are earn slightly higher median hourly wages when compared to peers who did not sign contracts.

Location also influenced compensation. Practice managers' salaries ranged from a low of \$40,000 in Missouri to a high of \$63,830 in North Carolina. The gap between hospital administrators' salaries based on location of practice was quite significant, ranging from a low of \$39,966 in Connecticut to a high of \$87,525 in Colorado.

Seniority is a weak driver of salary and, in many cases, salaries trended lower as seniority among managers and administrators increased.

Benefit Issues

Office managers receive an average of two weeks of vacation while practice managers and hospital administrators received three weeks paid vacation each year. Median weeks of vacation increase as years at current location increase.

Most managers, regardless of position, report receiving the following benefits: continuing education, health insurance, veterinary car discount, veterinary product discount and paid time off. Office managers are more likely to receive reimbursement for uniforms and administrators are likely to receive dental insurance, reimbursement for license fees and days off for continuing education.

General Trends

Since 2015, office managers experienced increases in average salaries and decreases in the number of hours worked annually. Hourly wages went up 8% over the two years. Practice managers saw stagnating salaries and a 1% decrease in annual hours over the last two years. Hourly wage went up 1% over the last two years. Hospital administrators saw a 4% salary increase over the last two years but this was echoed with an identical increase in annual hours worked so the resulting increase in hourly wage for the last two years was zero.

Factors such as location and number of staff managed appear to have a favorable impact on salary. Education and credentials continue to be effective routes to higher salaries.

To read more about the survey finding, go to www.vhma.org

About the VHMA

The Veterinary Hospital Managers Association, Inc. (VHMA) was formed in 1981 to provide individuals actively involved in Veterinary Practice Management a means of effective communication and interaction. The mission of VHMA is to enhance and serve professionals in veterinary management through superior education, certification, and networking. For more information about VHMA or [CVPM](#), visit www.vhma.org