



# Shadowing Veterinarians at the Andover Animal Hospital

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Earth, Life and Time, General Biology



## Service Site:

I completed my practicum project at the Andover Animal Hospital in Andover Massachusetts. At the Andover Animal Hospital the staff strives to provide the best care for the animals and their owners. They have been providing and caring for pets for over 50 years.

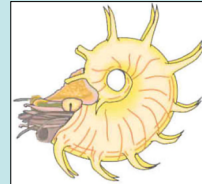
## Issue Confronting the Site:

While shadowing the veterinary staff at the Andover Animal Hospital I was working to determine if veterinary medicine was the path I wanted to pursue. The Andover Animal Hospital the staff works together and with owners to provide the best care for the animals.



## Activities:

I shadowed the veterinarians through out their daily routines. I followed the veterinarians as they met with and consulted with animals and their owners, observed the paper work research and phone calls which occurred behind the scenes, as well as and surgeries and dental procedures. I also was able to sit in on their case conferences, regarding interesting cases that come up, observing the veterinarians use each other to determine the best way to proceed with the case. In addition to following the veterinarians I was able to observe the veterinary technicians and learn how they work with the veterinarians to provide care for the animals.



A veterinary technician performing a dental cleaning on a cat at the Andover Animal Hospital

Photo taken from  
<http://andoveranimal.com/gallery.shtml>, 2008  
Andover Animal Hospital

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## Impact:

Shadowing at the Andover Animal Hospital was an influential experience. I was able to get to know the veterinarians and learn about their experiences in veterinarian medicine from college to where they are now. They were able to give me valuable insight into the differences between medical school and veterinary school in addition to what options are available after graduating veterinary school. Also, being able to observe the daily work of the veterinarians was very helpful. I was able to watch patient exams and observe the interaction needed between the veterinarian and both the animals and owners. When interesting or difficult cases emerged I was able to watch their conferences discussing the case and the best way to proceed. After the conferences the veterinarians would explain the tests done and x-rays taken allowing me to understand and see how they came to their conclusions.

Going into the surgical room allowed me to see the multiple skills needed to be known by all the veterinarians. Surgery was what I was considering if I was to choose the medical path, so being able to see that veterinarians work both with the animals in the examination room and in the surgical room was helpful in showing the wide variability of skills. It also showed the rotation of the duties, so no two days were the same.

Shadowing the veterinarians at the Andover Animal Hospital was a great experience. As much as I learned from my time there and enjoyed being there shadowing the veterinarians has lead me to the decision that I do not think that veterinary school is the right path for me. It also helped me to see that through the comparison of what I had learned from the veterinarians and other sources that medical school is also not what I am considering at the time.

## Future Work:

In the future I would enjoy continuing to shadow at the animal hospital even though it is not where I plan to end up. For helping me to find out what path I plan on taking, in the future I will intern and volunteer in other biological fields, to explore other opportunities for my future.