



Population Management

Video Transcript

October 2011

Dr. Brian DiGangi: Can you hear me? Okay. So sorry for that little delay. We got the clickers situated. So let me lower this a little bit. So we're going to talk about population management. It's a little bit of an advanced topic for shelter medicine. We are going to try and keep it simplified so everybody can understand and everybody can get something out of it. So with that, I want you to think for a minute there is a lot of different ways that shelters will go about trying to save more animals. That's obviously the goal of shelters, rescue groups and the like. We want to save as many animals as possible.

You have heard of groups that maybe they are going to do adoption promotions, like the one you see on the left. No kill shelter. No cats for adoption. So they are going to promote adoptions as a way of getting more animals out. Another common way is we're going to have a spay/neuter clinic. We're going to spay/neuter more animals so that fewer are coming in, and that's how we're going to save more animals. Another choice is you see on the top right. You have shelter that elected to -- they had a shelter that was overpopulated. They decided they needed to euthanize animals to make room for the rest that were coming in. So

that's another option that might hear about.

Then the last one, the bottom right, a lot of shelters or organizations, well, let's just build a new shelter. We need more space, so let's build a bigger shelter. So those are all recent news articles that I pulled off of the internet. So what do you guys think? What is your opinion? There is not necessarily a right or wrong answer here. How would you save animals in your community? Would you increase euthanasia to make more room in the shelter? Would you promote more adoptions? Do you think do more spay/neuter to decrease intake? Or build a bigger shelter? Which do you think is the best answer there?

All right. So let's see. Kind of split down the middle for promoting more adoptions and do more spay/neuter. So I like those two options. Like I said, there is not necessarily a right or wrong answer. I hope that you will think by the end of this that increasing euthanasia is probably not going to be the most effective way of doing it or certainly not going to be the most publicly acceptable way of doing it. And building a bigger shelter also is probably not going to be as effective. So I'm glad to see nobody chose that option. So let's explore that in a little bit more detail. So the learning objectives for this session are to understand the importance of actively managing the flow of animals throughout the shelter, and then I'm going to show you some basic shelter math, just a few relatively easy calculations that help you describe the dynamics of the shelter population

and help you plan how you can move animals through to save more lives in the end. And then we are going to cover a few of the techniques that are used to decrease crowding, increase live release so hopefully you will be familiar with those and be able to describe those at the end of this.

So as a broad overview, we are going to define what is population management, and we are going to do that by looking at shelter statistics. So specific things that we are going to learn is to calculate our length of stay, a couple of capacity calculations that I think are important, and live release and live release rates, and then we will talk about the specific tools for conquering crowding. So a definition of population management.

When I say that, I'm talking about the use of evidence-based decision making to influence the flow of animals throughout the shelter. A couple of key words there is evidence based. You are going to look at the trends to decide what you are going to do next, and it's a proactive definition too. You're actually going to look at this information and make decisions that influence what happens next rather than reacting to the situation that is at hand. The goals of population management are the same as in animal sheltering in general. We want to enhance both physical and mental well-being of the animals in our care and then increase overall lifesaving capacity and try to shave as many animals as we can. So population management is intimately tied to the concept of crowding. So when I say crowding, I'm talking about maintaining a number of animals in excess of an organization's capacity for care. We are going to come back to

capacity for care and define that in a little while. But notice there is no set number on there. It really depends on what you can actually provide for. So you might be thinking, as a lot of shelters think, doesn't housing more animals mean that we're going to save more, and actually what we will find out is that that's not true. If you think about crowding, what happens when you're in a crowded situation? You could put in here -- it doesn't have to be a shelter. It could be a nursery home. It could be a nursery school for children. Anything like that. You will get these similar things going on. So more people, more animals crowded together, you are going to have increased disease transmission, increased stress for everybody involved, both the animals and the staff. Overall decreased welfare. When you're stressed, your welfare is not good. Decreased capacity for care. So if you haven't changed the number of people that are available to take care of the animals or the number of resources available, your ability to do so is going to decline and people are going to be unhappy, so customer service is going to decline. The end result is that the animals actually stay longer in the shelter and fewer of them leave alive. So all of those things interact with one another as well. They are not all isolated. So coming back to capacity for care. What kind of things do you guys think of would define what a shelter's capacity for care is? Number of staff I heard. That's a good one. Resources. Meaning what? Money. Yeah. How much money you have. What else? What other? Space. How much space is going to matter. If you have any other outlets for the animals to go. That might tie into space, how much

space you have available. So those are some good options. Here is a list that I came up with. Most of these are from the guidelines or standards of care which you guys are intimately familiar with now. There is a couple that I added of my own. Number of housing units you guys said.

