Caring

“It’s proper to make the distinction
When explanations are given;
Between those who care as a hobby
And others who care for a livin’.”

Baxter Black, 1986

“Animal Lovers”, Coyote Cowboy Poetry

Idea for quote borrowed from K. Bayne, ILAR Journal V43(1) 2002
Dare 2 Care (D2C): Developing a Sustainable Compassion Fatigue Program That Meets Your Institutional Needs

Tuesday, October 17, 2017
8:00AM – 10:15AM
Room 98
develop and implement a sustainable compassion fatigue program. The use of animals in the biomedical research profession is a complex and highly regulated field. Due to high levels of compassion fatigue in this field, the authors will share their own experience on how the Office of Animal Welfare at the University of Washington developed and implemented a sustainable compassion fatigue program that worked well for their institution.

 Speakers/Topics:

 8:00 Sally Thompson-Iritani Welcome and Introduction

 8:15 Sally Thompson-Iritani Breakout Session Consogram Exercise and Concept Mapping

 8:45 Sara E Kerner Introduction to Compassion Fatigue, Self Reflection, and Strategies for Coping Mechanisms

 9:05 James "Preston" Van Hooser Developing and Implementing a Compassion Fatigue Program

 9:35 Cynthia A Pekow Compassion Fatigue and Euthanasia

Presenters

Sally Thompson-Iritani
Director, Office of Animal Welfare, University of Washington
Leader/Moderator

James "Preston" Van Hooser
Review Scientist & Regulatory Compliance Manager, University of Washington
Leader/Moderator

Sara E Kerner
Veterinarian Technician, University of Washington
Speaker

Dominic D'Urso
Animal Technician, University of Washington
Speaker

Cindy A Pekow
Chief, Veterans Affairs Puget Sound Health Care System
Speaker

Anneke Keizer
Speaker
Session Objectives

- **Examine** compassion fatigue and its impact on our community
  - *lab animal caretakers*,
  - *IACUC*
  - *Researchers*

- **Evaluate** where in the process CF may show up

- **Provide** example coping strategies

- **Illustrate** D2C program development

- **Develop** and **implement** a sustainable compassion fatigue program

- **Casual Conversations**
Facilitator

Compassion Fatigue – What is it?

Kathy J. Andrich
Scientific Instructor
Office of Animal Welfare
University of Washington

Anneke Keizer
Co-Owner & Founder
COPE+
CF Committee — share stories

IACUC Protocol Review

J. Preston Van Hooser
Review Scientist & Compliance Manager
Chair, D2C Compassion Fatigue Committee
Office of Animal Welfare
University of Washington

Animal Breeding Colony

Dominic M. D’Urso
Veterinary Specialist I
Department of Primate Resources
Washington National Primate Research Center
University of Washington

Clinical care of research animals

Sara E. Kerner
Research Scientist II
Department of Comparative Medicine
University of Washington
Speaker Panel

Compassionate euthanasia

Cynthia Pekow
Chief, Veterinary Medical Unit
VA Puget Sound Health Care System

Sally Thompson-Iritani
Director
Office of Animal Welfare
University of Washington
Anneke Keizer
Co-Owner & Founder
COPE+
Compassion Fatigue

The emotional residue or strain of exposure to working with those suffering from the consequences of traumatic events.
The Cost of Caring

“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet” (Remen, 1996)
In the 1970’s

• When I started to work in the field of laboratory animal sciences, I was overwhelmed by emotions.

• Nobody told me about these feelings of
  o Guilt…
  o Sadness…
  o Regrets…
We all Experience it

Not only the people who work directly with animals but also the IACUC members and administrative personnel, who review protocols, experience compassion fatigue.
It is important

To provide people with proper guidance and care because this will also have an effect on the animals.
Self Reflection
Self Care Strategies
Institutional Level

• What does compassion fatigue look like at your Institution?
J. Preston Van Hooser
Review Scientist & Compliance Manager
Chair, D2C Compassion Fatigue Committee
Office of Animal Welfare
University of Washington
Animal Background

- Cattle Ranch
  - 4H
  - FFA

- B.S. Zoology – College of Idaho

- R.S. Dow – Neurological Sciences Institute, Portland, OR

- University of Washington, Seattle, WA
Compassion Fatigue

**Research Scientist**

- Visual Cycle
- Mouse Model – LCA
- Incidental Tissues
- 1998
  - Rpe65 ko
- Animal Numbers
  - ~15,000 mice/yr

