



**American Association  
of Equine Practitioners**

***Council/Committee/Task Force  
Report Form/Board Recommendation***

<b>Committee Name:</b>	Healthy Practice	<b>Quarter/Year:</b>	2025
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Dr. Ashley Whitehead (Chair) & Dr. Meggan Graves (Co-Chair)	<b>Date Submitted:</b>	Nov 21, 2025

This Committee is:

☐ Reporting with no action

☒ Recommending board action or a policy change (add information below)

**Summary of Activities/Issues/Decisions/Accomplishments:**

This was the HP Committee's first year following the merger of the Wellness Committee, Emergency Taskforce, and Practice Culture Taskforce. Our priority for the year was to understand the available resources and deliverables created by our founding groups and strategically plan for the next three years.

The following is a list of activities of the committee:

- **Strategic planning** session in Nashville with 13 attendees (see details on approval below)
  - Created values and mission statement for HP committee
- **Webinars:**
  - Staying Sound in Practice: Injury Prevention, Ergonomics, and Longevity for the Equine Veterinarian
    - Kevin Balcirak, Dr. Meggan Graves, Dr. Amiee Eggleston-Ahern (Sept 9, 2025)
  - Food for Thought: Practical Nutrition and Healthy Practice(s) for Vets
    - Julie Francis, Dr. Meggan Graves, Dr. Amiee Eggleston-Ahern (Nov 19, 2025)
- **Presentations:** "A Workshop to Align Core Values and Guide the Practice Mission Statement", branded HP and trial run with committee in Nov. Plan to send to board for approval in the new year in preparation for possible speakers' bureau (see details in strategic plan).
- **Videos:** reviewed current content, planned for interviews at convention
- **Website:** planned for new flow and formatting of HP-related content. Short-term minor updates completed in preparation for the convention.

- **Convention:** activities occurring at the Denver Convention include: HP Committee Showcase instead of business meeting, advertising the recipe cookbook, collecting video testimony for website and socials,
  - **Presentations:**
    - HP key session on Monday: “Managing Your Online Reputation in Equine Practice”
    - HP members presenting on HP topics: “Building Culture in the Equine Practice” “Alleviating the Burden: Establishing an Equine Emergency-Only Practice”, “Establishing an ER-Only/Urgent Care Practice”

### **HP Committee Meetings:**

Feb 19, April 28, June 25, July 9, Aug 13, Sept 10, Oct 08, Nov 14

#Members rolling off: 8, including board liaison

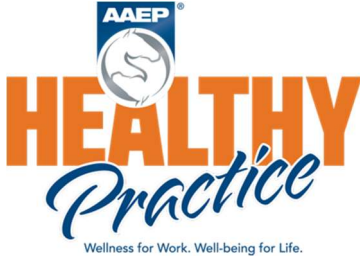
#New members: 6, including board liaison

### **Recommendation for board action: (state in the form of a motion and provide any background or supporting documentation you feel is appropriate):**

We put forward the motion to approve the Healthy Practice Committee strategic plan 2025-2027.

On June 25th, 2025, the HP Committee, consisting of 11 members, along with the board liaison and staff liaison, convened in person to formulate our strategic plan for the upcoming three years. A follow-up session took place in November to refine our committee values and mission statement, utilizing a workshop resource developed by the committee and tailored for delivery to the AAEP membership. The HP Committee has approved this document, and everyone is eager to begin the new year with a strategic plan that will be impactful to our AAEP membership.

Attachments: “AAEP Healthy Practice Committee Strategic Plan 2025-2027\_Final.docx”



## AAEP Healthy Practice Committee Strategic Plan 2025–2027

Facilitated by Liza Holland, Holland Management Services, Inc.

Date: June 25, 2025

The **Healthy Practice Committee** of the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) was created through the merger of three prior committees and task forces, including wellness, emergency coverage, and practice culture.

