DAVE&CHERYL DUFFIELD FOUNDATION

Shelter Assessment Report

Assessment of the Nevada Humane Society, with two locations, located in Reno, NV, and Carson City, NV. A nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization, Incorporated in 1932, was created to address the suffering of local stray animals. In 2007, the Board of Directors changed the organization's mission to one of lifesaving, promoting animal welfare while finding homes and providing care for homeless pets in Northern Nevada.

June 2022

The Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation and its program Maddie's Pet Project of Nevada (MPPNV):

Workday co-founder Dave Duffield and his wife, Cheryl, created the animal welfare foundation Maddie's Fund® in 1994. In 2016 the Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation was formed, building on 25+ years of philanthropic work as it expanded to include other areas of focus. With a background in business entrepreneurship, our founders give back by tackling big initiatives through an innovative lens to develop transformational programs and services.

Support for veterans and companion animals and groups that serve others unconditionally are the signature focus areas for the Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation. The Foundation and founders have also supported a variety of public service initiatives, ranging from investments in higher education institutions and public high schools to strengthening their local community youth, health, and safety programs.

Maddie's Pet Project of Nevada, a program of the Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation, is committed to revolutionizing the status and well-being of dogs and cats in the state of Nevada. By supporting organizations with strong leadership, progressive thinking, and a willingness to put families first, MPPNV will make Nevada a model state for animal welfare. As the sheltering world evolves, MPPNV will also evolve. As new metrics are adopted, we will pivot to ensure that the most relevant information is being collected to make the greatest impact for dogs and cats in our state. We will work to provide a safety net for dogs and cats in each county in Nevada by promoting community engagement and elevating our local leaders to be the absolute best animal welfare has to offer.

Mission: Revolutionize the status and well-being of dogs and cats in Nevada.

Strategic Goals:
1. To Develop Professional and Strategic Animal Welfare Leaders in Nevada
2. To Keep Nevada's Pets and People Together
3. To Provide a Safety Net for Nevada's Dogs and Cats

Report Development & Assessment

This report was prepared by James Pumphrey, an external consultant and Director of Maddie's Pet Project of Nevada, who led the assessment, and Kimberly Pickens, Foundation Program Specialist for DCDF.

Acknowledgment

The assessment team is grateful for the support provided by the Nevada Humane Society Board of Directors and the Executive team, who invited the Dave and Cheryl Foundation - Maddie's Pet Project of Nevada team to complete the assessment. The assessment team is incredibly grateful for the expertise and planning provided by Greg Hall, who worked as our point person for scheduling the assessment. Warm thanks to the Nevada Humane Society staff and volunteers for their cooperation throughout the shelter assessment process.

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INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical role of capacity in allowing organizations to function safely and effectively. As human hospitals and ICUs neared capacity, emergency measures were taken to attempt to stem the tide of incoming patients. Despite these efforts, in many regions, the number of patients exceeded hospitals' physical and staffing capacity during the peak of the pandemic. Patient care suffered, and lives were lost. Increased staff burnout and resultant turnover exacerbated these issues and delayed full recovery at the organizational level.

Historically, operating at or beyond capacity has been an accepted norm or even an explicit expectation for many animal shelters in North America. Shelters were given little opportunity to match the number of animals admitted to the shelter with the availability of appropriate housing or adequate staffing for care. Most shelters operated with little or no reserve to accommodate emergencies that predictably occurred, such as responses to natural disasters or large hoarding cases. Just as in hospitals, the result was compromises to safety, welfare, health, and in some cases, needless loss of animal lives.

Paradoxically, while the pandemic resulted in strained capacity in many sectors, many animal shelters were able to alter operations to operate within capacity for the first time. Shelters retooled intake and outcome policies and processes to prioritize the safety of the staff and surrounding communities. The focus shifted to providing, whenever possible, safety net services for healthy animals better served by staying in the community. Shelter intake was reserved for animals that were sick, injured, endangered, or dangerous. The result was a higher level of care for animals within the shelter while also providing resources more widely for the community. Staff morale improved despite the many ongoing challenges presented by the pandemic. While achieved under the circumstances of a pandemic, many shelters recognized that working within their capacity maximizes lifesaving, leads to the efficient use of resources, and improves the health and welfare of both animals and staff.

As pandemic restrictions lift, our strong recommendation is that shelters maintain the policies and procedures that allow shelters to work within their capacity for care. There are several strategies before entry to the shelter, during a shelter stay, and facilitating placement that help achieve this goal. These include:

1. Coordinated Entry/Care -
      a. Leave animals in place when shelter intervention is unnecessary
      b. Return of animals in the field by both ACOs and the public
      c. Provide access to veterinary and behavioral care
      d. Encourage the use of self-rehoming resources for owners, such as Home-to-Home
      e. Strengthen lost and found programs
      f. Utilize strategic scheduling of intake
      g. Remain accessible as a community resource

2. Pathway Planning -
      a. Identify appropriate pathways at intake
      b. Develop daily rounds to review outcome plan and welfare for every animal
      c. Establish daily monitoring protocols
      d. Maximize housing choices within the shelter

    e. Avoid wasted time by minimizing flow through bottlenecks

3. Remove barriers to outcomes-
    a. Prioritize return-to-home and communicate the goal of reunification widely within the community
    b. Implement open adoptions culture
    c. Expand foster base and facilitate adoption from foster

Implementing these programs allows shelters to operate within capacity, deliver an elevated level of service to their constituents, and facilitate long-term cost savings for the community. Shelters functioning as a resource center and support network drive healthy relationships and benefit all community members. Shelters were given the opportunity to shift their role, and the resulting impacts on staff, animals, and the public were astounding. We support these continued efforts.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During February 24-25, an organizational and operational assessment was completed by James Pumphrey, Director of Maddie's Pet Project of Nevada, and Kimberly Pickens, Program Specialist for Maddie's Pet Project of Nevada, in collaboration with Dr. Kate Hurley, DVM, MPVM and Program Director for UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program and Dr. Cynthia Karsten, DVM and Outreach Veterinarian for UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program.

This assessment partnership is part of an initiative by the Dave and Cheryl Duffield Foundation in collaboration with the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine program to provide support for animal welfare organizations providing sheltering services. The goal of the consultation is to provide recommendations and training that will further support the Nevada Humane Society on the path to becoming a model of excellence in progressive animal sheltering.

Prior to the onsite assessment, the Nevada State Statute, local ordinances, state-wide data, shelter statistics, and complaints from local community members were reviewed. Consultants met with the executive leadership team to discuss the primary concerns and discuss the assessment process in advance. The consultants found the executive leadership to be forthright and transparent throughout the assessment process. The consulting team met with:

- o Greg Hall – Chief Executive Officer
- o Chelsea Sladek – Community Services Director
- o Emily Lancione – Animal Care Director
- o Nicole Theodoulou – Marketing and Communications Director
- o Kristen Saibini – Development Director
- o Clay Johnson – Carson City Shelter Manager
- o Rebecca Goff – Clinic Manager
- o Brenna Rose – Human Resources Manager
- o Cherry Hastings – Cat Care Manager
- o Jack Mccreary – Facilities Manager
- o Pryce Scott – Community Cats Coordinator

During the visit, the assessment team observed daily practices at the shelter and observed/interviewed various staff.

This report serves to identify opportunities to help keep pets and people together, implement high-quality animal welfare/care practices, streamline operations, eliminate wastefulness of and reallocate resources, enhance collaborative efforts, create thriving and resilient workplace culture, and provide a vision for a community-centered approach to sheltering. Like many caregiving fields, animal sheltering has undergone an evolution of industry standards and acceptable norms.

Areas of improvement were identified during the assessment; however, these areas are commonly seen in most animal shelters in our country.

The assessment team takes a forward-looking animal sheltering view best articulated by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Shelter Medicine Program:

"We envision a shelter that is a resource for pet owners in the community, a place for assistance, advice, and compassion. Positive approaches to animal control offer community members assistance to correct an underlying problem (e.g., a hole in a fence or a broken gate). As a result, compliance with laws is improved, and people are supported to be better pet owners. Animals would come to the shelter only when no other alternative is available. The model shelter envisioned maximizes lifesaving potential through efficient use of resources, while supporting and engaging animal caregivers in the community and providing a safety net for animals who are temporarily without a home or in need of assistance. Animal care within the shelter prioritizes animal well-being, limiting stress, and reducing exposure to infectious disease."

"Progressive animal sheltering recognizes that an animal shelter is not the best place for an animal to stay, so strategies are selected that focus on stabilizing communities and animal caregivers, keeping pets in their existing homes, or efficiently finding new homes whenever necessary and appropriate. Keeping pets in homes and out of the shelter means there are fewer animals who need care and rehoming, and each animal spends only as long as needed in shelter care..."

"Efficient movement through the shelter means less risk of illness or behavioral problems. Decreasing length of stay in shelters supports physical and behavioral health and contributes to decreases in daily population, which helps the shelter to operate within their capacity for care. Functioning beyond capacity for care is associated with poor health, creating an unhealthy cycle of crowding and disease. Having fewer [animals] to care for improves the ability to provide care that truly meets the needs of the animals. Providing care that truly meets the needs of animals protects behavioral and physical well-being."

Recommendations for Nevada Humane Society focus on three primary approaches to accomplish those objectives:
1. Reduce the number of animals admitted to the shelter to only those who need sheltering, e.g., the injured, dangerous, legally required, and those who are truly in need of a new home.
    a) NACA Guideline on Appointment-Based Pet Intake into Shelters | National Animal Care & Control Association (nacanet.org)
    b) Animal Control Intake of Free-Roaming Cats | National Animal Care & Control Association (nacanet.org)
2. Reduce the length of stay for animals in the shelter by removing internal barriers to transfer, adoption, foster, reclaim, and return to field.
3. Increase the quality of housing, care, and welfare provided to animals during their stay in the shelter to improve the well-being of both animals and staff alike. Create minimal mental and physical health standards organization-wide from intake to outcome.

All recommendations are aligned with industry best practice standards shared by national animal organizations, including the Association of Shelter Veterinarians, Million Cat Challenge, Maddie's Million Pet Challenge, the National Animal Control Association (NACA), the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), Maddie's Fund, Association of Animal Welfare Advancement (AAWA), and the American Society of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).