**Other Factors**

- Euthanasia
  - Physical (CDMU)
  - Non-physical
- Developed mouse allergies
- UW Kills
- Desensitization
- Can’t talk about work
Compassion Fatigue

**Review Scientist**  
(2002-Present)

- Protocol Review
  - Species specific studies
  - Category E protocols
  - Animal numbers
- Grant Review
  - Projects/pilots without approval
- Animal Use Training Program
  - Euthanasia
    - Decapitation
- Post-Approval Monitoring
  - Protocol drift

**Other Factors**

- IACUC
  - System failure
- Animal numbers
  - ~686,877 animals/yr
- 100’s of Protocols
- >50 Different Species
- Unexpected Outcomes
- UW Kills
- Desensitization

- **STILL** can’t talk about work!
Compassion Satisfaction

- Work environment
- Potlucks
- Continuing education
- Guest speakers (tie it all together)
- Take time to understand the benefits of the research AND the importance of our role as part of the research team
- Dare 2 Care!!!

• Finally feel like I can start talking about work!!
Dominic M. D’Urso
Veterinary Specialist I
Department of Primate Resources
Washington National Primate Research Center
University of Washington
Animal Background

- BS: Biology - Kent State University
- Family farm
- Zoological Animal Care
- Laboratory Animal Care
NHP Species Used in Biomedical Research at UW

1. Rhesus Macaque

2. Long tailed Macaque

3. Southern Pigtail Macaque

4. Squirrel Monkey
SPF Breeding Colony:

• Harem breeding
  ➢ Large Family Groups
  ➢ Occasional Hand-rearing

• Dynamic challenges
  • Anatomical Resemblance
  • Physical Agility
  • Intelligence
  • Habituation
Negative Media, Animal Rights Activists, Urban Legends

- Protest
- Social Media
- Mail
- Break-ins
- Drone activity
- Harassment
Other Factors

- Long Hours
- Manual Labor
- Hazardous Conditions
- Extreme Weather
- Isolation
- Self Blame
How do we use compassionate communication to combat CF in our remote colony staff?

- Weekly Staff Meetings
- Quiet Room
- Employee Barbecue
Sara E. Kerner
Research Scientist II
Department of Comparative Medicine
University of Washington
My Road to Research

- Chickens – eggs
- Goats – clear brush
- Cows – Beef
- Dogs – protection
- Cats – pest control
- Rabbits – fun
Human – Animal Bond

- Equestrian
- Canine obedience, agility, nosework
Lab Animal Medicine Career

- Rodents
- Rabbits
- Ferrets
- Dogs
- Pigs
- Sheep
Gene replacement therapy that works in dogs to be tested in children

CF Considerations

- Individual backgrounds
- Special personnel hired to CARE
- Attentive to animal wellbeing
  - environmental enrichment
  - surgical care
  - analgesic
- Person affected impacts the whole team
What Are We Doing

- Planning meetings
- Communication
- Early attempts to reflect
- Adoption / sanctuaries
- Euthanasia Endpoint Notification
Cynthia Pekow
Chief, Veterinary Medical Unit
VA Puget Sound Health Care System
Coping with Research Animal Death

Cynthia Pekow, DVM, DACLAM
VA Puget Sound Health Care System
We all know...

- Most research animals will be euthanized
  - Protocol needs
  - Illness
  - Unsuitable
  - Not needed
Employee Hazard Training

- Bites, scratches, kicks, physical trauma
- Ergonomics, noise
- Zoonoses, allergens, blood-borne pathogens
- Caustic, infectious, radioactive, toxic agents
- Sharps, hot surfaces, physical hazards
- Public safety, facility and computer security
- Disaster plans, fire, flood, bomb threat
- Harassment, discrimination, whistleblower
- Emotional involvement?
Human-Animal Bond

• Views are influenced by
  – Cultural/religious background
  – Up-bringing
  – Personal experiences

• Individuals will have different perceptions

• Not everyone “loves animals”
Human - Lab Animal Bond

• Animals depend on us: a contract
  – Food/water/housing/environment
  – Interaction
  – Enrichment
  – Humane treatment

