Reviewer 3

Dear Reviewer 3,

Thank you for your suggestions. We agree with your comments, and we corrected point by point the manuscript accordingly as follows:

The title needs to clearly indicate that this is an opinion paper. Title suggestion: Clinical Practice Guidelines: An Opinion of the Legal Implications to Veterinary Medicine. The title was changed as suggested.

Someone needs to go through and carefully review the English text as there are still some word usage problems. The text has been proofread and corrections have been made (All changes that we made are highlighted by blue colour for you to see them.)

Table 1 has a mix of non-italic and italic font at the bottom. We have corrected the font used in Table 1.

Lines 282-283 need citations for those lines. What courts and where? The text presents the opinion of the authors with the aim to underline that whenever an injury results from an activity at the veterinarian’s office that is not considered a rendering of professional veterinary medical services, the cause of action is not malpractice, but ordinary negligence. It is important to point out that a “duty” is an obligation to satisfy a standard of conduct toward another. One must act reasonably in light of apparent risk. Veterinarians owe to their clients the duty to practice veterinary medicine in such a manner so as to meet the standards expected of the profession. Veterinarians owe this duty to their animal patients and also to their human clients.

Lines 314-319 needs a statement that an expert will still need to state what CPG should be used. In the text, we have explained that the main issues commonly calling for the expert testimony are: (1) the applicable standard of care, (2) causation, (3) the assessment of damages, which often involves (4) medical prognosis.
The type of issue involved dictates the nature and scope of the expert witness’s input. The last three of these issues - causation, assessment of damages, and prognosis - usually require the expert witness to apply his or her expertise *directly* to the question at hand. Even where a CPG contains information relevant to causation, assessment of damages, or prognosis, it is hard to see how a court could use this information without the accompanying testimony of a medical expert witness.

Authors did do significant refinement and improvement of the ms. This work is still primarily an opinion piece and needs to clearly state that. Thank you. As suggested, we changed the title to clearly state that the paper presents opinions of the authors.

Best regards,

Prof. Annamaria Passantino