

Vet Voices: A Conversation with Dr. Robin Simpkins

A VPP Community Spotlight

Dr. Simpkins has been co-owner of Cherokee Hospital for Animals since 2020. She joined VPP in 2018 and is a current member of VPP's Medical Advisory Board.

Q: What motivated you to pursue practice ownership? How did VPP help?

A: Since graduating from vet school in 1999, I had always wanted to pursue practice ownership – but I was unsure about how to achieve it and I felt uncertain about the business side of ownership. After working at Cherokee Hospital for Animals for a few years, it became clear that we had issues with our practice culture, and I saw practice ownership as an opportunity to change that.

In 2018, after years of trying to negotiate becoming a partner/owner with the previous practice owner, she decided to partner with VPP instead. Initially I was disappointed, expecting that it would now be more difficult for me to become a partner in the practice. Less than a year after partnering with VPP, the previous owner left and it was evident that this new partnership would be the best thing to happen to my career. I was given the opportunity to become medical director in 2018 and partnered with VPP to become a co-owner of Cherokee Hospital for Animals in 2020. The support I had from VPP with the day-to-day operation of the practice, marketing, recruiting, leadership development, inventory – and the business operations in general – made it possible for me to feel confident enough to pursue partnership.



Q: How have VPP's mentorship and leadership development programs strengthened your practice?

A: One of the most influential programs I have participated in has been VPP's peer group meetings. The peer groups allow medical directors and doctor partners within the VPP network to meet, develop relationships with their peers and discuss both the medical and management issues that they are facing. This program has been so valuable to our practice, and to me personally. VPP now has similar meetings for the network's practice managers, and I have seen excellent growth and increased knowledge from our practice manager as a direct result of the leadership training that she has received in these meetings.

Q: How do you envision your continued development as a partner within the VPP community?

A: I plan to further refine my management and leadership skills, leveraging the various development programs offered by VPP. Participating in VPP's peer group meetings has already provided me with invaluable insights, and I plan to continue learning from the collective experience of my peers and applying best practices to drive success at my practice, Cherokee Hospital for Animals. In the future, I also hope to mentor newer partners and doctors within our VPP community, using my knowledge and experience to guide them on their own paths to success.