Staffing. How many people do have to take care of those animals. Staff training. It doesn't matter if you have 100 people. If they don't know how to take care of the animals, that's not going to help. Length of stay. If the animals stay longer, they are going to require more resources to take care of them. The actual number of animals that you have is going to matter. And then somebody mentioned financial resources is obviously going to play a role as well. Did everybody get those down? I know that is a fill-in in your notes there. Okay. All right. Also from the shelter guidelines we have some recommendations for what kind of statistics should we collect to manage the population. They say at a very minimum you want to look at on a monthly basis how do animals come in. Are they surrendered by owners? Are they relinquished by their owners or are the strays or are they coming in from cruelty cases? And how do they leave? How many are adopted? How many go to rescue groups? How many are euthanized, et cetera. And you also want to look at how many animals are in your care every day and track that over time to see how that changes. Ideally, so if you're meeting those minimums, the next step up is you actually want to look at those things by age group and see how it changes when you're looking at kittens, puppies versus adults, sick animals versus healthy animals for both physical and behavioral health.

And then evaluate all of those different groups, age, health, behavior status, both at intake and at outcome so you can get more specific the more involved you get. And then the very best practices include also looking at all those things above but also looking at disease prevalence at intakes, how many are sick when they come in the door and then how many of them actually come in healthy but develop illness while they are in the shelter. There is also times when you're some type of computer software to help analyze this information and report out. So this is just a note to say what you get out of it depends on what you put into it. Most of the time shelters that we have been to, this is the biggest problem, is that the data going into the system is not accurate. So you have to weed through that and figure out what can you use and what needs to be fixed so you can make some good recommendations and set the shelter up moving forward for collecting information accurately and then picking out what they need to monitor to take the next steps. Those are just some of the most common shelter software systems that are in use. All right. So probably the most important concept that we're going to talk about today is length of stay. When I say that, I'm talking about the duration of an animal's time in the shelter from usually reporting in days. You can report it in other units, but usually we're talking about in days, from the day that they come in until the day that they leave. That's pretty self-explanatory. And this is important because making sure that this is as short as possible really is the key to reducing crowding and increasing the number of animals that are saved overall. So we're going to try to

prove that to you in a couple of different ways. So the first thing that we're going to do is play the length of stay game. This was a game that Dr. Sandra Newberry came up with. I haven't done this myself before, so hopefully it will work out good. What we're going to do is have two shelters. We will have one shelter over there and one shelter over here. Both of them are going to take in the same number of animals, which are going to be you guys, every 30 seconds. One person is going to enter the shelter every 30 seconds on both sides. And then Just One More Shelter over on the far side, somebody is going to leave that shelter every two minutes. In this shelter, the Gator Grad Shelter on the side nearest me, same number of animals are coming in, they are going to leave a little bit quicker. So every one minute an animal is going to leave the shelter and get adopted. So what we'll do is I'm going to start the timer, and then if you guys could come up. Maybe you guys on this side of the room come up for this shelter. You guys on that side of the room come up for this shelter. And then once you get adopted, just stand off to the side. We will do it for a couple of minutes to see which shelter saved the most animals. The important thing to remember here is taking in the exact same number of animals, have the exact same number of cages available in a shelter, two cages available. So let's see if I can get this stopwatch to come up. All right. You guys ready? Okay. See the instructions. 30 seconds to figure it out. All right. So the first two intakes get ready. All right. So one animal in each shelter. You guys have to watch the clock. In one minute you get to leave. In two minutes you get to leave.