The recommendations described in this report will result in fewer animals in the shelter with lower lengths of stay, space for humane housing, and opportunities to provide proper environmental enrichment for all shelter animals. This, in turn, will create a high-quality environment for all shelter animals and people.

FUNDAMENTALS OF EFFECTIVE SHELTERING
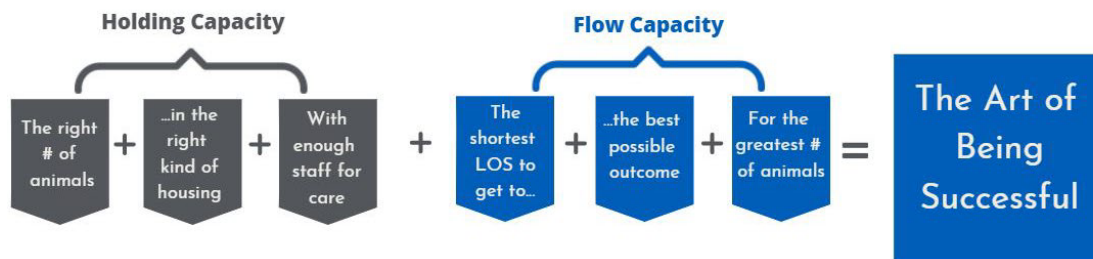
To offer the best possible outcome for the animals within shelters, we need to address the holding capacity and flow through capacity to ensure we successfully reach the most appropriate outcome for each individual animal in the optimal amount of time.

To achieve this state, we need to optimize the number of animals in our care at any given time by providing high-quality housing and ensuring there is enough trained staff to care for them. This will provide the shortest length of stay, offering the best possible outcome for the most substantial number of animals.

Capacity for Care

As defined by Michigan Humane, Capacity for Care is "an organization's capacity for care refers to its ability to effectively and humanely care for each animal while ensuring the health and well-being of all animals in its care. It is the limit to which an organization can provide humane, sanitary, and appropriate care for the animals it is charged with within the walls of its facility."

Capacity for care impacts an organization's ability to function at the appropriate level of quality and volume. The number of cages or staff does not define an organization's capacity but an aggregate of all resources that impact services provided. These resources include, but are not limited to, skilled staff hours, including veterinarians, veterinarian technicians, behavior experts, customer service, and care technicians. Additional resources include medical equipment, supplies, facility maintenance, and information technology systems. These elements determine how many animals and customers an organization can provide care and services to at any given time.

To provide an example, ABC Animal Shelter has a capacity for care of 350 animals (this is a fluid number depending on resources required for each individual animal; e.g., medical cases requiring more significant resources) and means ABC Animal Shelter is resourced for each individual animal and can provide high-quality care for 350 animals or fewer. If ABC Animal Shelter exceeds 350 animals, even by 1 additional animal, the organization will compromise the integrity and effectiveness of the care provided not only for the additional animals but also for the animals already in their care.

Capacity for care is the fundamental building block of an organization's ability to serve their communities population of animals and influences the ability to provide a humane place for animals and those who care for them. Be it 1 or 100 animals over an organization's capacity for care, the result is the

same, a degrading of the integrity of an organization's quality of care and the potential for harm caused to animals in the organization's care.

Two critical factors directly and continually influence the capacity for care:
1. **The rate and condition in which animals are entering the organization.** The animal's condition determines the extent and length of time we utilize our care services for that animal. A "healthy" animal, who is immediately ready to be adopted, may only be in our care for a few days. Compared with a "treatable" animal, which is not immediately adoptable and requires more significant care and treatment before it is ready to be placed into a new home and, therefore, has a more substantial impact on our capacity for care. The spectrum of treatable animals is quite broad, ranging from minor issues that may require a couple of weeks of additional care to severe ailments that require months of rehabilitation and thousands of dollars in medical expense.
2. **The length of stay of animals who enter the organization from intake to outcome to achieve their most appropriate outcome.** Determining the target average length of stay per animal based on their presenting condition is critical for achieving and maintaining an organization's capacity for care. For example, an average Length of Stay of 3 days for half the population would afford the other half a 9-day length of stay bringing the organization's average house population to 50-300 animals.

The Association of Shelter Veterinarians Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters (ASV Guidelines) is considered the Gold Standard with the understanding that resources vary between shelters. However, a baseline of standards called The Five Freedoms must be met with respect to animal care and husbandry. <u>The Association of Shelter Veterinarian's Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters warns</u>: ***"Every sheltering organization has a maximum capacity for care, and the population in their care must not exceed that level."***

The "Five Freedoms" that follow have served as strong guiding principles within animal welfare for decades. The Five Freedoms serve to effectively measure the quality and effectiveness of animal sheltering, helping shape capacity for care. They are as follows:

Five Freedoms+
1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
    o By ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain health and vigor
2. Freedom from discomfort
    o By providing an appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area
3. Freedom from pain, injury, and disease
    o By prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment
4. Freedom to express normal and natural behavior
    o By providing sufficient space, proper facilities, and the company of the animal's own kind
5. Freedom from fear and distress
    o By ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering

+6. Freedom to the most appropriate outcome
    • In the optimal amount of time for every single animal.

Assuring capacity for care also supports success in meeting a Sixth Freedom, the freedom for the most appropriate outcome for each individual animal. Providing high-quality housing and minimizing the length of stay through proactive management are two critical factors in assuring capacity for care for every animal in the shelter.

Five Freedoms+
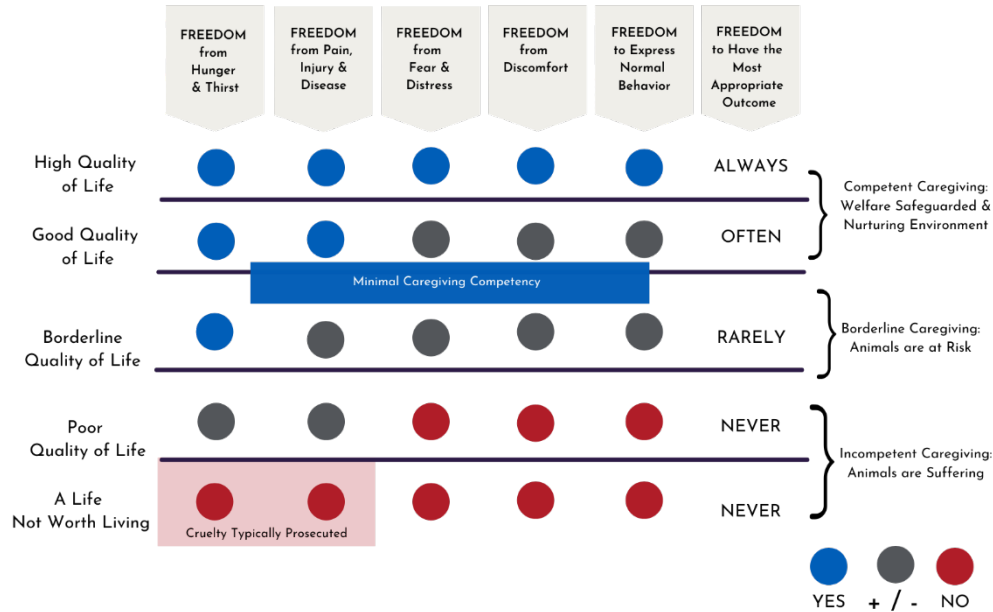
INTRODUCTION

We would like to preface this report by thanking the entire staff at Nevada Humane Society. The assessment team was greeted with smiles in the hallways, engaging questions, and a team that diligently cared for animals. The staff answered our questions and accommodated our request for additional materials to aid our assessment.

Nevada Humane Society is to be commended for doing excellent work. The staff's commitment to the animals is apparent in their daily care, handling, and excitement to learn and grow as a team.

It is crucial to understand that the Nevada Humane Society is contracted to provide sheltering services for jurisdictions in the Reno and Carson City areas. Contractually, the Nevada Humane Society receives animals from Washoe County Regional Animal Services and has limited control over this influx. Animal control policies on the management of free-roaming cats, impoundment fees, and punitive approaches to resolving animal conflicts are the primary cause of the underlying challenges contracted shelters are presented with when attempting to provide high-quality animal care and community-centered services.

Elected officials must be engaged to reimagine animal control services. Outdated, ineffective, and counterproductive policies that, while well-intended, have failed to respond to the community's needs must be replaced with new models of proactive policies that seek to keep animals where they are versus entering the shelter system. The assessment team endorses two statements released by the National Association Animal Control Association on appointment-based intake into shelters and shelter intake of free-roaming cats:

"Given the numerous harms and risks associated with unscheduled intake, we recommend all animal shelters replace this practice with an appointment-based system that includes individual assessment and a case management approach for all non-emergency requests." Read the full statement about appointment-based intake on NACA's website

"It is the position of NACA that indiscriminate pick up or admission of healthy, free-roaming cats, regardless of temperament, for any purpose other than TNR/SNR, fails to serve commonly held goals of community animal management and protection programs and, as such, is a misuse of time and public funds and should be avoided." Read the full statement about free-roaming cats on NACA's website."

The historical improvement in reducing length of stay and decreasing the volume of animals admitted to the shelter is commendable and steadily improves year after year. However, intake procedures and policies directly influence the pathway planning and length of stay.

Some of our recommendations require immediate resolution. Others require near-term goal setting and implementation. Certain goals will require more time and dedication to achieve over an extended period.

