LOGAN NESER: Hi! I am here today with Dr. Sara Pizano to talk about the integration of shelter, medical, and management teams for a collaborative healthcare system. Dr. Pizano was the Director of Veterinary Services at the Humane Society of Broward County where she supervised staff in the medical and surgical services department. She then served as the Director of Miami-Dade Animal Services from 2005 to 2012. Currently, she is the founder and leader of Team Shelter USA and the author of The Best Practices Playbook for Animal Shelters. Thank you so much for joining us Dr. Pizano. During your career, you have served as a shelter veterinarian and as a shelter director. We would like to hear some of your insights into the role of each position and working together to create collaborative healthcare programs for the shelter.

SARA PIZANO: Thank you so much for having me! And one thing I want shelter veterinarians to know about the director’s position is that there are a lot of people pulling at the director and telling that... Sorry. let me start over. [laughs]

LOGAN: Go for it. Whenever you’re ready.

PIZANO: So, what I would like shelter veterinarians to know about the director position in a shelter, especially a public shelter, there are many layers and people and leaders above them who are asking of their time and directing them. So, they are really pulled in a lot of different directions. So, with municipal or public shelters, it could be the Board of County Commissioners, a county or city manager, municipal attorneys, so there are a lot of things the shelter director or, I’m sorry, the director has to think about with respect to the overall organization. And if you were just doing the veterinary services part, you wouldn’t necessarily be exposed to those things. Break.

PIZANO: So, what we want to see is shelter directors that engage and include veterinarians in their management team, and that is so important because everything from intake policies, population management, capacity for care, live outcome programs, each of those steps has to do with health, physical and mental, health and well-being for those shelter pets. So, it is really important that directors of shelters include veterinarians in the leadership team.

Break.

PIZANO: So, if you’re a new shelter director, I really want you to research your organization, understand the hierarchy, whether it’s a private shelter or a public. If it’s a private shelter, it’s governed by a board of directors, and it’s really important for you to know what is being asked of the director and just in general how the shelter and the infrastructure is set up and that way you can best serve the shelter and be a good partner with the director.