• Animals seek out contact
Human - Lab Animal Bond

• Animals have
  – Personalities
  – Distinct attributes
    • Friendly, intelligent, courageous, amusing, quirky
      – Ability to distinguish among people
• Many are long-term
  – Close, frequent contact
Human - Lab Animal Bond

- Enriching for human and animal
- Decrease animal stress
  - Routine procedures
  - Research procedures
- Must not compromise
  - Research
  - Ability to perform job
Animal “sacrifice”

• Killed for an important reason
  – Advance science, medical knowledge
• Significance
  – Implied ritual
  – Symbolic
  – Creates distance
Grief, Mourning

- **Stages**
  - Anger, denial, bargaining, depression, acceptance
  - Complicated grief
  - Anticipatory

- **Symptoms**
  - Anger
  - Sleeplessness
  - Sadness
  - Loss of focus
  - Detachment
  - Frustration
  - Guilt
  - Impatience
  - Mood-swings
  - Depression
  - GI upset
  - Headache
  - Irritability

- **Effects**
  - High job turn-over
  - Low morale
  - Poor attendance
  - Poor job performance
  - Callous or uncaring attitude
What is the culture?

- Laboratory
- Division
- Institution
- Outside community
What is the norm?

- Naming animals
- Petting, playing with, talking to animals
- Bonding
How to cope?

• How to balance:
  – Caring
  – Bonding
  – Loss
  – Culture
  – Personal factors
Memorials

- Tact, sensitivity, dignity
- Concerns about animal activists
- Not to foster guilt
- Inclusive
- Gratitude
Memorials

• Ceremony
• Tree planting
• Garden or shrine
• Plaque
• Artwork
• Support of animal charity
U. of Rochester School of Medicine

ILAR Journal V43(1) 2002, Iliff An Additional "R": Remembering the Animals

Bronze casting, in place since the 1920’s
Merck Research Laboratories
(Rahway, NJ)

In tribute
to research animals
whose contributions have
saved millions of human
and animal lives and
reduced suffering
worldwide.

From the animal technicians,
supervisors, managers,
veterinarians and research
scientists who care for
research animals.

ILAR Journal V43(1) 2002, Iliff An Additional "R": Remembering the Animals
Korean FDA, Seoul Pagoda, site of annual ceremony

Front

Back

A

B

ILAR Journal V43(1) 2002, Iliff An Additional "R": Remembering the Animals
TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND REMEMBER ALL THE ANIMALS THAT HAVE BEEN USED IN OUR RESEARCH FACILITY, FOR THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF SCIENCE AND ENABLED MEDICAL ADVANCEMENT.

AND TO ACKNOWLEDGE ALL RESEARCH PERSONNEL WHO HUMANELY CARE AND USE ANIMALS; YOUR DEDICATION TO ANIMAL WELFARE AND TO SCIENCE IS ADMIRABLE.
Why we need to cope

- Beyond knowledge and skill, empathetic and caring personnel provide humane and respectful care
- Allowing appropriate outlets for expression can reinforce the integrity of the human-animal bond
- Compassionate animal care is a foundation of good science
• Break
• Stretch
• Share
Developing a Compassion Fatigue Program

Management

GET OUT OF THE WAY!

Those who say it cannot be done shouldn’t interrupt the people doing it.
Sharing UW’s Experience

• Needs Assessment
  ➢ Interviews (July 2016 & June 2017)
Compassion Fatigue at UW

Implementated

Need More Communication
Heart Stickers & Tags
Need to say goodbye
Study Endpoint Notification

Animal Euthanasia
Self care / Coping Strategies
Break Rooms
Drab Environments
Windowless Environments
Puzzles
Window Project
Currently evaluating all break rooms

Compassion Fatigue

Time/Space for Reflection

Someone to Talk to
Support Staff
Peer Counselor
Dedicated Area
Comment Boxes
Commemorations

Implemented

Implemented

Implemented

Implemented

Implemented

Implemented

Tabled
Tabled
In process
In process

Implemented

Implemented

Implemented

Implemented

Implemented
D2C Program Mission Statement

Assist all members of the research team to recognize compassion fatigue and raise awareness, provide tools, strategies and resources for managing human emotions in working with and caring for laboratory animals.
Initial Program Target Objectives

• Study Endpoint Notification

• Support for Staff
  (someone to talk to)

• Annual Commemoration*

• Dedication Area*
Study Endpoint Notification

• Heart Stickers
  ➢ Temporarily being used with NHPs as well

• Cage Tags
  ➢ In progress

• Email Notification (NHP)
When individuals experience grief, anxiety, or bereavement associated with animal loss, it is important that we:

- Acknowledge that these feelings exist
- Provide support in the workplace

Addressing bereavement in a safe and supportive environment allows individuals to:

- Feel validated
- Strengthen coping mechanisms
- Reinforce ability to sustain or form new bonds
Support for Faculty/Staff ~ cont.

