

Making a Better World for Pets in Make the Difference



Pet owners will tell you that nothing is worse than watching a furry family member get sick. Driven by emotion, they race to find veterinary services, only to be left frustrated when they cannot access care when and where they need it.

It's a story Rachel Beck, CVT, PMP and Dr. Kelly Cooper have heard time and again. Not only had they seen the figures for pets not receiving the care they needed, but they were also hearing

stories from colleagues throughout the industry about the underutilization of skilled employees.

Something had to give; pets, owners and professionals all deserved better. So, they decided to do something about it.

DEMAND OUTPACES SUPPLY

As early as 2018, Rachel and Kelly had read Mars Veterinary Health research indicating that 75 million pets in the United States would not have access to care by 2030 due to a critical shortage of veterinarians. At the same time, reports of veterinary technicians experiencing burnout and mental health issues and subsequently leaving the industry were surfacing.

Knowing that Banfield could meet everyone's needs while remaining competitive as an employer and a pet care provider, Rachel and Kelly created the Credentialed Veterinary Technician Appointment Program. This innovative strategy shifts preventive and follow-up care to credentialed veterinary technicians freeing veterinarians to see new patients and more complicated cases.

"By offering credentialed veterinary technician appointments, we are creating opportunities for our credentialed veterinary technicians to operate at the highest level of their license while generating capacity to provide care for pets. It's good for our people, our patients, and our business," said Rachel Beck, CVT, PMP.

The program's three-pronged approach reduces burnout among veterinarians while removing veterinary technicians from simple support roles to work at the top of their license credentials:

- Ways of working: Strong partnerships between Veterinarians and veterinary technicians
- Skills Assessment and development: Ensure technicians have the skills to meet pet needs
- Maximize the day: Veterinary technicians own their own caseload, freeing up veterinarians

The pilot program began in late 2019 with plans to slowly roll out across the United States – a strategy that quickly changed with the pandemic. As pet companionship grew during COVID lockdowns, it was clear the program was needed more than ever. Adoption and execution of the Credentialed Veterinary Technician Appointment Program was fast-tracked, and today, 90% of Banfield hospitals are booking vet tech appointments.

HEALTHY PETS, HAPPY LIFE

It turns out that empowering veterinary technicians has proven overwhelmingly successful — both for our business and our Associates.

Lesley Robinson, CVT, shared her excitement for the program, saying, “I love taking ownership of appointments and feeling like my license is valued.” According to Dr. Courtney McDonald, veterinarians feel the same: “Clients get in faster, and I love that they have relationships with the entire team, not just their DVM. I feel like our CVTs are practicing at the top of their licenses, and now, so am I.”

Equally as exciting is the value the program has brought to the business, including and added \$305 million in revenue since its launch, and:

- Increased employed associates by 19% and slowed the pace of turnover
- Forged new career paths for veterinary technicians
- Elevated net promoter scores for hospitals with more credentialed vet techs
- Given 3.4 million pets consistent, quality care

Rachel and Kelly’s exceptional work bringing the Credentialed Veterinary Technician Appointment Program to Banfield is a true testament to Mars Associates who make things happen every day.

Calling all Do-ers

Does this story spark something for you? Are you or another Mars Associate an innovator, a trailblazer or a collaborator? We want to hear from you! Applications and nominations for the 2025 Make A Difference Awards are being accepted through September 20, 2024.

Nominate a Trailblazer Today at <https://mtd.mars.com/>