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Speice

Independent Study and Mentorship 3A

5 October 2018

The Heart of Veterinary Medicine

Assessment 5 - Research

**Date:** 5 October 2018

**Topic:** Veterinary Sciences

**Works Cited:**

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**Assessment:**

Heartworms are incredibly common in Southern states such as Texas because of climate. Because of this, it is becoming increasingly important for veterinarians based in Texas to have a working knowledge of this illness. Additionally, this disease is especially common among animals that are picked up from shelters or off the streets making this especially important to this

year's topic of study in the Independent Study and Mentorship program due to the proposed focus on rescue veterinary work.

Heartworms are spread through infected mosquitoes which is why they are more common in Texas. Because of this simple transmission of the disease, without prevention, heartworms could become a serious issue in dogs and cats in Texas. This is why it is incredibly important for aspiring veterinarians to be knowledgeable over this disease. Reading articles and viewing images about the progression, treatment, and prevention of this disease was incredibly educational.

Learning about the detrimental side effects of heartworms reinforced the importance of prevention and education. Images of this disease and its effect on the hearts of animals diagnosed with this disease prompted thought into potential ideas for an original work project focused on education over topics such as this. Because images of this disease showcase the detriment caused to animals, these would be a great example to use to educate the public over the importance of prevention.

Researching and reading about the long term side effects of this illness also further supported the idea of prevention as a solution. Because many animals aren't diagnosed early on due to a lack of prominent symptoms, the heartworms usually progress into an overwhelming number of worms to deal with and eradicate. Additionally, new information was obtained regarding heartworms. This information suggests that dead worms are just as harmful, maybe even more harmful, than live worms because they don't decompose and instead continue to obstruct passageways in the heart and lungs. Using this information later on as part of an original

work project over education and prevention could be very helpful and convincing due to the severity of the consequences related to this disease.

Researching and identifying the symptoms and different ways of diagnosing this disease were also incredibly beneficial. Knowing symptoms of this common disease will result in a more well-rounded and informed knowledge when going on mentor visits to a veterinary clinic. Additionally, knowing all of the different methods of diagnosing this illness provides options when attempting to identify the underlying cause of an animal that comes in with respiratory issues as effectively as possible.

Overall, heartworm disease is an incredibly complex disease and these articles have only started the process into further research into this disease. Through this research topics such as symptoms, severity, and basic aspects of treatment were covered. Through future research, topics such as a more intricate understanding of treatment and different prevention methods will be covered in order to have a working understanding of all aspects of this illness. Having a working knowledge of this disease will be very beneficial in a veterinary clinic due to how common this disease is in Texas.