

Nutrition Resource Has New VMTH Headquarters

The school's Nutrition Service moved last September into a renovated, custom-designed facility at the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital (VMTH).

The Nutrition Support Center, funded in part by the Nestlé Purina PetCare Company, combines the retail sector with the veterinary medical sector. It is designed as an integrated space to store and manage food for VMTH patients, consult on client cases, and teach clinical nutrition. It also facilitates clinical solutions, nutrition research, product display and accessibility, inventory management, and student exposure to the wide variety of available products.

"We believe veterinarians have the power of nutrition to really make a difference in their patients. Through this

center, veterinary students have the power of nutrition at their fingertips," says Dr. Aine McCarthy, director of professional communications for Nestlé Purina PetCare. "UC Davis has the largest nutrition support service in the country, and we're proud to be a partner in that."

The new center integrates all the essential elements: a kitchen for mixing diets; space for storage racks and dispensers to keep food fresh, pest-free, and easily accessible; a clinical nutrition technician; and a computer system with custom PDA (personal digital assistant)-based software that utilizes scanning technology, bar code printing, and inventory software that can generate replenishment orders. It also houses an office for nutrition residents, an education center with computer terminals and a small library.

Dr. Andrea Fascetti, chief of the Nutrition Service, says, "The facility has increased our visibility in the VMTH—both formal and informal nutrition consultations have increased. There is now more input and assistance for nutritional therapy, which helps both the patients and teaching program."

The logistics of the nutrition center have allowed the VMTH to stock a greater variety of food products. It's important to have a range of diets and be able to use different approaches to disease processes, says Dr. Fascetti.

The Nutrition Service comprises both the Nutrition Clinic and Nutrition Support Service.

The Nutrition Clinic offers VMTH appointments with board-certified nutritionists and residents to solve problems such as obesity, recommend alternative diet approaches, and pro-

Right: A ribbon cutting ceremony, led by Dean Bennie Osburn, Nutrition Service Chief Andrea Fascetti and Purina representative Aine McCarthy, heralded the opening of the Nutrition Support Center on the second floor of the VMTH.



In its clinical setting, the Nutrition Support Center is an ideal place to teach clinical nutrition and to consult on cases where nutrition may play a vital role in an animal's recovery.



Above: Clinical nutrition technician Stefanie Oppenheim uses a PDA scanner to check inventory of commercial pet food stocks. A computer system with custom software integrates all aspects of managing food supplies for thousands of VMTH client animals, including tracking and restocking pet foods and ingredients for special diets.



Left: Resident veterinarian Sean Delaney and fourth-year veterinary student Lisa Szeto mix a custom diet for a VMTH patient who needs a high-calorie, low-volume diet that must be administered through a feeding tube.