BACKGROUND/ANIMAL DATA

2021 Total intake: 7,480
Average Length of Stay: 16.72
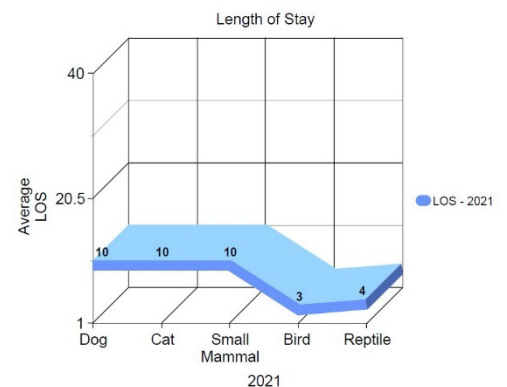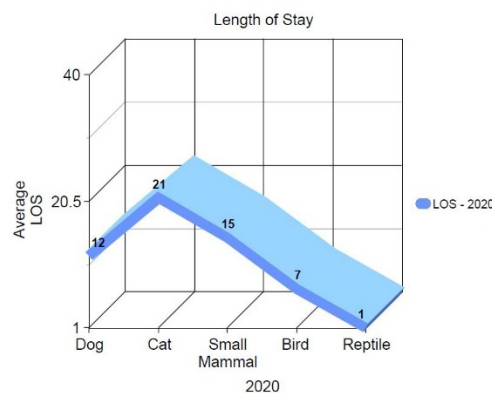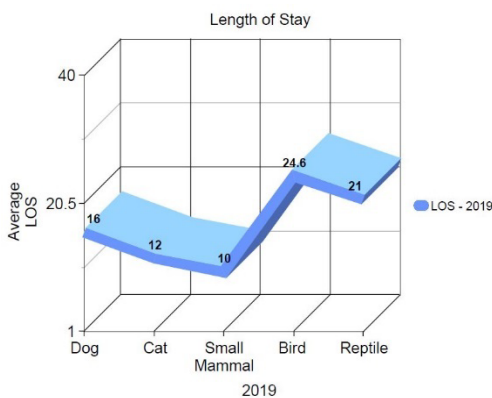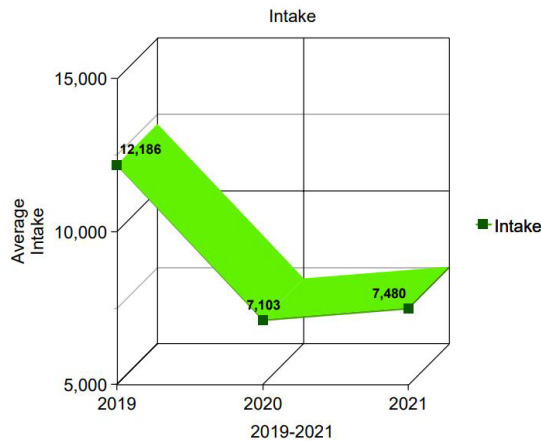
RECOMMENDATIONS
Essential Recommendations

1. **Coordinated Entry System** - Admission that is appointment-based and aligned with a shelter's capacity for care ensures that high-quality animal care can be offered. "Animals and people are better served when intake is matched with capacity for care and the ability to assure an appropriate outcome for each animal within a reasonable time frame. Utilizing an online appointment software to "shape the path" by providing an accessible tool for the community is a great asset to achieving this goal. An online appointment system automates and makes the admission schedule predictable for staff.

2. **Community Cats -** Healthy free-roaming cats should be returned to the field/home as the default decision. Trapping of healthy cats should be ceased for the foreseeable future. Outreach-based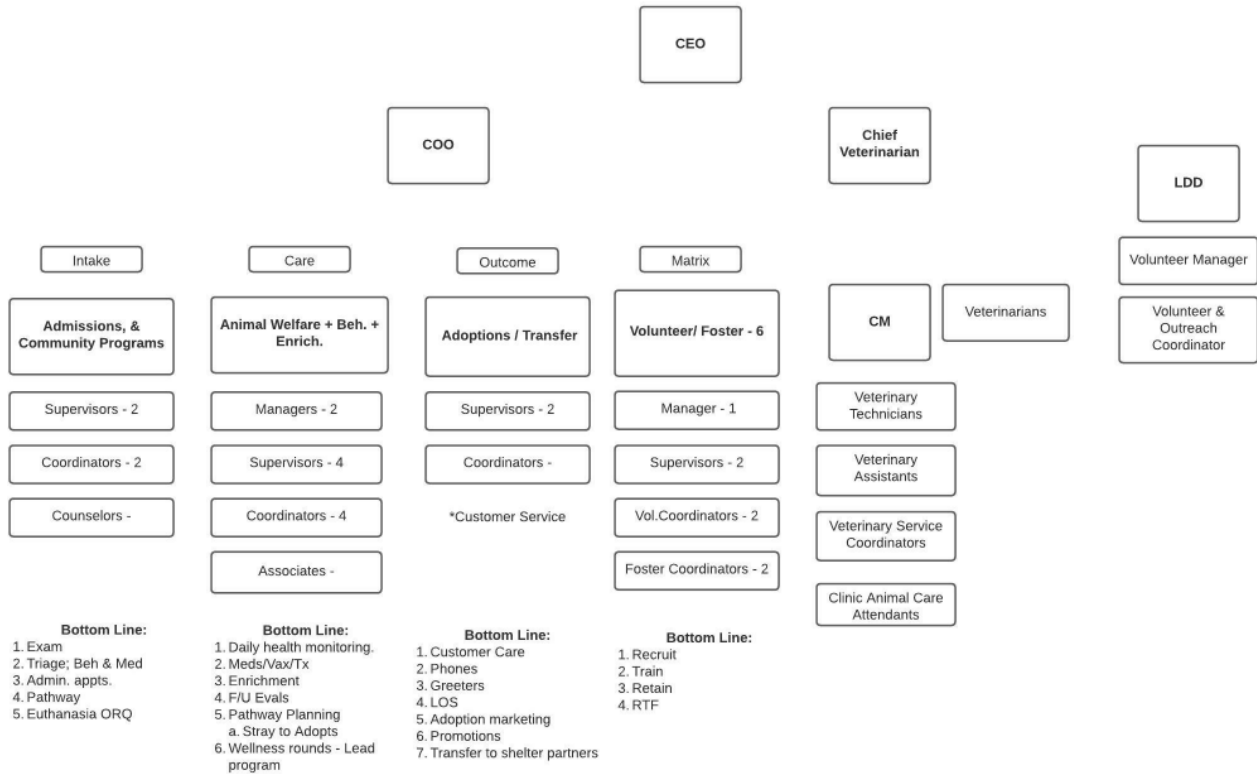 community cat programs require adequate spay/neuter capabilities when alignment on surgical scheduling can be conducted. All support and services we offer should be rooted in our capabilities and capacity. Scaling surgical capabilities and scheduling is the first step to building a large-scale community cat program. This is beyond the scope and capabilities of the organization currently. Nevada Humane Society should alternatively be focused on increasing the effectiveness of a return-to-field/return-to-home approach to managing free-roaming cats brought to their facility and engaging with their jurisdictions to decrease the number of cats trapped by NHS and animal control departments.

3. **Facility Redux –** There is a significant amount of underutilized space and pain points, including staff offices/workspaces, the underuse of kennels, the opportunity to expand kennels, and the small clinic space. As animal welfare professionals, we need to offer the most comfortable housing possible for shelter pets to reduce FAS and allow those animals to be afforded the Five Freedoms +. Also, as animal welfare professionals, we need to provide our staff with the conditions that will enable them to achieve the organization's goals while maintaining their own welfare.

4. **Organizational Restructure -** Having the right people in the right roles is essential to a highly effective team. Proper management to staff ratio is critical for guidance and oversight. Functional workflow departments based on pathway planning will enhance the organization's ability to avoid a silo effect and encourage collaboration. We recommend having 2 managers and 2 supervisors in the animal care, intake, foster, and community services departments.

CEO

COO   Chief Veterinarian   LDD

Intake	Care	Outcome	Matrix		Volunteer Manager
Admissions, & Community Programs	Animal Welfare + Beh. + Enrich.	Adoptions / Transfer	Volunteer/ Foster - 6	CM Veterinarians	Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator
Supervisors - 2	Managers - 2	Supervisors - 2	Manager - 1	Veterinary Technicians	
Coordinators - 2	Supervisors - 4	Coordinators -	Supervisors - 2	Veterinary Assistants	
Counselors -	Coordinators - 4	*Customer Service	Vol.Coordinators - 2	Veterinary Service Coordinators	
	Associates -		Foster Coordinators - 2	Clinic Animal Care Attendants	

Bottom Line:
1. Exam
2. Triage; Beh & Med
3. Admin. appts.
4. Pathway
5. Euthanasia ORQ

Bottom Line:
1. Daily health monitoring.
2. Meds/Vax/Tx
3. Enrichment
4. F/U Evals
5. Pathway Planning
  a. Stray to Adopts
6. Wellness rounds - Lead program

Bottom Line:
1. Customer Care
2. Phones
3. Greeters
4. LOS
5. Adoption marketing
6. Promotions
7. Transfer to shelter partners

Bottom Line:
1. Recruit
2. Train
3. Retain
4. RTF

Organizational Structure

Staffing & Departments

Staffing requirements depend directly on the daily population of animals in the shelter. In our recommendations for NHS, we project a much lower daily population, achieved through open adoptions, return-to-field/return-to-home, and a coordinated entry system. Because we foresee this substantial reduction in population, an outline of ideal staffing needs for every department has not been included since these will fluctuate with time; however, we have made recommendations based on the current situation and immediate goals.

Strengths–

1. The staff at NHS is a developing team working together to help the people and animals of Washoe County and Carson City. Overwhelmingly staff are doing their jobs to the best of their abilities and are working to define clear expectations and responsibilities.

Opportunities for Improvement: Staffing and Development–

1. Realign programs and workgroups into 3 specific functional categories, including Intake, Care, and Outcome (pictured above). Each workgroup must be accountable and responsible for moving animals through the shelter cooperatively and collaboratively.
2. Develop to expand emotional intelligence and resilient work teams by creating a work culture agreement. Devote resources to developing the leadership team on change management, adaptive leadership, competency-based education, and continual feedback.
   a) Recommended readings include:
      - *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* by Daniel Coleman
      - *Switch: How to change things when change is hard* by Chip Heath and Dan Heath
      - *Radical Candor* by Kim Scott

3. Develop clearly defined roles, workgroups, and department bottom lines:
    a) This process allows the management team to make decisions based on the Five Freedoms+ and removes the burden from potentially untrained or inappropriate staff. Define departments' bottom lines by getting back to the essential functions of your department or program and shift your mindset to quality over quantity.
4. Hire a second facility employee with knowledge of facility maintenance, mechanical experience, and people skills. The facility is too large to only have one facility employee.
5. Hire a leadership and development team to focus on onboarding training, continued staff training, leadership development, and employee retention.
6. Provide competency-based staff training on the following Core Functions:
    a) Intake
    b) Vaccine/Medication
    c) Sanitation
    d) Examination
    e) Health Monitoring
    f) Fear Free
    g) Communication & Customer Care
    h) Organizational Culture
    i) Shelter Medicine Course (for Veterinary Services staff).

