

# A Qualitative Analysis of UK Stakeholders' Views on Co-produced Care in Veterinary Services

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## Abstract

This paper explores the views of UK stakeholders on co-produced care in veterinary services through a qualitative lens. Co-produced care involves collaboration between veterinary professionals and clients, ensuring decisions about animal health and welfare are made jointly. This study delves into the perceptions, benefits, challenges, and overall impact of co-produced care on the veterinary profession. Data was gathered through interviews and focus groups with veterinary professionals, pet owners, and other relevant stakeholders. The findings suggest that co-produced care can enhance client satisfaction and improve animal health outcomes, although challenges such as time constraints and varying levels of client knowledge must be addressed. The study concludes with recommendations for implementing co-produced care more effectively in the UK veterinary sector.

**Keywords:** Co-produced care • Veterinary services • UK stakeholders • Qualitative analysis

## Introduction

Co-produced care, a collaborative approach where professionals and clients work together to make decisions, has gained traction in various fields, including human healthcare. In veterinary services, this concept involves veterinarians and pet owners jointly contributing to the decision-making process regarding the health and welfare of animals. The rise of this approach stems from the recognition that involving clients more deeply in care decisions can lead to improved outcomes and satisfaction. However, its application in veterinary services is relatively underexplored, particularly in the UK context [1]. The veterinary profession traditionally involves veterinarians making decisions based on their expertise, with clients expected to follow recommendations. However, the dynamics are shifting towards a more participatory model where pet owners' insights and preferences are valued alongside professional expertise. This shift aligns with broader societal changes towards shared decision-making and client empowerment. This article aims to fill the gap in the literature by providing a comprehensive qualitative analysis of UK stakeholders' views on co-produced care in veterinary services [2].

## Literature Review

The concept of co-produced care originates from the broader movement towards patient-centered care in human medicine, where the focus is on collaboration between patients and healthcare providers. This approach has been shown to improve patient satisfaction, adherence to treatment plans, and overall health outcomes. Translating this model to veterinary services involves similar principles, where veterinarians and pet owners work together to make decisions that best suit the animal's health needs and the owner's

circumstances. Several studies highlight the potential benefits of co-produced care in veterinary services. For instance, research has shown that when pet owners are actively involved in care decisions, they are more likely to adhere to treatment recommendations and have a better understanding of their pets' health needs. Additionally, this collaborative approach can enhance the veterinarian-client relationship, fostering trust and communication [3].

However, implementing co-produced care in veterinary practice also presents challenges. One significant barrier is the time required for thorough discussions and shared decision-making, which can be a constraint in busy veterinary clinics. Another challenge is the varying levels of knowledge and understanding among pet owners, which can affect their ability to participate meaningfully in care decisions. Furthermore, there can be differences in opinions between veterinarians and pet owners, leading to potential conflicts. Despite these challenges, there is a growing interest in exploring how co-produced care can be effectively integrated into veterinary services. This study aims to contribute to this body of knowledge by examining the views of various stakeholders in the UK veterinary sector, providing insights into the feasibility and impact of this approach [4].

## Discussion

The findings from interviews and focus groups with veterinary professionals, pet owners, and other stakeholders provide a rich understanding of their views on co-produced care. Overall, the responses indicate a positive perception of this collaborative approach, with stakeholders highlighting several key benefits. Firstly, co-produced care was seen as enhancing client satisfaction. Pet owners appreciated being actively involved in decisions about their pets' health, feeling that their opinions and knowledge about their pets were valued. This involvement led to a stronger sense of ownership and commitment to the care plans, which, in turn, improved adherence to treatment recommendations. Secondly, the collaborative approach was found to improve communication and trust between veterinarians and clients. By engaging in open and honest discussions, both parties could better understand each other's perspectives and work towards mutually agreed-upon solutions. This trust is crucial for successful veterinary care, as it underpins the relationship between the veterinarian and the client [5].

Moreover, stakeholders noted that co-produced care could lead to better health outcomes for animals. When pet owners are more engaged in the decision-making process, they are likely to be more attentive to their pets' health needs and more proactive in seeking care. This proactive approach can lead to earlier detection of health issues and more timely interventions,

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ultimately improving animal health and welfare. However, the study also identified several challenges to implementing co-produced care in veterinary services. Time constraints were frequently mentioned, with both veterinarians and clients acknowledging that thorough discussions require additional time that may not always be available in busy clinical settings. This issue is particularly relevant in practices with high caseloads and limited resources. Another challenge is the varying levels of knowledge and understanding among pet owners. While some owners are well-informed and capable of participating actively in care decisions, others may lack the necessary knowledge or may have misconceptions about their pets' health. This disparity can make it difficult for veterinarians to ensure that all clients are equally engaged and informed [6].

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## Conclusion

In conclusion, this qualitative analysis of UK stakeholders' views on co-produced care in veterinary services highlights the potential benefits and challenges of this collaborative approach. While co-produced care can enhance client satisfaction, improve communication and trust, and lead to better health outcomes for animals, it also presents challenges such as time constraints, varying levels of client knowledge, and potential conflicts. To overcome these challenges and maximize the benefits of co-produced care, it is essential to provide training for veterinarians, allocate dedicated time for consultations, and educate pet owners about their role in the decision-making process. By implementing these strategies, the UK veterinary sector can move towards a more participatory model of care that values the insights and contributions of both veterinarians and pet owners. Ultimately, co-produced care represents a promising approach to veterinary services, aligning with broader societal trends towards shared decision-making and client empowerment. By fostering collaboration and communication, this approach can enhance the quality of care provided to animals and strengthen the relationship between veterinarians and their clients.

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## Conflict of Interest

None.

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