Getting to Know Your Point of Care Machines to Improve Patient Care
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In-House vs. Reference Lab Diagnostic Testing: The Great Debate
In the veterinary world, there is an ongoing debate between in-house and reference lab diagnostic testing. While certain tests must be submitted to a reference lab due to their complexity or unavailability at the point of care, veterinarians have many excellent options for running routine chemistry and hematology tests within their hospitals. Doing so ensures the best patient care and can also improve hospital profit.

Benefits of In-House Testing
Running routine and stat chemistry and hematology tests on in-house analyzers can increase the cost of labor, but it helps your technical and medical team become proficient in the use and maintenance of point of care analyzers, as well as test result interpretation. Becoming familiar with the tools of our trade makes us experts in their best use and limitations. As they say, practice makes perfect.

Considerations for Reference Lab Testing
Some clinics opt to submit routine tests to reference labs to save money and labor. This approach can be cost-effective and reduce the workload on in-house staff. However, it may result in longer turnaround times for test results, potentially delaying clinical decisions and patient care.

Finding the right point of care diagnostic lab solution helps mitigate the cost of labor to perform tests and reduces the cost to train teams. When considering lab equipment, choose a system that is not only accurate, but also reliable, easy to operate, low maintenance, and reasonable cost. The labor costs to perform lab work in house can be managed and may generate greater income as patients are diagnosed and treated sooner.

Conclusion
Both in-house and reference lab testing have their advantages and challenges. The key is to find the right balance that works for your practice, ensuring the best care for your patients while maintaining efficiency and profitability.