

Women veterinarians earn \$100K less than men annually

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Women veterinarians make less than their male counterparts, new research from Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine has found—with an annual difference of around \$100,000 among the top quarter of earners.

The disparity predominantly affects recent graduates and the top half of earners, according to the research, the first overarching study of the wage gap in the veterinary industry.

"Veterinarians can take many paths in their careers, all of which affect earning potential," said the paper's senior author, Dr. Clinton Neill, assistant professor in the Department of Population Medicine and Diagnostic Sciences.

"Similar to what's been found in the human medicine world, we found the wage gap was more prominent in the beginning of their careers but dissipates after about 25 years. This has large implications for lifetime wealth and earnings, as men will consequently have a larger sum of wealth at the end of their careers because of this."

Neill and his collaborators examined practice [ownership income](#), experience and specialty certification.

The reasons for the earning inequality are challenging to identify. The researchers cite unconscious bias, size of practices, less external financing and societal expectations as potential factors.

The industrywide effects of this bias can be linked to some common misconceptions, Neill said. While they did find an ownership disparity, this didn't account for the wage gap as a whole.

Their analysis showed that type of ownership also plays a role. Partnerships, for example, are more beneficial for women's income

earning potential than sole proprietorships, while any form of ownership benefits men's incomes. When it comes to the number of years worked, the study found that men move into higher income brackets at lower levels of experience than women.

While the paper aimed to lay the groundwork for more solution-oriented studies, the researchers suggested that measures such as industrywide income transparency could help close the gap.

More information: Clinton L. Neill et al, The role of experience, specialty certification, and practice ownership in the gender wage gap for veterinarians in the United States, *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* (2021). [DOI: 10.2460/javma.258.6.591](https://doi.org/10.2460/javma.258.6.591)

Provided by Cornell University

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