



Veterinary Committee on Trauma (VetCOT): Annual report—September 2023

Summary:

The VetCOT Veterinary Trauma Center (VTC) network is celebrating its 10th Anniversary!

Four trauma centers have been with us since 2013—Foster Hospital for Small Animals at Tufts University, Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital at the University of Pennsylvania, NC State Veterinary Hospital, and Oradell Animal Hospital. We are recognizing these facilities for their tenure with a customized anniversary plaque in September. The current VetCOT network, Waves 1-6, consist of 23 trauma centers, including 5 at a provisional status level.

The six subcommittees continue to make great progress and have solid meeting cadence.

The spring conference attracted over 100 attendees and continues to grow each year.

VetATLS will be debuting its beta model in early 2024 and we continue to forge partnerships within the veterinary trauma community, but more importantly we are branching out into the human trauma sector, human first responders, and the working dog/military population to fully elevate the translational trauma medicine concept and research and promote the VetATLS as a critical tool to further confidence and competence in the veterinary trauma sector.

ACVECC has generously continued to fund a part-time VetCOT Program Coordinator position whose main responsibilities are working with the VetCOT subcommittees and Trauma Centers, website maintenance, newsletter, conference planning, and supporting the trauma education platform development.

Annual Conference

The **eighth annual ACVECC-VetCOT conference** was successfully held in person at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas in March 24-26, 2023.

The Annual Business meeting on Friday kicked off the weekend with 18 in-person and 9 on-line attendees. Dr. Hall provided a year in review and the subcommittee chairs presented updates on each of their respective teams.

Upon surveying the group, and brainstorming strategic initiatives for the near and longer term, the following items were identified:

Near Term Initiatives: next 1-2 years

- 1st Launch VetATLS course
- 2nd Generate Clinical Practice Guidelines for trauma centers and broader ECC community
- 3rd Streamline and refine processes for identification, verification, re-verification

Longer Term Initiatives: 3-5 years

- 1st Consider a trauma vet textbook as a follow on to the VetATLS course notebook
- 2nd Generate Clinical Practice Guidelines for trauma centers and broader ECC community

3rd-tie Further the trauma center recruitment and retention by continuing to provide resources to centers in the network.

3rd-tie Promotion of use of the VetCOT trauma database for research

3rd-tie Build brand awareness in a multi-disciplinary way across multi species practitioners

All of the near-term initiatives are either under way or planned to start within the next year.

The conference itself attracted 110 participants, including speakers and sponsors. Over the two-day event, participants could earn up to 13.5 continuing education credits from ACVECC and enjoyed the opportunity to network with colleagues from around the country and internationally. We heard from 21 presenters, including 5 case/abstract report outs and 4 human trauma physicians. The case panel discussion and translational panel discussion continue to be conference favorites among attendees based on a conference satisfaction survey. A new event, a social mixer during the poster presentations Saturday evening, was well-received and we plan to continue this part of the program, budget permitting.

Key speaker topics included Advances in Canine Hemorrhagic Shock, Clinical Practice Guidelines, managing a human med “virtual ICU” to overcome remote rural resource challenges, Top Veterinary Trauma Article reviews, and translational trauma medicine solutions. The Sunday luncheon, shared with the Mattox Trauma Conference, featured keynote speaker Dr. R. Todd Maxson, who presented “A Very Personal Disaster—Trauma from the Other Side of the Table”, giving his own account of a trauma incident and recovery.

We look forward to next year’s **ninth annual ACVECC-VetCOT conference** April 12-14,2023 in Las Vegas. Planning is currently underway. As in the past, we are collaborating with the Trauma Critical Care and Acute Care Surgery conference organizers (Mary Allan) to coordinate logistics and MD speakers. Dr. Hall will be soliciting speakers and sponsors at the upcoming IVECCS conference in Denver in September.