Just leave the opposite corner. Stand off to the side. All right. Next two intakes. Yep. All right. So both shelters are full. That's good. We have got two animals in each shelter. They are looking pretty good. All right. Next group. We have our first live release over here. Very nice. So what's happening over there? It's getting a little crowded. So we have some random commingling over there. We have another intake in five seconds and another live release over here. We have the first live release over there. That's good. That shelter still seems to be a little crowded. All right. Who is next? Another live release. We have four animals in that shelter over there on the right and still only two over here, but the same number of animals is coming in, the very same rate. How is the physical and emotional welfare in that shelter over there? It's deteriorating. Another live release over there. That's good. There are still only two animals on that side. So you guys get it? You get the point? Okay. You're all released. You have all been adopted. So same number of cages available, same intake rate. Every 30 seconds a new animal came in. The only thing that was different was that it took a little bit longer, not even that much longer, for animals in that other shelter to leave. And you saw how quickly it got overwhelmed on that side. So for those of you who like math, we are going to look at it in a little bit more of a mathematical sort of way. We have just one more shelter. Let's say that they take in five animals every day in their shelter. On average they stay about 20 days each. This is going to be a quicker question, but it's not working for this type of question. Just think about

how many animals do you think that shelter -- are going to be in that shelter each day given those parameters. They come in. Five animals per day? On average they stay for 20 days each. How many animals are going to be in that shelter on any given day? Just shout it out.

Anybody? 100. How did you get that? 5 times 20, right? So that's easy. What about the other shelter? Same number of animals are coming in. Five animals every day. On average they stay 10 days each. A little bit shorter length of stay. How many animals are in that shelter? 50. So does that make sense to everybody? On average 20 days.

Length of stay for just one more shelter is going to be 100 animals in there every day versus half the number of animals on the other side. The only thing that's different is how long the animals are staying. Which shelter would you rather work at? The one that has to take care of 100 animals or the one that takes care of 50 animals every day? And think about which shelter is going to be able to better meet the needs of each of those individual animals and probably have the same number of staff members. So the next question is, like I said, 100 is more than 50. Isn't that shelter saving more animals? If you think about it, the number of animals saved per month, if there are 100 animals in there every day times 30 days, divided by an average length of stay of 20 days for each of those animals, that first shelter is going to save 150 animals per month. If we do the math for the second shelter, they are also saving 150 animals per month. So if we look at -- they had half as many animals in the shelter. They stayed less time, and they actually saved the same number of animals as

the other shelter did. So how do we actually use length of stay to figure out what's going on? It's nice to figure out what the length of stay is by species. Is it going to be different for dogs or cats? It probably is. What about age group? Is it going to be different for puppies and kittens versus adults? What do you guys think is going to have a shorter length of stay usually? Puppies and kittens. Everybody wants them. They get out fast. By outcome, how long does it take an animal to get adopted? How long does it take an animal to get transferred to a rescue group? You want to take a look at those things. Then once you have got an idea of that, you might want to set a target for your length of stay moving forward because we want to decrease it so that we can save more animals in the end. So you are going to look at what is the current length of stay. You don't want to set a goal that is too hard to obtain. Just tweak it by a little bit. What is the mission of the organization? Maybe it's a sanctuary, and their goal is not to adopt out as many animals as possible. They just want to take care of a set number of animals and do the best job that they can. So it's not going to matter as much to them. And what about resources? Maybe you have got a certain number of staff members available and that's it. So you have to figure out what your length of stay is going to be based on finances as well. So we will make graphs like this when we look at shelter software, and you can make graphs like this when you look at the data. So you will see we have the number of days animals stay in the shelter and the months along the bottom. And this is just looking at length of stay for different outcomes. In the yellow we have

how long it takes animals to get returned to their owners. All across the year, two days, four days, generally about the same. About an average of three days or so in this particular shelter. And you look at how long it takes them to get transferred. Back in the winter months, two days, three days, they were getting transferred. But in the summer something happened, in the spring and summer, where it started taking them a lot longer to get these animals out to rescue organizations. So we have nine days, 13 days, et cetera. And then for adoptions, the blue bar, stayed pretty steady throughout the time period. So you want to look at this and say what happened in April or May that resulted in those animals taking so much longer to get out of the shelter because we know that that's going to impact how many of them actually get out in the end. Maybe there was something going on in the springtime. Maybe they took in a whole bunch more animals, and there was some holding case going on or something like that. That overwhelmed the shelter, and the normal operating procedures weren't functioning as well as we would expect them to. So you can address it by looking at the data in that fashion. So then we will do a couple of capacity calculations that I talked about. It's pretty simple math, so don't get too scared about it. The first one is what we call holding capacity. I think this is an important one to know because this is the number of animals a shelter can expect to house on average - we're generally talking about averages -- in a given day. You need to know how many cages do you actually need to house what you're required to take care of, especially if you're talking about a county shelter that has