Opportunities for Improvement: Organizational Structure

Organizational Chart Update
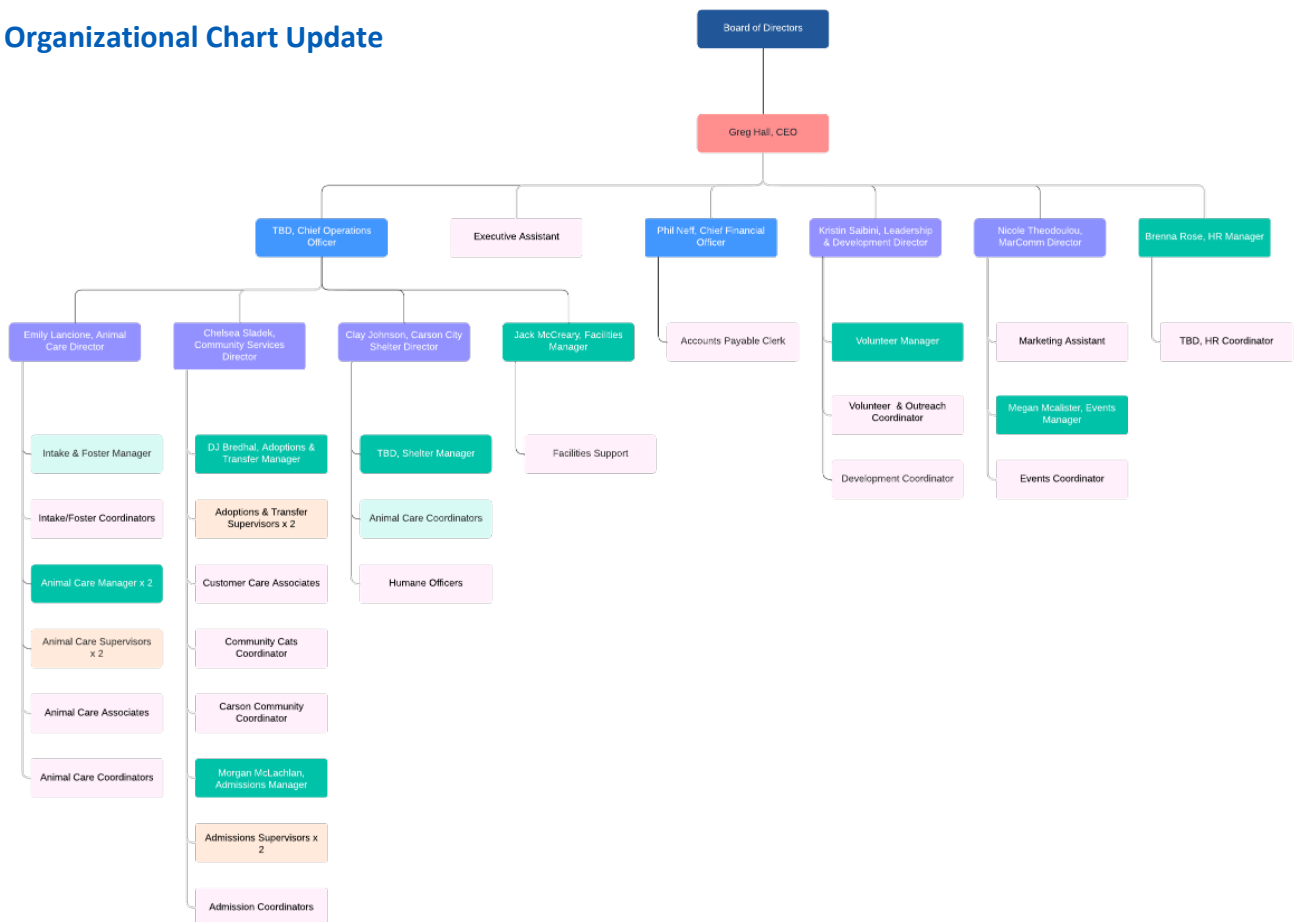
Development & Learning

We must constantly innovate and evolve to stay current for animal welfare organizations to succeed. Remaining sharp and relevant allows our teams to grow their skill sets continuously. Commitment to competency-based education can scale your organization and create a valuable investment. We recommend that a position or internal program be designed to address the NHS team's onboarding training needs and continuing education needs. Creating a culture of continual learning is an essential short- and long-term investment in the organization's health and vitality. Increasing staff retention and professional knowledge will help to ensure that organizational capacity grows accordingly. Strategically investing first in staff development will allow other strategic goals to succeed. We highly recommend salary reviews & bands for all positions in relation to the animal welfare field and, more importantly, for market-based comparable outside the nonprofit sector.

Intake

Admissions

A shelter that serves as a safety net for only those animals who truly need emergency housing, immediate care, and/or a new home has fewer animals in the shelter, and thus providing excellent care becomes more attainable. Proactively promoting services and resources that allow owners to keep their animals will help reduce the shelter's population and will strengthen NHS's relationship with their community. By requiring appointments, for those surrendering their animals, you will demonstrate a commitment to ensuring each animal receives optimal care and that their stay at the shelter will be as short as possible. Maintaining the philosophy that intake should be the last resort is important.

Strengths:
1. Exams, checkups, vaccines, and evaluations start immediately upon intake.
2. After intake, the animal is placed in the kennel they will remain in until adoption.
3. Every animal does not receive a behavior evaluation unless there is an obvious problem.
4. There is no pass or fail regarding the evaluations; Resources are utilized before making a final decision.

Opportunities for Improvement:
1. Review and implement the NACA statements regarding the NACA Guideline On Appointment-Based Pet Intake Into Shelters & Animal Control Intake of Free-Roaming Cats.
2. Review contracts with animal control and ensure alignment and interpretation. Define what a "no" to the county looks like, and have documentation to support your decision. Sometimes what we believe the contract says is unclear when the contract is reviewed directly and the interpretation is made clear.
3. Provide resources to have successful transitions for people and their pets.
   a) Provide follow-up calls to adopters 1 week, 30 days, 60 days, and 90 days out.
   b) Develop a Community outreach and pet owner support program.
4. Implement the pet evaluation matrix. Discuss with owners at the time of their appointment the realistic options available for their pet. Animals with conditions outside of the organization's capacity for care or capabilities should be offered alternative services other than admitting the animal into the shelter system. Provide owners with helpful, transparent information so that they can make informed decisions for their pets.

5. Engage in honest and transparent conversations when an animal has a medical or behavioral condition that exceeds the shelter's ability to treat. Adoption criteria should be clearly explained to owners, and entry into this program should be reserved for those whose health/behavior statuses are within healthy/treatable conditions.
6. Review and discuss surrender paperwork with owners.
     a) Evaluate the animal individually, both medically and behaviorally, at the time of intake.
7. Encourage supported self-rehoming. Ask people who need to surrender their pets to utilize a supported self-rehoming platform, like Rehome by Adopt-a-Pet or Home-to-Home, instead of bringing them to the shelter.
8. Change your narrative to the public and rescue groups about contracts and intakes.
     a) When all appointments are booked, it is crucial to recognize that you are not saying "no" to people but instead simply saying "not now" or "not today".
     b) Staff should be authorized to admit an animal without an appointment when needed and in the animal's best interest.
9. The intake area should be welcoming. Make the space a little more inviting with comfortable seating and artwork of families with their pets.
10. Remove the overnight kennels in the intake area and repurpose that space into two intake/exam rooms.
11. Perform a behavior & medical triage - Define emergencies based on the animal's condition with a narrow definition of true animal emergencies: institute requirements and justifications for tracking emergent admission.
12. Initiate the animal's pathway planning immediately upon intake. Animals can diverge from their pathway if needed, but all animals should have a decided pathway immediately upon intake.
13. Intake should always be performed by a team of at least two people to maximize efficiency and reduce the risk of injury.
14. Intake staffing needs can be estimated by calculating the time needed for an intake exam and the monthly daily average of intake.
     a) If an intake exam takes 15 minutes and you have an average of 10 intakes/day, you will require 5 hours of staff time dedicated to intake (2.5 hours x 2 employees)
     b) Average intake can fluctuate monthly, and it is vital to schedule extra hours for busier times of the year.
15. Update the intake process by implementing a coordinated entry system for managing animal admission. A Coordinated Entry System (CES) is a process to ensure that people with pets who are experiencing a resource or housing crisis are quickly identified, assessed, referred, and connected to available resources.

Coordinated Entry Core Elements
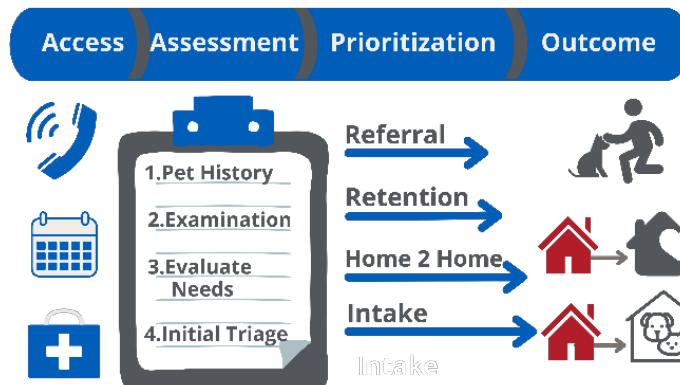
    a) An online appointment-based system is utilized for all non-emergency intakes, including animals found at large. The Coordinated Entry System was developed through models in animal welfare known as managed admissions programs and through the body of work of human services agencies to help people facing a housing crisis. In launching CES, organizations streamline and connect their community members with holistic resources to better serve their individual needs. CES streamlines the process of finding resources and housing for animals facing homelessness with the goal of housing the most vulnerable animals first and helping families keep their pets whenever possible. Free-roaming cats already have a home in their community and should not qualify for admission into the shelter system. Alternatively, they should only be admitted for surgery and return, with release occurring by the next day. Animal Control should only bring in healthy free-roaming cats in alignment with a pre-established surgical schedule.

    b) Stray animals should also be scheduled whenever possible. Effectively engaging and messaging with our community on how they can best help will support the Capacity for Care within the facility. Several examples exist that can be replicated of animal control facilities working with their communities on handling found animals. For instance, Cabot Animal Support Services developed the following messaging *"Hold onto the pet for 48 hours (about 2 days). Typically, pets do not wander too far from home, so the chances are that someone is looking for them close to where they were found. You can fill out <u>a Lost and Found Pet form</u> so, the shelter staff knows that a pet has been found."* <u>Found Pets - Cabot Animal Support Services - CASS</u>

    c) Each day, the number of available appointments should be scheduled according to the current capacity, daily population rounds, and target length of stay.
        i. Appointments are set to recognize that you are not saying no to people but simply saying when you can accommodate them.
        ii. Emergency admission is accounted for, and the schedule is developed with the projection of emergent situations.