Subcommittee Highlights

Communication

Our quarterly **newsletters** have been well-received and are our main communication tool to the Veterinary Trauma Centers. Newsletter links are listed below. Our general VetCOT distribution list for all communications is now over 200 recipients.

The new website went “live” November 2022. We have added an info@vetcot.org email address to ensure timely communication. We were also able to use the website for Wave 7 VTC applications and conference registration and payment. It continues to be a work in progress, with information and updates being added each month.

Dr. Claire Tucker assumed leadership of this subcommittee in May. She has already made huge strides in updating the VetCOT social media platforms. She has updated the [VetCOT Facebook link](#) and Instagram sites and makes weekly posts highlighting the VetCOT trauma centers. She will evaluate the effectiveness of these two platforms and expand or cut back as needed.

Claire is also experimenting with Google Groups as an on-line forum for trauma discussions and knowledge sharing.

Registry

As of August 2, 2023, the veterinary trauma registry, utilizing REDCap, has **64,143 logged cases**. Quarter on quarter data trend remains very stable regarding the type of trauma, species, and patient outcome.

The **registry relocation** went smoothly and is 100% complete. The University of Minnesota hosted database was officially closed July 17, 2022. Cases presenting January 1, 2022 and forward are being entered into the new database. There are 46 trained data entry personnel across all VTCs for the new database. Historical data has been transferred to the Colorado Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CCTSI).

We have had **two requests for data usage** for research studies over the last year; both have been approved by the subcommittee.

There are now **26 publications** using VetCOT Registry data.

Seven articles, including the 2017-2019 Registry Report, were published in the last year.

[Animal Trauma Triage Score, Modified Glasgow Coma Scale, age, and weight were associated with outcome in feline bite wounds \(1,065 cases\): a VetCOT registry study.](#)

Tinsley AT, Oyama MA, Reineke EL. J Am Vet Med Assoc. 2023 Mar 13;261(6):881-887. doi: 10.2460/javma.22.11.0531. Print 2023 Jun 1. PMID: 36913392

[Prognostic indicators for feline craniofacial trauma: a retrospective study of 114 cases.](#)

Kelley JL, Hoyer NK, Rao S, Rawlinson JE. Front Vet Sci. 2023 May 12;10:1190474. doi: 10.3389/fvets.2023.1190474. eCollection 2023. PMID: 37252383

[Surgical interventions and outcome in a population of feline trauma patients.](#)

Fisher CJ, Cavanagh AA, Liss D, Adams T, Marvel SJ, Hall KE. J Vet Emerg Crit Care (San Antonio). 2023 May-Jun;33(3):337-347. doi: 10.1111/vec.13291. Epub 2023 Apr 29. PMID: 37120709

[ACVECC-Veterinary Committee on Trauma registry report 2017-2019.](#)

Hall KE, Rutten JI, Baird TN, Boller M, Edwards M, Hickey M, Raffae MR. J Vet Emerg Crit Care (San Antonio). 2023 May-Jun;33(3):289-297. doi: 10.1111/vec.13295. Epub 2023 Apr 22. PMID: 37087555

[Evaluation of outcome associated with feline trauma: A Veterinary Committee on Trauma registry study.](#)

Gregory CW, Davros AM, Cockrell DM, Hall KE. J Vet Emerg Crit Care (San Antonio). 2023 Mar;33(2):201-207. doi: 10.1111/vec.13277. Epub 2023 Jan 12. PMID: 36636787

[Retrospective evaluation of elevator-related injuries in dogs \(2015-2020\): 13 cases.](#)

Bartling J, Whelan M, Sinnott-Stutzman V. J Vet Emerg Crit Care (San Antonio). 2023 Jan;33(1):70-73. doi: 10.1111/vec.13246. Epub 2022 Dec 22. PMID: 36545909

[Comparison of clinical outcomes in cases of blunt, penetrating, and combination trauma in dogs: A VetCOT registry study.](#)

Davros AM, Gregory CW, Cockrell DM, Hall KE. J Vet Emerg Crit Care (San Antonio). 2023 Jan;33(1):74-80. doi: 10.1111/vec.13253. Epub 2022 Sep 8. PMID: 36082427

For a complete list of all 26 published articles, click here [VetCOT Registry Published Articles](#).

