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CVMA Recognizes World Suicide Prevention Day on Tuesday, September 10th *Chicago Veterinary Medical Association highlights veterinarians as particularly vulnerable*

World Suicide Prevention Day, observed on September 10th each year, is a day dedicated to raising awareness about suicide and promoting efforts to prevent it. The day aims to provide information and support for those affected by suicidal thoughts or behaviors and to advocate for mental health resources and services.

World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) is organized by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO). The theme for World Suicide Prevention Day for 2024 is "Changing the Narrative on Suicide" with the call to action "Start the Conversation". The Chicago Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) is compelled to bring awareness of this global initiative to prevent suicide and provide individuals with the resources to cope with this pervasive public health crisis.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimated 700,000 people across the world die annually due to suicide. There are many more individuals who attempt suicide or experience suicidal ideation.

Although it is not widely known, the veterinary profession has one of the highest suicide rates compared to many other industries or career paths due to job-related stress. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), female veterinarians are 2.4 times as likely with male veterinarians being 1.6 times as likely to die from suicide compared to the general population.

“CVMA commends the dedication of veterinarians, vet techs and others in a profession that demands not just technical skill but also a huge amount of heart.” said Dr. Marina Jaworsky, CVMA Board President. “The emotional toll of caring for animals, often dealing with difficult decisions and the highs and lows of their health, can

be immense. Encouraging veterinary professionals to prioritize self-care and seek help when needed is essential for their well-being and the quality of care they provide.”

Resources for helping shine a light on World Suicide Prevention Day can be found on the International Association for Suicide Prevention’s website at: www.iasp.info.

If you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide, call, text, or chat 988 to reach the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline for free, immediate and confidential support.

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About the Chicago Veterinary Medical Association: Chicago Veterinary Medical Association is a professional network with a longstanding tradition that connects more than 1,000 veterinarians with comprehensive resources that support their continued development as champions of animal health while encouraging the fostering of the human-animal bond.

About the Chicago Veterinary Medical Foundation: The CVMF, established in 2009, is a 501^(c)(3) charity that works with Chicagoland veterinarians to provide financial assistance to pet families in need by helping with the costs of their pet’s urgent, unexpected medical and surgical bills. The Foundation’s work plays a vital role in strengthening the human-animal bond by helping sick and suffering pets get well again.