16. Utilize an online appointment system and collect pet behavior & medical history when the appointment is scheduled to screen for medical and behavioral conditions that can be planned at the appointment itself. (e.g., Acuity or Waitwhile Software)
    a) Admission profiles: <u>Cat admission Profile</u> **|** <u>Dog admission Profile</u> **|** <u>Rabbit admission Profile</u> **|** <u>Smalls admission Profile</u> **|**<u>Bird admission Profile</u>

17. After-hours admission by animal control and the public should be reserved solely for injured or suffering animals in accordance with the affiliated emergency clinic. All other animal admissions should be scheduled and/or occur during regular business hours. Animal Control intake of healthy cats should be stopped and oriented to the schedule of the spay/neuter TNR surgery schedule.

18. The high turnover rate in Community Services needs to be addressed. Provide a safe place for staff to discuss points of concern for them or how the organization can help them succeed and meet the goals of the department and the organization as a whole.

19. Change the Volunteer Coordinator position to a managers position. Hopefully, this will allow that person, TBD, a more competitive rate for the responsibilities being performed.

20. Provide a positive change management philosophy to shift the culture of the customer service team and set clear expectations.
    a) Recommended reading: *Switch: How to change things when change is hard* by Chip Heath and Dan Heath
    b) Recommended training: <u>Client Service and Adoptions Training</u>
    c) Recommended pre-recorded webinar: <u>Difficult Volunteers</u>

21. Initiate the Adopters Welcome policy and procedures as soon as possible.
    a) Adopters Welcome manual | HumanePro by The Humane Society of the United States
22. Until the Adopters Welcome philosophy becomes a part of your culture, all adoption denials must be director-approved. No exceptions.
    a) Denying a potential adopter for reasons erroneously perceived as predictors for responsible pet ownership results in fewer animals saved.
23. All volunteers should be onboarded with Fear Free, Adopters Welcome, and Best Friends Online Customer Service Training.
24. TNR cases need to go to the clinic and then RTF/RTH.
25. If you have to trap, do so based on the surgical schedule.
26. Create an informational community cats page with humane deterrents, provide resources and discuss how S/N is often the cure for nuisance behavior. You can use these great resources for examples:
    a) Community Cat Colony Care
    b) Managing Community Cats
27. Engage with partnering organizations and programs to address the cohousing approach during houselessness and other emergent needs that may arrive for community members.
28. Form boarding relationships with other organizations and only utilize NHS shelter for programs in an emergency.
29. Build a more substantial foster base.
    a) Short term fostering opens the door to recruitment
    b) Greater Good Charities - Good Home Fostering Resource

Care
Animal Care

The animal care team and the Director of animal care impressed the assessment team with their communication skills, attention to animal needs, and desire to learn. However, some changes can be made to allow for more efficient use of staff time and increase the quality of life for the animals within NHS's care.

Strengths–
1. NHS is excited to continue pursuing opportunities to exceed minimal humane housing, offering larger and less stressful housing to a larger number of animals.
2. NHS was operating at capacity during the time of the assessment.

Opportunities for Improvement–
1. Start to utilize the spot cleaning method immediately and deep clean once a week or when an animal is moved or adopted.
2. Barn cats need to be released immediately. Their quality of life is very low.
3. All cats brought in by the community or trapped need to be serviced and returned to home immediately, regardless of sociability.
4. Recurring – Volunteers feel that NHS is not making the best choices in adopters. This issue can be addressed by ensuring all staff and volunteers complete and abide by the adopters welcome training during onboarding and offered as a refresher as needed:
    b) Adopters Welcome manual | HumanePro by The Humane Society of the United States
5. Owners who have dogs with a bite history should be counseled and offered resources that exist in the community but also be provided owner requested euthanasia through the clinic and count those services as a clinic service, not live outcome rates.

6. Require addresses from the county on all animals requiring transfer.
7. Increase portal housing for all animal housing units.
8. Schedule dog walks/potty breaks to occur at the same times every day, three times a day minimum, evenly spaced.
9. Break down cat cages in the hallway and provide those to your fosters.
10. Due to the high turnover rates, lack of community cats alignment, and organizational alignment with volunteers, we recommend that the cat staff become one with the dog staff and be renamed animal care.
11. Define reactivity in dogs and what that looks like. Work with a behavior expert to define signs of reactivity. If they are reactive, move them out of the public view and evaluate. Consider working with Marissa Martino.
12. Tools utilized for dogs: slip leads should only be used for moving within the same room and harnesses for walking.
13. Utilize fosters for all sick animals to reduce their stress and allow for quicker recovery.
    a) Animals will recover faster, be more comfortable, have less frustration and FAS, and receive more personalized care in a home with the added benefit of relieving workload pressure at your organization.
14. If cats and dogs must remain in the shelter, ensure they have an adequate hidey spot and two-sided housing.
15. Provide treat bins for all dogs. Either with treats or kibble.
16. Animal care staff should be trained to medicate orally and topically.
17. The five freedoms are not provided for animals in some small mammal housing areas and are not provided for dogs in the intake kennels. <u>All animals should have double-sided housing with a hiding spot to allow them the option to retreat and hide from intake to outcome.</u>
    a) Small Mammals should have standard setups based on species. These housing units should be marked with visual aids dedicated to their species-appropriate care guidelines.
    b) Separate guinea pigs and rabbits and never house predators with prey (e.g., ferrets are considered predators.

18. Daily health and behavior monitoring by animal care staff.
    c) Ensure monitor sheets are visible on animal housing units and follow the animal during their stay.
19. Implement health and behavior reporting system with emergency red flags for both conditions. Ensure documentation is objective and consistent in its verbiage, definitions, and format.
20. Utilize hiding spots of all small mammals, cats, and dogs.
21. Utilize treat bins and practice quiet kennel protocols.
    a) http://www.clickertraining.com/node/343
    b) Treat_Buckets.pdf (tufts.edu)

22. Appropriate housing for small mammals and additional equipment for exotic animal housing. To include humane housing that is appropriate beyond short-term housing. For example, model housing shows how adopters can house the animals in their new homes.
23. Review of staff schedule and workflows. Consider 4-10 schedule for hourly staff. Sunday through Wednesday and Wednesday through Saturday allows the staff to have one week off and three consecutive days off. This will also allow for one staff training day every Wednesday.

Behavior

Staff members and volunteers work together to provide enrichment for animals. An effort is expended to attempt to meet the needs of animals in care. An integrated approach to behavioral care with expanded resources and commitment cross-departmentally will aid in achieving the goal of providing minimal mental health standards for all animals. Being walked outside and given time and space for play is essential for meeting the Five Freedoms. More resources need to be dedicated to ensuring each dog receives a baseline of behavioral care. Behavior is fluid and must be reevaluated and monitored by trained personnel through day-to-day interactions.

<u>Strengths–</u>
1. The staff understands behavior modification cannot be done in the shelter and is interested to learn more techniques to help ensure a better quality of life for the short amount of time animals are in the facility.

<u>Opportunities for Improvement–</u>
1. Integrate behavioral care in every interaction with animals, from intake to outcome. Develop and train workflows, staff, and the workplace culture to prioritize behavioral care as essential.
   a) Behavior Triage at the time of intake.
   b) Behavior Observations along with health observation daily.
   c) Population Wellness Rounds daily
   d) The first 72 hours are essential to ensure they are provided a hidey spot, and we are doing everything possible to decrease their stress levels. This should be continued throughout their stay. We need to prioritize the most humane housing possible from intake.
2. Determine objective language to describe behavior, including body language, observations, history, and evaluation.
3. Advanced behavioral modification should not be attempted, as the shelter is not equipped to perform this type of intervention. See fear free definitions and Pet Evaluation Matrix.
4. Certification for behavior staff, veterinary staff, and operational management team.
5. Continuing education focused on behavioral literacy for dedicated behavior staff is necessary, and competency-based knowledge should be assessed.
6. Create consistent enrichment schedules and expectations with animals, staff, and volunteer involvement.
   a) Scheduled potty breaks three times a day, quiet kennel routines, positive reinforcement upon staff members entering and exiting kennels, etc.

Housing

NHS has an aesthetically dated but thoughtfully designed facility. Ensuring double compartment housing for every dog/cat will help achieve the Five Freedoms. Separation of food, water, and resting areas from elimination areas enables animals to keep their living areas clean, reduces stress, allows normal behaviors, improves welfare, and increases appeal to adopters. Provision of play areas outside will allow for expressions of normal behaviors at all times of the year.

Strengths–

1. Most animals have access to double-sided housing. Comfortable resting places are provided, and cleanliness is prioritized.