The **charge** given by the AAEP board of directors is *to develop resources, including educational programming, for the AAEP membership in the areas of personal and practice wellbeing and to maximize personal and professional quality of life for veterinarians and staff.*

### **HP Committee Mission Statement:**

*We empower equine veterinarians and their teams to thrive in a dynamic profession by creating practical resources and fostering meaningful connections that cultivate personal, professional, and practice wellbeing.*

### **Key Focus Areas**

After much discussion, the participants adopted two overarching strategic areas for the committee based on our supplied charge:

- 1) Marketing and Outreach
- 2) Education and Resources

After reviewing the deliverables and work of the foundation committees, participants felt that the well-being dimensions and practice culture pillars still resonate and are consistent with, as well as supported by, numerous veterinary and healthcare associations, which brings familiarity to our membership. The committee's goal is to strategically address each of these areas with content and resources, making them easily accessible and visible to the membership.

A third overarching strategic area was discussed – Data – which was decided not to be an area of its own, but rather a thread that needs to be considered throughout the committee's work. The committee will continually seek ways to enhance its understanding of the equine veterinary community through research and data collection.

## **Marketing & Outreach**

The newly merged Healthy Practice Committee discussed the numerous resources that have been developed through the recent work of the wellness committee and various sustainability task forces, and the need to more widely distribute the content. The committee identified two main target areas for marketing: the AAEP website and social media platforms. Additionally, the committee has a long-term goal of launching a wellness campaign at Convention that includes practice challenges and an events calendar. The overarching theme of the outreach needs to be a positive narrative and support for a shift towards personal and professional well-being for all equine veterinarians.

### **Short-term goals:**

- Review the current website and resources
  - Look for gaps in resources to prioritize for future development
- Website Update related to Healthy Practice Committee and Resources
  - New consolidated pages for Healthy Practice content
  - Clear, consistent messaging related to the new committee
  - Ensure all associated/created resources are available and linked
  - Ensure that external resources are appropriate and up-to-date
- Develop multiple routes to bring awareness to the website and drive engagement with site
- Pilot a Healthy Practice Challenge (see below) with a small group of clinics prior to a larger launch at Convention

### **Long term goals:**

- Annual Healthy Practice Campaign
  - Develop and implement an annual wellness campaign beginning at the AAEP Conference with new or recurring theme ('Healthy Practice Starts with Me', 'I Love My Job', 'What Makes Me Whole', 'Unlocking the Potential').
  - Annual Wellbeing Challenges for practices and practitioners
    - Incentives for practitioners/clinics
    - Members encouraged to post on AAEP digital platforms to drive awareness
  - Branded materials to be distributed at convention and other events
  - Year-long event/communication calendar launched at AAEP for the coming year
    - Build excitement and allow for early scheduling in calendar for events
  - Build HP campaign into one of the receptions or similar (welcome?)
- Social Media Calendar Plan and Execution
  - Develop and maintain an annual social media calendar template, including key wellbeing dates, committee event marketing, "did you know" healthy practice facts and tips, resource promotion and research highlights

## **Education and Resources**

The committee determined that, at this time, we do not have an immediate need to create more written HP content; rather, the committee would like to focus our efforts on developing content that complements the resources and allows for dissemination to both the AAEP membership and more broadly to equine practitioners. This was seen as a compliment to the AAEP mission to improve the overall profession and attract members. The committee plans to focus on webinars that have already proven to be well-received, as well as develop presentations and videos that can be given to veterinary audiences by request.