• Create open atmosphere
  • encourages staff to acknowledge feelings
  • free from the shame or embarrassment of emotional reactions.

• Institute a safe open-door policy

• Provide a pleasant work environment

• Supply a comfortable break area for resting and reflecting
More ways YOU can help.....

• Rotate staff to distribute job responsibilities to share difficult tasks

• Ensure proper training in euthanasia procedures

• Do not require the animal caregiver caring for long-term animals to participate in the euthanasia

• Honor a request to be excused from euthanizing an animal

• Consider institutional adoption program for animals suited to transition to a home or sanctuary environment (per institutional policies)

• Remind each other to take pride in the respectful and compassionate nature of their daily care and how this positively impacts animal welfare
Other D2C Program Related Objectives

• Self Care Strategies
• Reflections
• The “Box” Project
• Work Environments
• Get Involved
• Sympathy Cards*
Self Care Strategies
Non-negotiables of Self Care

• Eat well
• Rest
• Move (30)
• Fresh air (20)
• Connections and Spirituality
Time and Place for Reflection

• Purpose - provide an opportunity for individuals to come together in one place to pay tribute to our research animals and each other.

• Paul and Casey shared their stories and provided an explanation about how the use of their research animals help bring new treatment to patients with Myotubular Myopathy (MTM), a form of muscular dystrophy.

• Open to all animal caregivers, research faculty and staff

Martin K. (Casey) Childers, DO, PhD
Professor
Rehabilitation Medicine
University of Washington

Paul Frase
NFL Veteran
Co-Founder, Joshua Frase Foundation
Work Environment / Break Areas
**The Box**

- Poetry
- Letters
- Farewell Notes
- Drawings
  - Drawings courtesy/copyright of Emily Spaulding, Research Scientist/Engineer 1, University of Washington, Department of Comparative Medicine - Veterinary Services
Get Involved

• Recruit investigators to conduct informational seminars:
  ➢ Discuss why the research is important and potential benefits of the results.
  ➢ Explain why specific endpoints were chosen for the study.

• Encourage all forms of support:
  ➢ Investigate partnerships with counseling providers if your institution permits.
  ➢ Encourage individuals to build an outside support network of family and friends.

• Take an opportunity to understand the benefits of the research at your institution:
  ➢ Remember the benefits of research advancement for both humans and animals.
  ➢ Reflect on any personal impacts of research advancements.
D2C Toolkit

- Own It (management/exec leadership supports but stays out of way)
- Expect challenges
- In-Person Interviews
  - Needs Assessment
  - Identify trends and immediate objectives
  - Challenges
- Form Compassion Fatigue Committee (CFC)
  - Identify immediate goals/objectives
  - Identify other goals/objectives that are important (i.e. low hanging fruit)
- Mission Statement
- Establish Baseline
  - All user survey - Research Faculty/Staff, ATs, IACUC, Admin
- Human Subjects Protocol?
- Funding Opportunities/Sponsorships

Develop

- Own it (management/exec leadership supports but stays out of way)
- Monthly D2C:CFC Meetings
- Time for Reflection - Quarterly Basis/As Needed
- Challenges

Implement

- Own it (management/exec leadership supports but stays out of way)
- Survey - Annually
- Establish “Baseline” (metrics)
- Identify what is and what isn’t working and make necessary changes

Sustain

If you need help, reach out to us!
Acknowledgments

• University of Washington Leadership

• D2C Compassion Fatigue Committee

• VA Puget Sound Health Care System

• Anneke Keizer, Co-Owner & Founder, COPE+

• Ken Gordon, Executive Director, NWABR
Remember…..

• Empathetic, caring personnel ensure that animals are treated humanely and with respect.
• Emotionally supported individuals who are caring and respectful toward animals are best suited to promote and provide an enriching experience for animals.
Thank you for what you do..... you truly make a difference!