contracts that has to take animals in. So the way that we calculate that is we look at the average number of intakes per month, multiply it by what the required holding period is. So three days, five days, seven days, whatever it is for the shelter that you're working with. And then talking about reporting it by month, divide it by 30 days per month. Figure out how many cages do you need every day during that month. So we will look at an example to make that a little bit more clear. So we will go back to just one more shelter. Remember, they take in 150 animals per month. Let's say that they have a three-day required stray holding period. Because they are just one more shelter, they want to take in more animals, but they are not going to build any more housing units. They are telling you that right now, we only have 10 appropriate housing units for our animals, but we really want to increase the number of animals that come in because we think we are going to save more that way. So they want to know, can they increase their intake without adding any more housing? So we will calculate the current holding capacity. I will skip that slide for you. So currently their holding capacity, if we look at that formula, 150 animals per month times three days required holding period divided by 30 days per month. They need housing for 15 animals per day, given the situation of the shelter today. If they wanted to increase that by 50 animals, that would be 200 animals per month. Still have a three-day holding period. And then we divide it by 30 days per month to get the per day rate. So they are going to need housing for 20 animals per day. If you remember that they only had 10 housing units to being with, what you

figured out by looking at this is that not only they can't increase their intake, they don't even have enough housing units to take care of the animals they have right now. They need 15 housing units right now, and they only have got 10. So the answer is no, they shouldn't increase their intake. Does that make sense to everybody? This is especially important when you're trying to build a new shelter. Here is what that might look like graphically. You have got a number of dogs on the vertical axis, the months of the year along the horizontal axis, and this black bar represents the number of housing units. You could look at this data, just looking at the data, not even going to the shelter, and you calculate the holding capacity which we said was 15, on average of 15 across the year, you already know this shelter is crowded. There is going to be multiple animals per run if you look at the information like this. So the next calculation that I think you all should be aware of is what's called staffing capacity. And that is the number of staff members required to meet the minimum care requirements for the number of animals that are housed in the shelter. This is a nice one because all three of the organizations that you see up here, the National Animal Control Association, the Association of Shelter Vets, and the Humane Society of the United States all agree that you should have on average 15 minutes to take care of every animal. That's just cleaning and feeding only. That's how they break it down. Nine minutes for cleaning, six minutes for feeding, total of 15 minutes per animal per day just to meet those very basic requirements of cleaning and feeding. So if we look at an example of that, here is the calculations for

the Just One More shelter who is caring for 100 animals each day. What we have done is calculate out the number of hours per day it would take for cleaning and feeding. So multiply by 15 minutes per animal, divided by 60 minutes to get your hours. You need 25 staff hours per day to clean and feed those animals. Most of the time you don't have a full eight hour day to do all of these things, cleaning and feeding. You want to get it done really within the first three hours, not only because most shelters don't open to the public at that point, but it's just unfair to the animals to have to be sitting in there waiting the whole day or seeing other dogs being fed and they are not getting fed. So we shoot to have those things done within three hours. So if we divide that 25 hours by three hours, that should need eight and a half staff members during that three-hour period to get that done. So let's compare that to the other shelter that is only caring for 50 animals per day. Remember, they are saving the exact same number in the end. They only need 12 1/2 hours per day for cleaning and feeding which equates to only 4 1/2 staff members. So there is a huge financial savings as well in staff time. So they are saving the same number of animals, taking better care of the animals, and it's costing less. So I rounded up nine staff members for the Just One More shelter, five staff members for the Gator Grad shelter. And the conclusion that you could make in this shelter in this shelter is that reducing length of stay, like they did in the Gator Grad shelter, is going to decrease the number of staff members needed to provide basic care, or you can look it the other way. Maybe they already have nine staff members in that