### **Short-term goals:**

- Webinars:
  - Identify upcoming quarterly topics and create a list of speaker options
  - Work with Karen Paultz on timing and delivery, and speakers
  - Assign a host/moderator from the group to attend each webinar and brand as “Healthy Practice Committee”
  - Secure funding for honorarium for speaker
- Presentations:
  - Review previous presentations developed by previous committee members and select priority topics
  - Create draft presentations/slides
  - Work with AAEP staff on branding/design
  - Develop a plan for how to implement speaker “Train the trainer” training
  - Create 2-3 slides that could be used in any presentation given by an AAEP representative to highlight the work being done by AAEP to promote Healthy Practice
- Videos:
  - Inventory existing, started, and planned videos
  - Determine which resource/theme is highlighted in the video and where to use each video (website, social media, presentation, XP)
  - Review lists of people/practices that could be interviewed
  - Identify any new videos that should be created to complement resource/HP themes
  - Work with the AAEP videographer and editing team to complete videos
- Convention:
  - Work with the convention committee to determine space for HP topics
  - Identify timely topics or themes related to the keynote and identify speakers
  - Resources
  - Determine if there is a need for fillable forms for the PDF copies of current resources (toolkits).

### **Long-term goals:**

- Create a Speakers Bureau with individuals trained to give Healthy Practice Presentations at local VMAs or other conferences.
  - Hold train-the-trainers’ sessions to get speakers prepared and polished

- AAEP would have a list of topics and potential speakers
  - Organizations and conferences would reach out to request contact information for the speaker(s) and arrangements made directly
  - The organization would provide travel and honorarium as per usual (no cost to AAEP)
- Create and enact a schedule for reviewing previous resources
  - Determine if any updates are required
  - Determine if there any gaps or immediate needs for new resources
  - Track engagement of members through analytics
- Discuss with the Education Programs Committee ideas and opportunities for inclusion of HP topics at various meetings (resort, XP, short courses), microlearning sessions, and an XP dedicated to HP.
- Discuss with the Student Education and Outreach Committee how to incorporate some HP into their speakers bureau content
- Survey of membership at appropriate times to determine needs and desires related to HP committee

#### **Other ideas discussed as potential areas for future committee work:**

- ★ Cookbook (brought to you by the Healthy Practice Committee)
  - Gallop & Go: Quick Eats for Equine Practitioners
  - The Crock and Trot Cookbook
  - Stable Nutrition: Quick & Wholesome Recipes
  - Mane Course: Recipes from Horse Doctors
- ★ Gym/wellness membership support by AAEP partnership
- ★ Spanish course for equine veterinarians
- ★ Podcast topics for “Practice Life”
- ★ Mindfulness as a theme and area of education

#### **Collaborations**

The committee believed that the topics and themes of the HP committee are closely related and may overlap with those of the following committees. We aim to foster meaningful and strategic collaborations to build upon these connections.

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee
- Early Career Committee
- Educational Programs Committee
- Student Education and Outreach Committee
- Emerging Technology Task Force

**Areas Requiring Funding and Staff Resources**

Website and Social Media – website restructure for HP page(s), social media post designs

Branding and Design of presentations

Annual Kickoff Campaign – supplies, advertising, part of a booth?, mail outs

Incentives for Challenge – convention discount, prizes

Reprints of toolkits as deemed appropriate

Honorariums for Webinar speakers

Cookbook printing?

## **SWOT Analysis for HP Committee**

### **Strengths**

Passionate membership, diversity of backgrounds, deep real-world expertise, broad geographic and practice-type reach, cross-committee collaboration, solution-oriented thinking, collaborations with similar associations, respect and visibility of AAEP in the community, can pivot easily and quickly based on community needs (nimble).

### **Weaknesses**

Lack of scientific veterinary-specific data (especially equine), inconsistent and often negative narratives in the veterinary communities, stereotypes, work-life imbalance, information overload, overcommitment, difficulty setting boundaries, and disconnect between academic training and practice reality.

### **Opportunities**

Bridging academia and practice, promoting mentorship and onboarding, elevating emotional intelligence and positive culture, leveraging existing wellness supports, and creatively packaging wellness content for diverse delivery formats.

### **Threats**

Shrinking equine practice workforce (both in practice and academia), status quo bias, lack of confidence in long-term industry sustainability, comparison pressures with other veterinary practice types, underutilization or uptake due to competing time demands of the target audience, and difficulty in measuring impact with existing tools.