How the Ottawa Humane Society Took Spay/Neuter Mobile

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Mobile Spay/Neuter

The OHS Experience
Motivation

• Cat overpopulation
• Cat homelessness
• Supporting pet owners
• Cornerstone of OHS five-year Strategic Plan
Thank you!
Thank you!
Our model

• Cats only!
• 4 days/week, average 18 cats/day
• Subsidized fee of $20, means-tested
• Appointment-based
• Focus on low-income neighbourhoods
• Post-surgical/emergency care provided
• Annual operating budget: $460K
  Revenue: $75K
Program development: Vehicle procurement
Program development:
Vehicle procurement

- Custom build
- Local vendor
- At least six-month build
- Multiple site visits
Program development: Accreditation

- Accredited under two categories
- Exemptions requested post-inspection
- Records management must be contained to mobile
Program development: Surgery

- Pilot: internal animals, on-site at OHS
- Slow, progressive growth
- Many changes to SOPs
- Most locations now off-site
- Successfully sterilizing 18 cats daily
Metrics to date

MSNS Program Metrics

- 2016-17: 1250 Cats, 604 Clinics, 232 Clients
- 2017-18: 3050 Cats, 1738 Clinics, 1358 Clients
- 2018-19: 2299 Cats, 1793 Clients, 163 Clinics

Surgical Goal: 2745 Cats
Challenges

How hard could this be?
Challenges

• Supervision
• Staffing
• Training
Challenges

- Client considerations
- Animal health
Challenges

- Vehicle issues
- Parking
  - Clinic locations
  - Access to inside space
  - Overnight
- Weather
Successes

- Veterinary support
- Community partnerships
- CVO Accreditation
Successes

• Committed staff and volunteer team!
• Strong SOPs
• Microchip uptake
• The clients!
Lessons Learned

• Set realistic surgical expectations
• Flexibility and adaptability are critical and on-going components for success
• Veterinary support and partnerships are crucial
• This will not be easy!
A model for your community

Would we do it again...
A model for your community

Should you?
A model for your community

Maybe it’s not *mobile* spay/neuter?
A model for your community

• Needs
  Analysis – what does the data indicate?
  Identify priorities – strategic plan?

• Existing Resources
  Your clinic, staff, supplies
    • What can you do with what you have
  Community vets
    • Rent vet space
    • Vouchers
  Donors
    • Do you have donor support/buy-in?
A model for your community

Early Considerations:

• Cost per spay/neuter
• Sustainability
• Species
• Staffing model
• Is mobile required in your community?
A model for your community

Mobile-specific considerations

- CVO – can the requirements be met? (autoclave, records keeping, etc.)
- Temperature-controlled parking required
- Non-surgical support
  - Admin
  - Supervision
- Post surgical complications
A model for your community
A model for your community

Now what?
Needs analyzed & priorities identified
Resources determined
Building Veterinary Support & Partnerships

Early Planning:
- Communicate intent
- Ask for feedback
- Use the feedback

Launch:
- Make it formal

On-Going:
- Update on progress
- Share successes
- Ongoing requests for feedback
Building Veterinary Support & Partnerships

Research supports:

• Pet owners using this service would likely not have their pets fixed at all without a low-cost S/N program.

• With awareness, more pet owners will actually contact veterinary services for spay/neuter.
Community Support & Partnerships

• Compile a directory of community resources
  – Groups
  – Organizations
  – Media
• Explain the benefits of S/N
• Offer what you can to the community
• Ask for what you need in return
Low-cost spay/neuter saves lives

Conclusive and peer-reviewed

• Stabilizes local pet populations
  – Decreases shelter intake
  – Decreases euthanasia rates
  – Increases LRR

• Valuable tool for spreading awareness of responsible pet ownership

• Corrects misunderstandings about pet sterilization
Next Steps for OHS

- Increase surgical numbers up to 100/week
- Increased education for pet owners
- Offer other resources to pet owners
- New partnerships with local:
  - Veterinarians
  - Community groups
  - Cat groups (friendlies)
Thank you

Questions?