

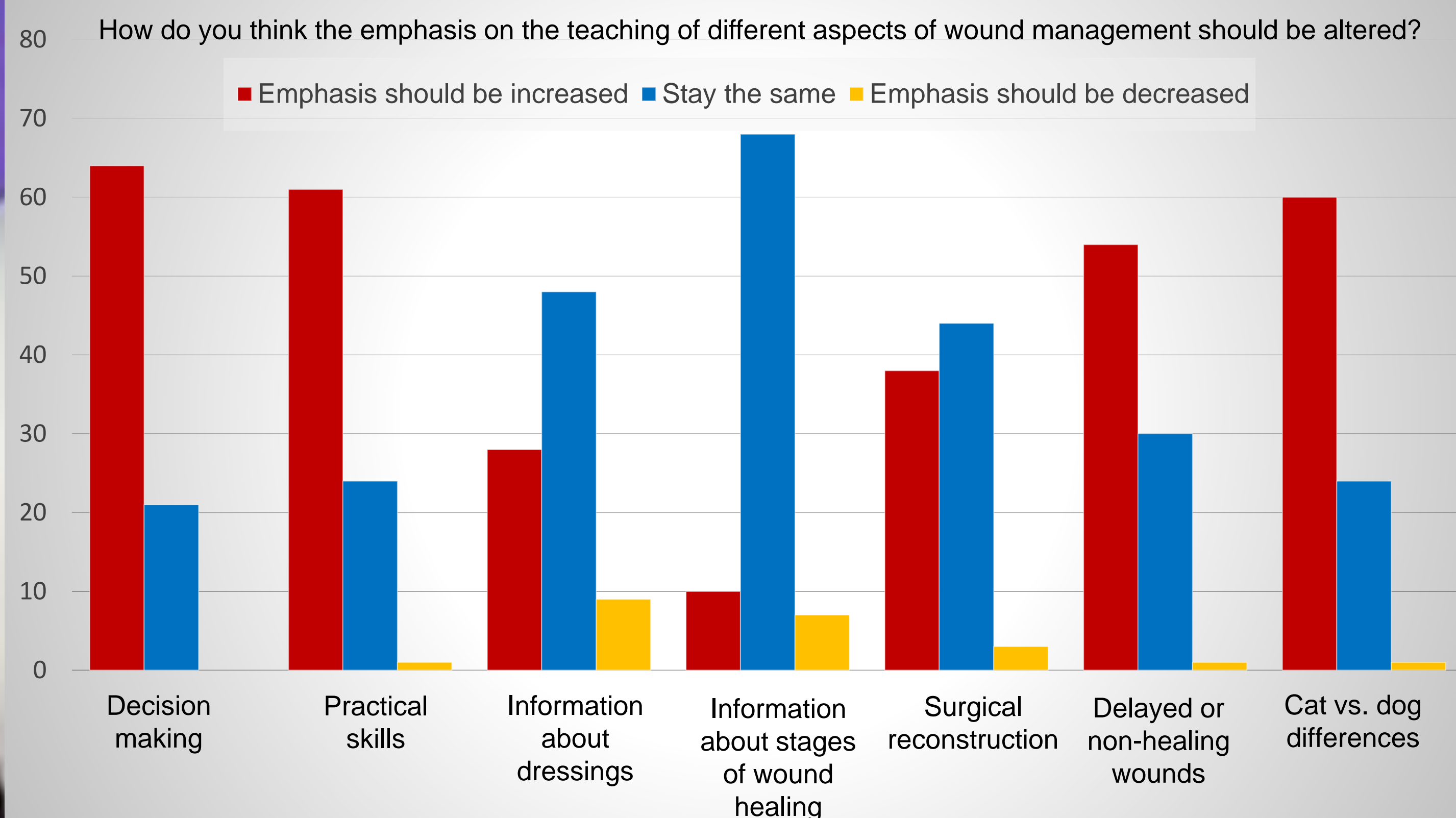
The development of e-learning and clinical skills resources to improve the teaching and learning of small animal wound management

Background and context

The ability to manage wounds is a key attribute for recent veterinary graduates entering first opinion practice. Traditionally, wound management is taught didactically in the Department of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Cambridge. A student elective project was undertaken to improve the learning experience.

Innovation

Clinical students and recent graduates were surveyed about the current teaching method. 63 per cent of respondents felt that an insufficient amount of time was dedicated to the topic, with the majority stating that they would like an increased emphasis on decision making and practical skills, as shown in figure 1. below.



In response, new resources were created, using an integrated approach of e-learning modules and practical skills exercises. E-learning has previously been well received as a teaching method in veterinary medicine¹ and practical skills exercises are well utilised by students in the Pauline Brown Clinical Skills Centre².

Five different clinical scenarios were designed to reflect common wound presentations in first opinion practice; these consisted of a shearing injury, a cat collar wound, a laceration, a chronic wound and a burn. Figure 2. shows the burn case presentation.



A four year old MN Weimeraner presents with an adverse reaction to a spot-on pyrethroid administered the previous day. There is a rapid onset chemical burn present on the dog's dorsum.

Figure 2.

The cases are presented in a quiz format, with key concepts and further supporting information given where appropriate. Figure 3. gives an example of one of the questions; the blue text indicates where hyperlinks to supporting information are available.

Which of these options is most appropriate for initial management? Refer to [this chart](#) if you are unsure of which dressings can be used in which phases of wound healing.

Select one:

- Surgical debridement and primary closure
- [Wet-to-dry](#) dressings with daily changes
- Dressing with an [alginate](#) as a primary layer and a [foam dressing](#) as a secondary layer
- Dressing with [honey](#) as a primary layer and a [foam dressing](#) as a secondary layer
- Surgical reconstruction with a local skin flap

Figure 3.

The practical skills exercises are incorporated, by encouraging students to practise the clinical skills encountered in each case. This includes tie-over dressings, for which an illustrated instruction booklet was created. Figure 4. shows an excerpt from this booklet.



Tie the two ends of nylon tape together. The dressing should be secure on the wound but not under high pressure, as shown in the illustration, left.

Figure 4.

References

- Bernkopf, M., Franz, S. and Baumgartner W. 2010. Experiences with a blended learning course for clinical veterinary education at the University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna, Austria. *Tierärztliche Praxis Großtiere*. 2010; 38 (2): 99-108.
- Wager, C.J. and Brearley, J.C., 2016. What happens when you open a purpose built Clinical Skills Centre in an established vet school and allows students 24 hour access to it? *VetEd International Symposium of the Veterinary Schools Council* 2016