Opportunities for Improvement–

1. Provide humane housing - As you strive to create a state-of-the-art animal shelter, take time to assess your community's growth rate and your shelter's animal data and programs to help determine your future needs.
   a) Double-sided housing is provided to all animals in all permanent housing units. Housing units designed for short-term housing should be discontinued for use and renovated to be double-sided. An example is pop-up cages for cats; these should be repurposed for fosters, and dog wire crates utilized for kitten housing should be discontinued.
   b) Offer hiding spots - Your staff members are not the only ones who need a break room where they can retreat from the shelter hustle. Downtime is crucial for good mental and physical health, and The Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) guidelines for shelter standards call for a retreat option for all cats in shelters. This should be instituted for dogs as well. Do not hesitate to give animals hiding spots for fear they may remain out of view of potential adopters. A study published in the journal *Animal Welfare* showed that cats who have a place to get away show significantly less stress than those who do not – and they are more likely to approach the front of the cage. Having the hiding spot did not increase the number of days to adoption or reduce the number of cats adopted. Examples of dog hiding spots include a kennel in their housing unit or frosting the glass halfway up from the floor if in an adoption area.
   c) Offer accessories for animals in housing: See Curtailments and Treat Dispensers DIY Housing Accessories (sheltermedicine.com).
2. Ensure double-sided housing with a hiding place for all animals from intake to outcome.
3. Housing should be set up with supplies necessary for incoming animals.
4. Provide wall-mounted workspaces in areas where workstations are needed, but there is not adequate room for desks. Flexible workstations should be available to provide for scheduled staff each day adequately.

Facility

Strengths -

1. The facility is clean, bright, and cheerful.

Opportunities for Improvement –

1. Utilize training videos and SOPs to ensure all staff, volunteers, and community service workers know how to care for and clean the facility properly.
2. Develop a procurement and inventory system.
3. Develop a ticket system in the form of facility requests (i.e., Jira).
4. Start utilizing Rescue disinfectant as the sole disinfectant and cleaning agent.
5. Install 2 dilution stations for Rescue products.

6. Look to purchase high-quality scrub brushes, squeegees, and the Lafferty airless foamer or pump up foamer.
7. Wrap foam tape around the hose couplers to prevent damage.
8. Participate in daily/weekly rounds with the management team to address any issues.
9. The city/county handles significant repairs and updates. We recommend this process be streamlined to include NHS facilities staff.
10. Add another dilution station to the facility.
11. Add a second maintenance employee.
12. Instead of animals moving to winter kennels, install outdoor heaters or acclimate dogs to the cold. Dogs can be acclimated to being indoors or outdoor. This is essential to allow for fresh air and reduce disease.
13. Winter kennels could potentially be utilized for the clinic.
14. Remove center aisle bars in kennels.
15. Utilize and reimagine outdoor pods into play runs. Install artificial grass or pea gravel, plants, etc. Make this space more welcoming with live plants and seating.
16. Place vinyl paw prints on the floors to show where dogs can be walked without causing stress on other animals.
17. The breastfeeding room should be moved to a smaller space, and the current breastfeeding room and be repurposed as a volunteer space or other office.
18. The kitten area should become the retail space, and the kittens should be moved to one of the other cat areas.
19. The front desk needs to be clear of all clutter with clear and concise branding.
20. Kitten camp can be repurposed as a room for small animals or an office.
21. Enclose current retail space and repurpose it for another use, such as rabbits. The separation of rabbits and guinea pigs is essential for disease prevention.
22. Cat colony room 3 should be converted into marketing offices.
23. A pod kennel space behind cat colony 3 should be used for bunnies or cats.
24. Enclosed storage units should be placed in the hallways to store open shelved items to reduce the look of clutter.
25. Place a visual barrier on one side of the kennels to allow dogs to have a hidey spot.
26. Break down the cat cages in the hallways and repurpose them for foster homes.
27. Help desk and development coordinator offices can become cat colonies but with 2 cats maximum.
28. The John & Sharon McCloskey room should become a kenneled area for cats.
29. Move out half of the kennels in cat rooms 1 & 2 and place them in the John & Sharon McCloskey room.
30. Frost or image wrap all outward-facing windows to allow cats to have privacy and be less stressed.
31. Maddie's adoption space (formerly for puppies) can be repurposed for rabbit spaces and/or guinea pigs to show natural behaviors.
32. Install permanent easements on outside kennels.
33. Change rabbit rooms to the dog adoption rooms/meet and greet room.
34. Place an adoption desk in the dog area.
35. Replace current rabbit cages with Snyder custom rabbit cages.
36. Redesign the cat colony rooms with wipeable surfaces and shelving. Let them go outside any season if they like.
37. Perform a complete repaint of the lobby with clean, neutral colors.

38. If NHS continues to use mops for people areas, purchase a clean/dirty water insert for the mop buckets or replace them with spray mops.
39. Invest in an outdoor shed or space to store clean cages.
40. Update signage throughout the facility.
41. Place treat bins on all kennels with kibble or treats. Place a sign on each door asking the dog to sit. If a dog is reactive, remove them from the adoption pod and place them in foster care.

Clinic:
1. Install key fobs for clinic doors.
2. Install electrical in the potential workspace (currently storage) behind the reception desk and on your way to the back hallway.
3. Make space for the clinical staff to store their personal belongings.
4. Install a heater in the surgery kennels 23-29.
5. Cat holds 5 & 6 have the potential to be repurposed for labs/vaccine storage or another clinic workspace.

Medical
Opportunities for Improvement–
1. There is nowhere for staff to place their personal items.
2. The entire clinic space needs to be reimagined to utilize the space correctly.
3. Speak with ShelterLuv about designing an invoicing program for fosters and angel pets and inventory control.
4. Regarding the surgical schedule: Surgical capacity first, then programs.
5. Retention needs to be capacity-based.
6. Change internal and external verbiage from "Clinic" to "Hospital".
7. Participate in purchasing group.
8. Add more computer workstations by placing units on the wall and adding workstations in exam rooms.
9. Add electrical in "storage space behind the front desk" to allow more workspaces.
10. Hire a dedicated sterilization technician.
11. Medical staff should be veterinary assistants.
12. Adhere to industry best practices:
    a) Provision of Veterinary Care in a Shelter Setting Best Practices
    b) Exhibit A Veterinary Care Timeline
    c) Exhibit B HBSV Shelter Medicine Journal
    d) Exhibit C Balancing Veterinarian and Shelter Staff Needs
    e) Exhibit D Standardized Data Collection Questionnaire Example from CATalyst Council

Population Management

Animal flow through the shelter is optimized by proactive population management and monitoring. Decreasing the length of stay will ensure fewer animals are in care at any given time. Fewer animals, in turn, will reduce stress and disease exposure and transmission and increase resources available for overall well-being. Proactive population management by the medical and operational leadership team allows animals to receive the best possible care and the staff the best possible support.

Strengths–

1. There are dedicated staff and protocols related to animal flow.

Opportunities for Improvement–

1. All operations managers should have daily responsibilities for participating and assisting in population management and daily rounds.
2. Initiate Daily Population Wellness Rounds/Animal Flow:
    a) Teamwork will allow quick recognition of animals that are being held up in their flow-through, reassessment of decision making, assessment of population and current capacity, and assurance that the needs of individual animals are being met.
    b) Conduct a LOS (Length of Stay) review for each animal. Determine Fast Track and Regular Track animals.
    c) Address behavior & medical needs to eliminate bottlenecks and maintain welfare.
    d) Perform or update pathway planning for each animal.
    e) Discontinue the use of "Negative and Positive Outcomes". The term "Appropriate Outcome" allows for neutral language oriented toward each animal's needs. Care plans can be articulated based on commonly seen medical and behavior conditions to provide individualized care through thoughtful pathway planning.
    f) Address facility cleanliness & repairs.
3. Conduct (weekly, bi-weekly, etc.) animal welfare review meetings with the management team. Review the population wellness rounds results and determine appropriate outcomes for all animals within your care.

Sanitation

Clear, step-by-step sanitation protocols that include spot-cleaning save staff time minimize the use of and exposure to chemicals and decrease the likelihood of disease exposure and transmission. Saving time on cleaning allows staff to have more positive interactions with dogs, such as walking and additional enrichment: staff job satisfaction and retention increase as we transform their work from primarily cleaning to caregiving.

Strengths–

1. There are currently sanitation protocols in use.

Opportunities for Improvement–

1. The organization is transitioning to using Rescue and has appropriately labeled signage and instructions at the fill stations.
2. Initiate Spot Cleaning protocols for dogs and cats to reduce stress and ensure staff time is better utilized. Post job aids on the protocol for spot and deep cleaning protocols for each species-specific animal ward.
3. Eliminate the use of mops in all animal areas. Utilize spray mops in public nonanimal areas with frequent mop head changes.

4. Utilize foam-based sprayers to administer Rescue disinfectant.
5. Ensure the only disinfectant/cleaner utilized for animal areas is Rescue.
6. Ensure dilution stations are utilized for dispensing any chemical to ensure proper dilution and staff safety.
7. Provide OSHA and Personal Protective Equipment training to all staff and volunteers. Chemical applications such as daily cleaning should only be used with the appropriate PPE, e.g., applying Rescue safety glasses should be worn for potential splashes.
   a) The assessment team observed containers, spray bottles, and mop buckets that were not properly labeled with an appropriate label.
   b) The assessment team observed staff hand mixing chemicals rather than using a dilution station; This should be prohibited as it is dangerous for the animals and people within the facility.

Volunteers

A thriving volunteer program is essential to help NHS meet its mission and ensure that the Five Freedoms are met for all animals in its care. A robust and organized volunteer program infrastructure with a clear leader to reinforce guidelines and expectations is critical for a successful volunteer program. Volunteers should never be seen as a replacement or supplement required paid positions to be operationally functional. A shelter is way over its capacity for care if it is dependent on volunteers to run its facility. Shelters need to be able to achieve their mission with the paid personnel they have. Volunteers are an added resource to the organization and not a replacement. Volunteers should be viewed as another pay grade, meaning they need training, scheduling, and accountability just like all other staff.

Strengths–
1. Currently has an active volunteer program and understands the importance and value of their volunteers.

Opportunities for Improvement–
1. Volunteers are a critical function for organizations and should be utilized everywhere possible. They should be taught to use software systems, be involved in population wellness rounds, and receive as much training as provided to staff.
2. Adopters Welcome needs to be instilled in the Volunteer program.
3. Establish a culture of learning, feedback, and continuous improvement for all volunteers.
4. Job descriptions and assigned schedules will ensure a culture of accountability.

