



## **History of the Development of the AVDC Equine Veterinary Dental Specialty**

The American Veterinary Dental College (AVDC) was provisionally approved by ABVS-AVMA in 1988, and AVDC was awarded full recognition as an ABVS-AVMA specialty organization in July 1997. Although AVDC was created to improve and promote veterinary dentistry without a species-specific limitation, historically the focus was on small animal dentistry; AVDC developed from the American Veterinary Dental Society, which was established in 1976 by a group of individuals who had been meeting regularly to share their mutual interest in small animal dentistry during the AAHA meeting.

While the founders of AVDC were focused on improving dentistry in small animals, other North American, European, and Australian veterinarians involved in academia and private practice developed equine dental research programs and training opportunities, and published a wide array of articles regarding equine dentistry (see separate Bibliography file).

Equine dentistry has now expanded well beyond “floating” and extractions, to encompass all dental disciplines including oral surgery, endodontics, occlusal abnormalities, periodontics, and restorative dentistry.

In early 2000, the Academy of Veterinary Dentistry, a non-ABVS recognized organization that preceded AVDC and that offered dental certification initially in Small Animals, acknowledged the potential and importance of equine dentistry, and created an equine specific credentials program and certifying examination. In 2009, the American Veterinary Dental College (AVDC) and the Academy of Veterinary Dentistry (AVD) formed a joint committee, the AVDC-AVD Equine Specialty Development Committee. The Committee was charged with meeting the stated requirements of the American Board of Veterinary Specialists (ABVS) for development of a new equine dental specialty under the umbrella of the American Veterinary Dental College. The committee developed a plan designed to achieve this goal, and sought outreach to organizations and individuals that could be important partners in supporting development of this specialty. Meanwhile, the European Board of Veterinary Specialization directed the European Veterinary Dental College to develop a proposal for an EVDC Equine sub-specialty.

During 2010, the AVDC-Academy committee initiated discussion on how to create a formal Specialty Organizing Committee (SOC) that would fulfill requirements set forth by the ABVS. The goal was to use the momentum of both the AVDC-AVD and EBVS-EVDC equine initiatives in a mutually beneficial manner. EVDC agreed to join the SOC. An Equine Veterinary Dental Specialist Contact List was created which included the names of 78 veterinarians with an expressed and demonstrated interest in equine dentistry. The contact list also included 10 Equine Veterinary and Equine Dental Organizations, all North American Veterinary Colleges, and all North American Veterinary Medical Associations. The SOC created an Announcement Letter in July 2011 expressing the intent of the Committee to form an Equine Veterinary Dental Specialty. The letter requested interested veterinarians to contact AVDC to join the list, and to forward the letter to any other veterinarian they knew who might be interested. Sixty-two veterinarians

indicated an interest in SOC membership, and in December 2011, a second letter was sent to these 62 veterinarians requesting a Curriculum Vitae and completion of a questionnaire. The second letter indicated the CV and questionnaire would be used to determine if an individual met the qualifications to join a SOC as described in ABVS Policies and Procedures.

The Delphi system for selection (Delphi process: <http://www.iit.edu/~it/delphi.html>) was used to review the responses received from these 62 veterinarians.

In 2011, the International College of Equine Veterinary Odontology (ICEVO) submitted a letter of intent to the ABVS to form a Recognized Veterinary Specialty Organization (RVSO). The ABVS advised the ICEVO that, given existing ABVS policy, it could not form an RVSO in the absence of a formal agreement with the AVDC; ICEVO leadership was encouraged to engage with the AVDC-AVD Committee, and agreed to participate in the joint effort that was already underway. The AVDC-AVD-EVDC Committee added ICEVO as a participating organization.

A report describing progress in establishing an equine dental specialty under AVDC was submitted to ABVS in October 2011. A formal letter of intent to petition ABVS for recognition of an equine dental specialty under AVDC was submitted to ABVS in January 2012.

Sixty veterinarians submitted credentials for review including 6 members of the AVDC-AVD-EVDC-ICEVO Equine Specialty Development Committee. Under the Delphi system, no participant is permitted to evaluate her- or him-self. Two rounds of Delphi system voting identified 21 highly qualified veterinarians for a Global Equine Veterinary Dental SOC. These 21 individuals were offered and accepted membership in the Equine Dental SOC. Due to the international composition of the SOC, the initial focus of the SOC was to establish standards for training, credentialing, examination, and recertification that would be acceptable to the different specialty certifying authorities. The document containing these standards was initially referred to as the "Global Petition". Discussions within the AVMA leadership made it clear that ABVS-AVMA would not be willing to recognize a 'global' specialty. A petition specifically for submission to ABVS on behalf of AVDC, for recognition of an equine dental specialty in North America, was written, based on the "global Petition". Since neither AVDC nor ABVS policy restricts AVMA specialist recognition to veterinarians licensed by North American jurisdictions, all Global SOC members were invited to join the AVDC Equine Specialty Organizing Committee. Of 21 initial SOC members, 14 accepted membership to the AVDC Equine SOC. Those members who declined were, or subsequently became, part of the European Equine specialty initiative. The AVDC Equine SOC had 11 North Americans and 4 international members, who each met ABVS standards for inclusion in a specialty organizing committee. The AVDC Specialty Organizing Committee members were:

Jennifer Rawlinson (chair)	David Foster	Robert Pascoe
Robert Baratt	Stephen Galloway	BA Rucker
James Carmalt	Gary Goldstein	Hubert Simhofer
Edward Earley	David Klugh	Nicole duToit
Jack Easley	Michel Lowder	Gary Wilson

The AVDC SOC members (and the EVDC SOC members) agreed to take an examination to qualify for Founding Diplomate status. The examination was administered online in September

2013, and as a result, the following 11 individuals were proposed as Founding Diplomates in the final AVDC petition to ABVS for provisional recognition of an AVDC Equine Dental specialist:

Jennifer Rawlinson (chair)  
Robert Baratt  
James Carmalt  
Edward Earley  
Jack Easley

David Foster  
Stephen Galloway  
Gary Goldstein  
Michel Lowder  
Robert Pascoe

Hubert Simhofer  
Nicole duToit  
Gary Wilson

Following the required period of public comment in 2013, ABVS reviewed the November 2013 final version of the petition for provisional recognition of an equine dental specialty in North America, and at its meeting in February 2014, ABVS recommended approval. In April 2014, the AVMA Executive Board approved the ABVS recommendation, thus formally establishing the AVDC Equine Dental Specialty.

The AVDC Equine Dental SOC has written documents for the training program requirements, credentials review and examination procedures, designed to meet the overall extent and standard required for AVDC certification. These documents have been reviewed and approved by the AVDC Board of Directors, and outreach for solicitation of applications for Advanced Standing (for individuals who already have completed training or other requirements equivalent to AVDC Equine credentials requirements, and who as a result will be eligible for early entry to the AVDC Equine examination), or for entry to AVDC Equine training programs, started in June 2014.