shelter or 10 staff members or whatever. Now they have got extra time available to do other things, because everybody knows there is a lot more that has to happen besides cleaning and feeding. All right. So the last calculation, I believe, is the live release. This is defined as the number of animals that leave the shelter by any means other than euthanasia or in-shelter death. Usually that's return to owner, adoption or transfer to a partnering rescue operation. Usually this is expressed as a percentage of intake. You will see some shelters report this as what's called a save rate. That's when they express it as a percent of outcome. The potential problem with that is that that's going to be a falsely elevated number. I will show you that in a minute. That's fine, as long as you understand what you're actually looking at. So this is a simple percentage. Number of animals released alive, divided by the number of animals admitted, multiplied by 100. So for our Gator Grad shelter, let's say that they release 100 animals alive each month, divide by the 150 animals that they admitted. That gives them a 67% live release rate. Okay. We look at the Just One More shelter. They are calculating their live release rate as a save rate. They are calculating it as a percent of outcome. Let's say they only release 75 animals alive per month. So 25 fewer in this example. Let's say only 80 of the animals actually left the shelter. That's all they are counting. They are not counting that 150 that actually came in. They are going to report out 94 percent live release rate, which looks a heck of a lot better. As we just went through, you saw the conditions in that shelter are probably worse. It's costing them a lot more, and they are actually

releasing 25 fewer animals per month given this example. So the point is to pay attention to how it's actually being calculated so you know. Maybe you want to report this outcome, this save rate, to your funders and donors in the community to look at how good you're doing rather than report the rate out of intake. But you probably should know that rate out of intake for your internal operations so you know how many animals are actually leaving as opposed to sitting in the shelter waiting for something else to happen. Okay. That's the end of the math. So what we'll look at next is quickly go through these tools to help reduce crowding if it's present in the shelter. I think you guys have a copy of this sheet in your notes. So the first thing I need to do is identify a population manager. This is a person that is going to lead these population rounds that I will talk about in a minute. They are going to be responsible for monitoring these statistics and going through the shelter each day and figuring out where the hold-ups are and making sure that all these tools are being used to the best of their ability. We are going to perform daily rounds. We're going to do what's called pathway planning, and then we're going to look at ways that you might be able to divert intake from the shelter altogether. So daily rounds is again a proactive approach to in-shelter care. You might have heard in previous lectures about veterinary rounds. You're going around looking at the animals that are sick or need medical or behavioral attention and coming up with your treatment plan. You might have heard about facility rounds where somebody goes around to inspect that things are clean, things are functioning properly, and there is no hazards to the

public. This is a different function than those rounds. They may all happen together, all at the same time by the same group of people, but there is distinct functions to the daily rounds that I'm talking about right now. So the specific goals of these daily rounds, we want to see what the animal's needs are, both physical and behavioral. We want to identify those needs and then create a response plan to address those needs. And then we want to follow up and make sure that those needs actually get addressed and there is some sort of accountability to make sure that something happened. So the daily rounds team should be a group of people. You want to have that population manager involved. They sort of run this part of the rounds. It's nice to have a member of the operations management team there. They are the ones that are on the floor day to day, making sure that things are functioning, they have some authority to direct staff. So it's important that they are involved. A member of the veterinary staff. We are going to be looking at, even if it's not specifically veterinary rounds, you're going to be looking at things that impact physical and behavioral health. So who better to do that than the veterinarian. And then it's important to have an executive management team member accompany the rounds team even if they don't do it every day. Once or twice a week maybe. Because they are going to be the person who is ultimately responsible for making sure things happen in the shelter. They also need to know what's actually going on on the floor. Many times they are sitting up in an office somewhere working on other things. They don't know what's happening in their own facility. So it's

important that they get down and inspect the animals with the rest of the team on a regular basis. So what do you do? To actually walk through the shelter each day and evaluate each and every animal that's in the shelter. These are the five questions that we always say you need to ask. So you want to know who are they. Do they have identification on them? Does it match the right identification? How are they physically, mentally? Are they okay? Is there something that we need to do for them to make them okay? Are they where they should be? Are we talking about a sick animal in a room with a bunch of healthy animals? Are we talking about puppies and kittens in a room with adult animals? That sort of thing. Do you need something today or do you need something to be scheduled? Are you waiting for spay/neuter surgery? Let's make sure that you're on the list so that can happen. Waiting for behavior evaluations. Make sure that that's in progress and scheduled to go as quickly as possible. The point is that all these things should be happening and you want to make sure that they are happening so that you can go back and make sure it happens as quick as possible so you can reduce length of stay so you can save more animals in the end. Some of the specific things that you want to look at: Food and water consumption, urination/defecation, general attitude and behavior. Can they walk around? Are they comfortable? Is there any signs of illness or pain that might have been missed on other rounds? So here is an example of a dog that I saw when we were walking through one shelter. What do you guys notice about this dog? What? Struggling to move, right? Maybe some

