As a full voting member of the House of Delegates of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association (AHVMA) and its sister organization, the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Foundation (AHVMF) wish to comment upon the appropriate use of vaccines for dogs. This statement and summary were prompted by the recent promotion by Walgreens Pharmacy in conjunction with www.ShotVet.com and others throughout the many states where this company does business.

Mobile veterinary clinics set up in conjunction with Walgreens are advertising and offering vaccine packages at discounted prices directly to dog owners, including the legally required rabies vaccines. Our comments and concerns are listed below:

* As with human medicine, any medical procedure, including vaccination, must be performed on healthy individuals after a patient/client relationship has been established;
* This requires obtaining a patient history and physical examination along with maintenance of client /patient records;
* Informed consent must be obtained beforehand from all clients, and appropriate information should be provided about the benefits and risks of vaccination;
* Follow up monitoring of the dog should be made for the 30-45 minutes following vaccination, to watch for adverse events including anaphylaxis and anaphylactoid reactions;
* Should these occur, immediate treatment is required by the attending veterinarian and staff;
* Clients should be told and given appropriate literature explaining that adverse events can still occur for up to 30-45 days after vaccination, especially for rabies vaccine, as all but one currently licensed rabies vaccines also contain thimerosol (mercury).

We also believe that the CEO and other managerial staff of Walgreens Pharmacy should be informed and further educated about this matter. The outcome of such dialog would hopefully be an informed educational effort by Walgreens to encourage clients to seek out local veterinarians for the medical and preventive health care of their pets. This should include the use, type, and frequency of vaccinations, as appropriate for the animal, and offering of serum vaccine titers as an alternative for routine boosters of previously immunized pets.