Outcome

Adoptions

A customer-friendly environment creates opportunities for increased adoptions. Community members are welcomed, encouraged to adopt, and supported in their success. The process is one that assists potential adopters in making a thoughtful, informed decision on which animal is the best for their family. The approach to adoption is conversation-based, emphasizing placing animals into homes rather than screening out applicants. The presumption is that potential adopters have good intentions and can make informed choices when assisted by the shelter.

Strengths–

1. The adoption program currently prioritizes reducing length of stay and follows an open adoption philosophy.

Opportunities for Improvement–

1. Reiterate the importance of an open adoption philosophy. Send a memo and conduct staff training detailing the Adopters Welcome philosophy and approach. Require supervisor approval if adoption staff declines an adoption.
2. Manager approval is required to decline an adoption with a documented reason and the requirement to include such instances in monthly internal reporting.
3. Set metrics for daily, weekly, and monthly adoption goals. Offer incentives for staff and leadership for achieving metric goals.
4. Have adoption counselors perform post-adoption follow-up calls to provide staff with knowledge and resources of what to share with adopters (i.e., remind new adopters of the 2-week policy to bring in dogs with medical concerns). These emails can be automatically sent utilizing tools like Postmaster. We recommend a 1 week, 1 month, and 3 month follow-up asking the adopter how they and the pet are doing. Let adopters know whom to contact directly if they have specific questions.
5. Two managers and two supervisors should be assigned to provide appropriate oversight and support to the adoption team.
6. Utilize "Acuity" or "Wait while" or similar software to manage high-volume adoption hours.
7. Create an adoption marketing and fee reduction schedule based on the animal's length of stay.

Other Live Outcomes

Live outcomes include those animals returned to their owners, adopted, or transferred to rescue groups and other community partners.

Transfer

To be a sustainable organization, you must increase your impact through partnerships with other organizations.

Opportunities for Improvement–

1. Become an active member of the Nevada Animal Welfare Coalition to establish professional relationships with brick-and-mortar, professionally run animal shelters within Nevada. Nevada SPCA, Pet Network Humane, and the SPCA of Northern Nevada are ideal partners for developing a professional and predictable transfer relationship.
2. Remove barriers to transferring animals from NHS to other professionally run animal shelters within the state.
3. Adhere to transfer best practices for professional relationships and communication around the transfer. Eliminate additional steps and requirements when dealing with established brick-and-

mortar animal shelters. It would be reasonable to have additional requirements for volunteer-based rescue organizations; for example, they may be asked to show additional proof, including having a dedicated relationship with a veterinarian or behavioral expertise.

    a) <u>Companion Animal Transport Best Practices</u>
    b) <u>Exhibit A Animal Transport Memorandum of Understanding</u>
    c) <u>Exhibit A1 ASPCA Animal Transfer Memorandum of Understanding</u>
    d) <u>Exhibit B Vehicle Buildout Consideration</u>
    e) <u>Exhibit C Vehicle Supply List</u>
    f) <u>Exhibit D Funding Transport Cost</u>
    g) <u>Exhibit E Transport Census Spreadsheet</u>

Return to Owner -RTO/ (should be viewed as Return to Home) RTH

Returning a pet to its home (owner) needs to be the desired outcome for all lost/stray animals. Have information on the website and phone messages that clearly state what to do when an animal is lost and when an animal is found.

1. Financial and red-tape barriers to returning dogs to the owners need to be reviewed in more detail. Staff reported bureaucratic barriers based on animal-control policies and differences in jurisdictional approaches to dealing with owned animals found at large as an area of concern. During this assessment, a detailed analysis of the jurisdictional differences and barriers to returning dogs to their owners was not conducted.

2. Jurisdictions contracting with NHS should be engaged in the goal of returning lost dogs to their owners. Barriers and punitive measures should be curtailed for first-time incidents, and solution-oriented approaches should be investigated. Recommend waiving fees any time it is a barrier to reclaim.

3. Offer resources to owners while in the field when dogs are escaping containment.

4. Clearly state what to do when an animal is lost or found. Encourage finders to look for the owner themselves. Consider implementing a "First 48hrs" campaign to encourage finders to look for the owner where the animals are found, including posting on social media, notifying NHS so the animal can be added to the website, having the animal scanned for a microchip, knocking on doors, and ask people in the neighborhood, etc. A variety of steps should be taken before an animal is brought to NHS. Remind people that most lost animals are found within a few blocks of their homes. Displacing them by bringing them to the shelter decreases their chances of being reunited with their families. <u>Lost Pets - Cabot Animal Support Services - CASS</u>, <u>Found Pets - Cabot Animal Support Services - CASS</u>

5. Healthy free-roaming cats should be left alone, and communication on the website, phone, and directly to the community should reinforce this message.

Community Cats

"Research and experience have revealed that <u>expanding RTF (returned to the field) to include unidentified, healthy stray cats in good body condition and old enough to fend for themselves</u> is better for cats, communities, and the shelter. The health status of the cats is taken as direct evidence that they have access to sufficient food and shelter to maintain their condition, provided they are returned promptly to the same location where they were found. In a study of more than 100,000 stray and feral cats examined in spay/neuter clinics in six states, less than 1 percent of cats were euthanized due to debilitating conditions, trauma, or infectious diseases. (Wallace 2006)"

Opportunities for Improvement –

1. Reassess community cat criteria and focus this program on decreasing the shelter intake population:
   a) A clearly defined policy should be implemented to return to the location found for healthy cats regardless of sociability. Diversion from this standard should require Director level approval.
   b) It was evident that "friendly" cats found outside were not being returned, and an attempt at rehabilitation and adoption was being made. The default needs to be returned to near the location they were found. A two-block radius is acceptable for a return.
   c) This program, at this time, should be viewed as a brief shelter surgery stay. Resources should be applied to ensure that cats are quickly spayed/neutered and returned to the location they were found with limited time spent at the facility.
   d) Outreach and proactive trapping should be utilized to surgical capacity.
   e) The priority should be to improve the quality and effectiveness of the community cat program to decrease the population of cats within the shelter itself.

Carson City Shelter

Strengths–

1. All of the ACOs are currently going through the NACA training.

Opportunities for Improvement–

1. Upgrade your current population wellness rounds to be more detailed and aligned with the ASV checklist, and add a facilities/cleanliness check.
2. No ACO should touch an animal before completing the NACA and fear free training.
3. Salaries of ACOs need to be increased.
4. Consider changing the ACO title to Humane Officer.
5. Shift the role of the ACO to be more of a resource with resources on the trucks to give to the community.
6. The relationship between Reno and Carson needs to be improved upon. Carson is an extension of Reno and should be treated as such moving forward.
7. A volunteer and foster manager are needed in Carson.
8. Work with a mediator or group that can provide that service.
9. Any healthy cat found outside RTH, regardless of temperament. Eliminate the barn cat program.
10. Be absolutely clear about adoption criteria and the resources NHS offers to the community.
11. Focus on "Behavior Wellness" vs. no-kill for all animals, and while the ethos has not changed, the communication with the community should. Prioritize the quality of life while downplaying the no-kill term. Tell the community, "we do not euthanize healthy and treatable animals".

12. Work with Marissa Martino and Dr. Pachel about the shelter behavior program and create SOPs.
13. The surgical schedule dictates community cat intake.
14. Dedicate resources to a humane deterrent for nuisance community cats.
15. Utilize spot cleaning and move animals less.
16. Utilize the open selection process.
17. Provide employee relations and leadership training to Clay. BJ Rogers and WILD. Leaders through AAWA.
18. Space needs to be reimagined to offer more usable space. Consider workstations that fold up and down, dual-purpose function furniture, and loft storage areas.
19. Portals need to be placed in dog kennels, or panels need to be removed to allow more room for dogs within their kennel.
20. There are three holding spaces, and the "green" one that houses a lot of the bite cases, stray dogs, and incoming transfers seemed to be the most full and the most reactive. The other rooms were close to empty. Housing all "not currently adoptable animals" together needs to be reassessed. The FAS in that room is incredibly high.
21. We recommend devising a way to label the kennels or the dogs (collar colors) instead of using the rooms to indicate where volunteers can go? This way, they can move the dogs to prevent reactivity.
22. At the time of intake, implement animal triage to include medical and behavioral triage.
23. Post the Pet Evaluation Matrix in the intake room.
24. Offer online appointment-based intake appointments.
25. Utilize the first 48 for stray animals. Found Pets - Cabot Animal Support Services - CASS, Lost Pets - Cabot Animal Support Services - CASS
26. Complete transfer and pathway planning more collaboratively.
27. Research Lyons County's policies and determine why animals are in their care for extended periods. Work with them, if possible, to alleviate this stress on the animals.
28. Schedule potty breaks and walks.
29. Alternate euthanasia technicians every week and ensure appropriate staffing levels to allow for a rotation at all times.
30. Utilize the clinic for euthanasias whenever possible and turn the euthanasia room into a drive-thru vaccination room.
31. Place a computer station in the ACO bay and euthanasia room if it will be utilized as such.
32. Prioritize a driver for behavioral and medical transfers.
33. There needs to be a dedicated veterinarian and veterinary technician in Carson.
34. Metrics-based salary bands need to be utilized.
35. Reimagine clinic space to add two more tables in the surgery room.
36. Utilize the ASV checklist asap.

Facilities:
1. Contact Jeff Bender of Bender Engineering + Construction (530) 582 - 5578 regarding the laundry room redo. Tell them Kimberly Pickens referred you. He is expecting your call.
2. Utilize the white glove technique weekly in all spaces, including kennels; this should be included in your population wellness rounds.
3. Remove all carpeted scratching posts and replace them with wipeable surfaces and shelving.
4. Utilize the cat colony cages for rabbits and cover the edges of the portals and use "fat cat" portals.
5. Provide portals in dog kennels or remove panels to increase the space.
6. Utilize Cat Room 4 for small animals.

