

# THE DIAGNOSTIC CHALLENGE FOR A VETERINARIAN

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Veterinarians are the best diagnosticians since they depend on direct leads from their patient's body than his /her minds interpretation of it. It is both strength and weakness. Technology including biotechnology has given tremendous scope to improve upon the senses which the vet puts to excellent use while reasoning out a disease.

However gadgets can only supplement the human mind, they can't supplant it. The fastest computer remains the proverbial tortoise to before the *Harish* human mind. Technology is perceived the stand alone winner only when the hare is asleep.

I would propose that the challenge at the veterinary services scale is to rightsize the technology for our need and use. Mind less acquisition of high value and high maintenance gadgets-be it ultrasound or nucleotide probes-would only expose human minds unable to interpret and use the output rationally.

The challenge for the profession is to create that superior mind which seeks and acquires its requisite gadget. Many a time the simplest gadget-say a stethoscope-used properly and at scale may be beneficial than say ultrasound at all district centres.

It should also be remembered that there is no substitute to quality. There is often a tendency amongst us to depreciate our practice citing lack

of resources. The last 7 months in the animal production sector showed me that if there is anything in plenty they are the resources. Financial constraints need not deny anything to a field veterinarian. Imaginative proposals, good writing of proposals and cogently maintained working are all that are required.

A project to create a superior diagnostic state level clinic in Trivandrum at a cost of Rs 50 Million is placed before the planning board for the year 2006-7. It will bring together the state of the art in the field of veterinary diagnostics and it will be a proud possession the state can show any visiting veterinarian from any part of the world. There should not be a known disease agent that can't be identified categorically and treated. Together with the NDDB assisted Goreskha project, the VBI Palode, ADDL, RDDDL network and the State Livestock Products Lab Cochin this will provide critical infrastructure for the field vet in chasing his disease agents away.

He will however need to be industrious, positive, energetic, thinking and over and above all a go-getter. Any diagnostic system is subservient to the speed of the human mind chasing the result and will only be fast as it works. Mind -Gadget marriage is the need of the hour and I hope that this special number of the JIVA provides new perspectives on the same.

I congratulate the organizers and wish the journal all the best.