Projects in process:

1. Transfusion practice in cats with trauma (Hickey)
2. Retrospective evaluation of a veterinary abdominal fluid scoring system obtained during abdominal focused assessment with sonography in cats following blunt traumatic injury (Langois, Prittie, Mastrococco)
3. Feline and Canine TBI (Baughman, Tucker)
4. Causes of mortality in Canine Trauma and the establishment of a MWD trauma score (Edwards)
5. Admission variables associated with outcome in canines with bite wound trauma (Guest, Reineke, Tinsley)

Resources & Trauma Center Support

The Resources subcommittee has been working to review and update the ***Resources for the optimal care of the injured veterinary patient document***. The objective is to have a final version to present to the Regents for approval in Q1 2024.

Quarterly **Trauma Talks** were implemented just over a year ago and have been well received. The July Trauma Talk attracted 50 online attendees. The recordings are posted on the website <https://vetcot.org/trauma-talks/>.

Based on a VTC needs survey, the team is also drafting **CPGs (Clinical Practice Guidelines)** to provide a resource of standardized care practices to the VetCOT Veterinary Trauma Centers.

Identification and Verification

Five hospitals applied for identification as part of “**Wave 6**”. All trauma centers were accepted by the subcommittee and approved for provisional status by the Regents last year. The next check-in is October 1, 2023. We expect 3 of the 5 VTCs to progress to verified status. Our “**Wave 7**” call for applicants attracted three applications (all from Australia). The subcommittee is currently in the application review phase and plan to make a recommendation to the Regents in Fall 2023.

Reverification of VTC from **Waves 1-4** is wrapping up. Three VTCs are currently being reviewed and on track to be completed in Fall 2023; the delay was partly due to VECCS suspending its certification reviews until September 2023.

All VTCs are monitored for requirement compliance on a quarterly basis. The subcommittee recommended a slight update to the verification/re-verification requirements. As we attract more international trauma centers, and staffing and budget challenges across all VTCs may not allow for travel and conference attendance, each VTC is now expected to complete 2 of the following for verification/re-verification (q 3 years):

- Representative at the VetCOT conference
- Representative on a VetCOT subcommittee
- Presentation of a quarterly Trauma talk
- Involvement in development of a CPG

Education

The education committee is continuing its “**Journal Club**” contribution for each quarterly newsletter. The team also reviews abstracts, case studies and posters submitted for the annual conference, with Dr. Tony Mann, subcommittee chairperson, moderating the oral presentations and poster contest.

Trauma Support (Nursing)

The Trauma Support Team meets regularly every two months. The team provides quarterly newsletter input for **best practices** with regards to procedures, treatments, and standard work processes. The team members have also volunteered their support in the creation and review of the CPGs being developed by the Resources Subcommittee.

All subcommittee charters and memberships will be reviewed by the end of calendar year 2023 and updated as needed.

Attachments (click on links in blue):

Spring Conference 2023:

- VetCOT 2023 Conference Program [2023 VetCOT Conference Program](#)
- VetCOT 2023 Conference Summary [VetCOT Conference Summary](#)
- VetCOT Annual Business Meeting Strategic Initiatives Ranking [2023 Strategic Initiatives](#)

Newsletter links:

- June 2023 [Newsletter June 2023](#)
- February 2023 [Newsletter February 2023](#)
- November 2022 [Newsletter November 2022](#)
- August 2022 [Newsletter August 2022](#)
- May 2022 [Newsletter May 2022](#)
- February 2022 [Newsletter February 2022](#)
- November 2021 [Newsletter November 2021](#)
- August 2021 [Newsletter August 2021](#)