7. Utilize empty dog kennels for rabbits.
8. Purchase bite guards for the Snyder cages to utilize for rabbits.
9. Frost half of the adopter view window (from the lobby) to allow for a hidey space for both cats and dogs.
10. Install walled laptop units or workstations.
11. Stop using mops. Utilize rescue foam sprayers, squeegees, towels, and scrub brushes.
12. If artificial grass is installed in the play yards, make sure there are multiple layers for drainage. Look at Heavenly Grass Company. Consider pea gravel in place of artificial grass.
13. Frost half of the outward-facing windows (to dog yards) in the cat spaces.
14. Place dog fight kits and a hog board in dog play yards.
15. Convert Dog recovery space to office space.
16. Convert storage room to office space.
17. Purchase a commercial dishwasher.
18. Install outdoor cattle heaters near the outdoor kennels (long-term goal).
19. Add a second ACO bay for drive-through vaccines(long-term goal).

CONCLUSION

Boyle's Law: Inverse relationship between volume & pressure. Increasing one decreases the other (vice versa). We can increase our volume by decreasing the pressure.

As humane organizations, we are committed to providing the best possible outcome to the animals in our care and in our community. We cannot guarantee humane care if we do not ensure we maintain our capacity for care. Stressed staff and crowded conditions are all too common in our animal shelters. Nevada Humane Society is no different. Operating consistently at or over capacity for care. Many shelters believe that animals were better off entering the shelter, regardless of the result. Disease, stress, and preventable death was the result. As an industry, our intention and the desired outcome do not align with the result. We must begin to recognize that there is another way. Recognizing capacity for care as a baseline for measuring success and setting boundaries is the first step to achieving quality services, healthy workplaces, and meaningful change, and we can start by being realistic about our capacity.

Setting realistic capacity for care and boundaries requires that we:
1. Insist on conditions that are kind to shelter leaders and shelter staff.
2. Know how much work we can manage at any one time within those kinds of conditions and develop strategies to stay within this limit.
3. Maximize efficiency so that we can accomplish as much as possible over time.
4. Accomplish more than we would have while suffering less than we might have.

Fundamentally if we want to embrace the Five Freedoms and ensure that every animal who enters our care has its health and welfare maintained or improved, **we must focus on what we can control:**
1. How and when animals come through our doors.
2. Appropriate pathway and outcome for each animal.
3. Conditions within our shelters (embracing the five freedoms).
4. The messages that we share with the public.
5. Where we focus our resources.
6. We must Ask each animal every day, "How is this for you?" and truly listen.

We must commit to providing, at a minimum, an adequate level of care for every animal we admit. We should strive daily to exceed adequate. The five freedoms are a good starting point, but they are not the finishing line. It takes resources and much energy to do so. It might mean admitting fewer animals at one time, but we will be providing a higher level of resources for the ones we have in care.

Leadership Assessment

The assessment team spoke with various staff and determined NHS does have a strong understanding of their own leadership skills and the ability to recognize leadership and potential growth within their employees. However, It is crucial to develop a formal leadership development plan so you can successfully and appropriately promote and hire from within. While a candidate may seem suitable or prepared for a position, it is crucial to have an established path to ensure you are setting them up for success.

NHS should establish a formal policy that sets out the criteria for promotion and any steps staff should take to make themselves a candidate for promotion. Formal promotion policies should <u>not</u> be inflexible. Take an individualized approach to candidate selection as long as you make opportunities equally available to everyone who meets the qualifications.

When your organization rewards hard work and loyalty, you become a highly desirable place to work for those assets looking for a long-term career.

Leadership is a complex skill that applies to every aspect of an organization, and it is essential to remain consistent and offer up-to-date leadership training to provide high-quality leadership and a growth mentality to your organization. The core responsibilities of any departmental leader should be to work collaboratively to the benefit of the organization, develop & train their teams, and create a healthy culture of accountability.
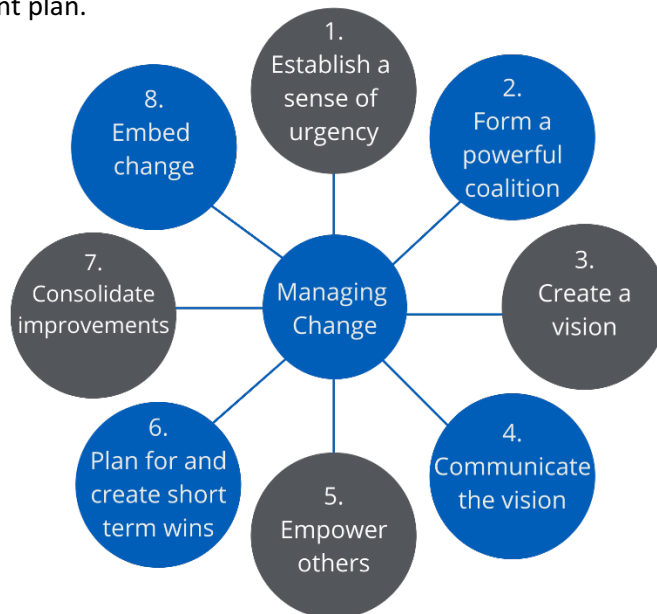
The Purpose of leadership is to generate CAPACITY not DEPENDENCY

- Dr. Ronald Heifetz

Managing Change

Change is difficult in the beginning, messy in the middle and beautiful in the end. To effectively move an organization to embrace best practices, the leadership must develop and implement a thoughtful change management plan.

The assessment team endorses the change management model articulated by the book Switch: How to Change when Change is Hard by Chip & Dan Heath. This book is based on the work of John P. Kotter's book Leading Change. Based on his article Eight Reasons Why Transformation Efforts Fail, Kotter outlines (not surprisingly) an eight-stage process for changing a culture:

Three Surprises About Change

1. **What looks like a people problem is often a situation problem.** Switch considers change at every level- individual, organizational, and societal. All change efforts usually have something in common: "For anything to change, someone has to start acting differently." But the question is always: Can you get people to start behaving in a new way? Dan and Chip state that "In our lives, we embrace lots of big changes- not only babies but marriages and new homes and
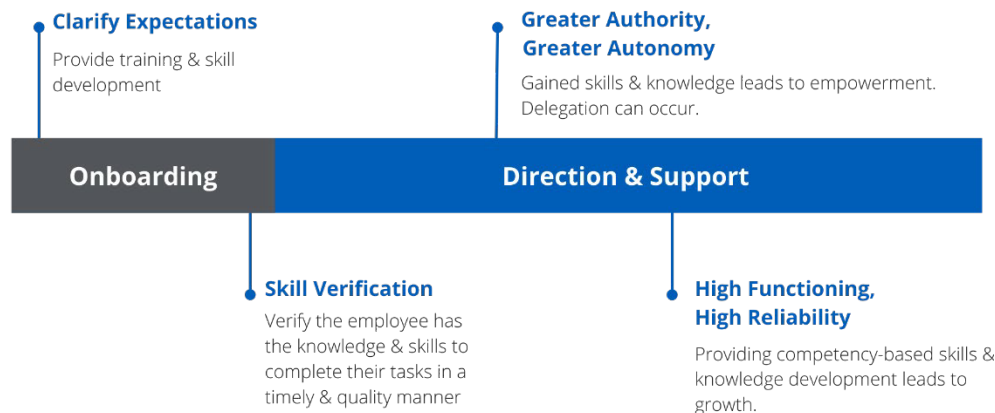
innovative technologies and new job duties." So that means that it is quite possible for people to change.
2. **What looks like laziness is often exhaustion.** When you try so hard to stay away from fattening foods because you are on a diet, your mind will get exhausted, and then you will finally give in.
3. **What looks like resistance is often a lack of clarity.** "If the Rider isn't sure exactly what direction to go, he tends to lead himself in circles."

Functional Management

The assessment team recommends initiating a management approach like functional management. This approach focuses on the tasks and functions of the organization. The key component is creating a culture of accountability and continual improvement. Competency-based education is deployed to determine the effectiveness of onboarding, expectations, skill verification, and growing individuals into high functional teams.

Functional Management Model

Clarify Expectations
Provide training & skill development

Greater Authority, Greater Autonomy
Gained skills & knowledge leads to empowerment. Delegation can occur.

Onboarding | **Direction & Support**

Skill Verification
Verify the employee has the knowledge & skills to complete their tasks in a timely & quality manner

High Functioning, High Reliability
Providing competency-based skills & knowledge development leads to growth.

The functional management model also allows for the creation of an accountability process that follows three systematic rules:
1. Expectation Rule (huddles, onboarding).
2. Skill Verification Rule.
3. Accountability Rule: follow the 1st and 2nd rules. The employee is ready for the supervisor to delegate tasks and responsibilities. Holding staff accountable means that the supervisor sets a time when they review each staff member's tasks and responsibilities. Recognition and Reward are key for accountable employees and are vital as consequences for staff who do not come through.

Once your team has clear expectations and skill verification, the direction and support section of the functional management model starts to shape a clear path for you and your high functioning team.

Delegating comes with expectation, verification, direction, and support. An employee should be empowered with their verified skill and knowledge.

It is important to hire, recognize and support the leaders already within NHS. Supervisors & managers who aspire to be leaders shape the path for their team members by:

- **Listening**
  Direct, frequent, and consistent feedback

- **Develop Others**
  Provide effective communication, training, and support

- **Build Community**
  Develop a healthy workplace culture centered on goals and values

Another key component to having a high-functioning team is to develop servant leaders. Being a servant leader involves actively contributing to the personal development and performance of the team and understanding that when team members feel personally and professionally fulfilled, they produce higher quality work more efficiently and productively. Key behaviors of a servant leader include:

3 Priorities	**3 Key Principles**	**3 Key Practices**
Developing people	Serve first	Listening
Building a trusting team	Persuasion	Delegating
Achieving results	Empowerment	Connecting others to mission

Providing & Receiving Feedback

Lastly, providing a safe place to give and receive feedback helps high-functioning teams convey information about behaviors and evaluates the quality of those behaviors. Feedback can reinforce existing strengths, keep goal-directed behavior on the course, clarify the effects of behavior, and increase recipients' ability to independently detect and remedy errors. A few ways to accomplish this is to provide and support the following:

1. Tools: Onboarding/Training, Huddles, 1v1, Performance Reviews.
2. Consistently addressing deficient performance.
3. Reinforce a unified leadership and chain of command with transparency and respect at all levels.
4. Stop unproductive conversations through accountability. Reinforce professional communication standards.
5. Establish a policy of Professionalism, Courtesy, and Respect in the Workplace.

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