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Veterinary Science: The Cornerstone of One Health

Kanjanabh Kumar Das |

***Corresponding Author:** Kanjanabh Kumar Das, 4th year B.V.Sc. & A.H, College of Veterinary Science, Assam Agricultural University, Khanapara, Guwahati, India.

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"Between animal and human medicine, there is no dividing line, nor should there be. The object is different, but the experience gained constitutes the basis of all medicine."

-Rudolf Virchow

It is without a doubt that throughout the ages, the optimisation of health has been one mankind's primary goals. Health is a diverse subject, often influenced by a variety of changing host, agent, and environmental factors, and as such, the continuous refinement of knowledge is arguably the most significant trait of a healthcare professional. This exclusivity has led to the emergence of multifarious techniques, procedures, and instrumentation.

Animal health is dynamic—it is continuously threatened by changing climate, haphazard livestock trades, illegal poaching, injudicious prophylaxis, lack of public awareness, etc. With globalisation and access to limitless information, livestock handlers and pet parents are becoming increasingly cognizant of their animals' needs. While awareness is ideal, this also makes the masses susceptible to misinformation, hence hampering their judgement. The new generations of veterinarians and veterinary workers must equip themselves with adequate skills to combat these deceptions effectively.

"60% of existing human infectious diseases are zoonotic" (WHO)—veterinarians play a key role in providing care that not only affirms animal health but transcends it through the upliftment of public health. Due to the decreasingly fine line of the human-animal interface, both run a severe risk of transmitting pathogens to one another. This, when coupled with any stressor leading to immunosuppression, has resulted in novel diseases emerging in both human and animal populations. 'One Health' encourages a collaborative, multisectoral, and transdisciplinary approach, and control of animal infections is fundamental to that concept.

Another burning issue that has established itself as a silent killer in our society is 'Antimicrobial Resistance'. AMR, which is directly responsible for 1.3 million deaths every year *(WHO)*, is a global challenge to achieving One Health. Strains of pathogens have grown progressively resistant while the rate of developing new drugs has been static. Antimicrobials are easily misused, and given the complex nature of disease pathogenesis, there must be strict antimicrobial stewardship programmes in place. The veterinarian and animal scientists are entrusted with the important task of discouraging self-medication by owners, ensuring completion of withdrawal periods, and monitoring susceptible herds.

Thus, it can be rightly said that the future of health is relatively dictated by the control and prevention of animal diseases, making veterinary science a cornerstone of One Health.

Lastly, I invite the newer generation of veterinarians and healthcare professionals to embrace the potential of continuous learning and research. I congratulate the contributors for presenting this issue of the *'NL Journal of Veterinary and Animal Nutrition'* and spearheading the modelling of scientific temperament to tackle the aforementioned issues.

"Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health and welfare, the prevention and relief of animal suffering, the conservation of animal resources, the promotion of public health, and the advancement of medical knowledge.

I will practice my profession conscientiously, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics.

I accept as a lifelong obligation the continual improvement of my professional knowledge and competence."

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