problems with ambulation, maybe some pain. What's that? He doesn't have much room. Yeah. Unfortunately that's sort of a standard, two sided dog kennel. It took him a long time to lay down and get comfortable, right? I don't know if anybody can appreciate it in a video. Did anybody see a cause for these signs? I think I heard it. Those are his claws. So that's an easy fix, right? I think I talked to you about that in a previous lecture, looking at those things when they come in, to make sure that that's not happening. That's cruelty. So we have to address that, and that's an easy fix to make that dog comfortable in that situation. So that's something that you might notice on rounds, walking by, and you see that dog having some trouble. You might pause and investigate that a little further and then make sure that some action is taken to get that need addressed. Now there is some special considerations. You want to think about when you're doing these rounds when did cleaning and feeding occur. Ideally you want to do them before cleaning and feeding happens because in this example here, it's a little bit hard to see. Obviously you can see that there is some diarrhea and not appropriately formed feces in the cage. There is a full bowl of food right here. The dog is not eating. A full bowl of water. You may not be able to appreciate it. It's kind of yellow tinged, that water. It turned out there was disinfectant in there. So not a clean source of water available for that dog. He is not eating, probably not feeling well. He has some signs of GI disease. If you had walked by after this was cleaned up and right after they fed, you may not know any of those things are going on. So it's important to pay attention

to the timing of rounds when that's happening. And then for group-housed animals, if you're in a shelter that's co-housing dogs or group housing cats, that can get really tricky. So you want to be sure that once in a while that you're actually monitoring them during feeding so you can assess their appetite and know any conflicts that may have arisen. So here is a video. So a shelter that is co-housing dogs. We were monitoring them during feeding time to see how things were going. He finally give ups. So that poor dog, they had been together, I think, for three days at that point. Who knows if that dog in the back had actually eaten anything in those three days in that room together. That's obviously something important that you want to know. And that's an easy fix, right? What could you do? Put the guillotine down, feed them separately as long as they were getting along in all other ways. Maybe there was something else happening there. So when you're doing daily rounds you want to have a actual written sheet that you're going through. In most of the software programs you can actually print out a shelter inventory. That's not too difficult. Here is an example of what a sheet like that might look like. Basically you want to write down what needs to happen. So that's your action item. Any notes about it. It's nice to record who initiated this action, who is requesting it. And then a column to check off when it actually gets completed so you can have that follow-up and make sure that it gets completed. And you can look back at these sheets. You can look at it every day as you do the daily rounds to figure out the obstacles to animal flow, what is preventing them from

getting out quicker. Maybe you look at this sheet and you have got 10 dogs waiting for behavior evaluation. So what's the hold-up there? Do we need to train more people to do behavior evaluations? Is that person not doing it efficiently enough? What's going on? This allows for open communication so that you see it's very clear who wants what done and who did it so you can keep track of that thing and insure accountability. If somebody didn't do what was asked of them, let's go find out why. Did they not know they were supposed to do it? Did they not know how to do it? Was it not communicated to them, et cetera? All right. And then pathway planning. I mentioned this during the intake talk a little bit, but I kind of skipped over it because I knew we would talk about it here. Pathway planning actually starts at intake, but this is a proactive approach to animal disposition, proactive approach to how the animal is going to leave the shelter. And the idea is that at most places you have an idea when the animal comes in what's the most likely path that it's going to leave that shelter. You know if you are presented with a cute fluffy kitten, it will probably get adopted real easily. You identify the likely outcome for that animal and try to get them there as quickly as possible. So you define this pathway at intake, and you update it every day when you're on daily rounds to make sure that it's still the appropriate pathway for animal. So the common pathways that we're talking about are return to owner, and ways of speeding up the return to owner pathway are to insure that you're doing proper microchip scanning which we spent a lot of time on the other day and in Dr. Levy's lecture as well. Making sure you

have some mechanism for lost and found animals. If you have a lost and found book, is somebody actually going through it. Checking to make sure that those animals aren't in the shelter. Is everybody's picture on the website? Is it clear? All the things that we talked about the other day. For adoptions. Fast track adoptions. That cute fluffy kitten or the purebred dog who you know will get adopted really quickly, bumped ahead of the line, so they move straight up to adoption so they can get out quicker and that space can be opened up for the next animal. Open selection is another way to speed up the pathway to adoption. That's where you have got the whole shelter open to the public. You don't have a separate area where animals are in their holding period that the public can't go into. They can see all the animals that are available. They can sign up for one that they like. Maybe it's not ready that day because it's in its holding period. There is some education involved in that, but this way it's signed up for adoption. You know that's the pathway it's going on. As soon as it becomes available, it can go to adoption rather than having to wait. It's chosen for adoption. It goes through whatever adoption procedures. It goes through spay/neuter. Then it's put on the adoption floor and then it gets selected. It just cuts down that time by a little bit so that we can free up that space for the next animal. Transfer to partner, making sure you know who the rescue groups in town are and what they are good at. Maybe you have got a really great hound rescue in town. You get a litter of hound puppies in. You want to be on the phone with them as soon as you know that's coming in and try to arrange them to get

to that group. Maybe you could even have the animal control officer drop them off at that organization if you have that sort of arrangement in place so they don't even have to come into a shelter. Then if you're talking about euthanasia, whether it's owner-request euthanasia or euthanasia that's been selected in house, you want to be sure that you have people that are trained and schedule to perform that in a timely fashion. You don't want somebody to come in and request euthanasia of their animal and then that person is not there that day and they have to wait a few days in the shelter for that to happen. So making sure that that is ready to go as well. And then finally, intake diversion is the last thing that I want to touch on. Just like it sounds like, a proactive approach to preventing animals from coming into the shelter in the first place. These are just a few ideas. There is lots of different ways to do this. Night drop boxes. This is an example of one. If you guys don't know, there are basically cages available to the public after hours so they can anonymously drop off an animal and leave it there overnight. So closing those night drop boxes actually can help reduce intake. That's something that we have actually done in Alachua County, and it helped a lot with reducing intake. I believe they haven't seen an increase in the number of animals dropped off, over the fence, or all the negative things that you think that are associated with doing that, and thinking about having animals unsupervised sitting in those cages overnight. People will shove multiple animals in there. If somebody comes in and it's already full, they will still put their animal in there. So it creates a huge welfare concern. So that's

one way of doing that. Offer behavior counseling. You guys know by now that the No. 1 reason animals are turned into shelters are for behavior problems. Many of them are preventable. Making sure that you have somebody around who can actually help counsel owners with some of those simple behavior problems or at least know where you can refer people to when they come in if they are actually willing to work with that animal and want to keep the animal. There is one particular problem that they don't know what to do about. Encourage owners to re-home the animals themselves. Most people don't know what it's like in a shelter. They don't understand all the pressures that we're under. They think that we can bring the animal to the shelter and it's going to get re-homed, and that's what they do. So if we can actually put a little bit of that burden on them, a lot of times that will be successful. Ask them if they have tried to re-home it themselves. Give them some suggestions for where you think is a good place for them to advertise or to try to re-home that animal. Transfer puppies and kittens to foster homes. Still having them come to the shelter but not into is shelter building per se. Maybe you have them go straight to a foster home so that they are still there being cared for through your system but they are not contributing to crowding in the building itself. You can restrict or schedule owner relinquishment. There is no reason why we have to let people come in anytime whenever they want. Let's do it by appointments like you do with any other service that you receive. Make an appointment. Come in and we will be happy to take in your animal in a week. You can even give it a vaccine that first

time it comes in so that it's well vaccinated by the time it comes to you and has to actually stay in the shelter. A lot of times people will find placement for themselves if they have to wait a few days. So then you may have diverted intake that way as well. Then, of course, T and R for feral cats. That's super important. Everybody is very familiar with that here at UF. So in summary active population management, I tried to emphasize the point about being active and proactive and actually making decisions that influence what happens rather than waiting for problems to develop. Active population management insures that you have good physical and behavioral welfare. It doesn't really maximize the number of lives that you can save through the shelter system. Along with that, you want to minimize length of stay as probably the biggest key and preventing crowding, all of its negative consequences, and the biggest way of actually increasing number of animals that are released alive. Capacity planning. Some of those calculations that we talked about can help you control a population that you have and understand the population that you have and the needs that you have to meet for those animals so you can plan your resources appropriately. And then we talked about three tools: Daily rounds, pathway planning, and intake diversion. Three tools that can help you proactively manage the population and keep it within your capacity for care. That is it. So if you guys have any questions we have a few minutes left. Otherwise we will end recording at 11:30.