



# Advancement of the Professions Committee Meeting

14th November 2023

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

## **Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC)**

**14 November 2023, 14:30-16:30 remotely via Microsoft Teams**

### **Agenda**

- 1. Apologies for absence, declarations of interest and welcome**
- 2. Sustainability workshop (Annex 1)**
- 3. Matters arising and minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2023**
- 4. Workstream updates**
- 5. AOB**
- 6. Date of next meeting 07 February 2024**

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	APC
Date	12 September 2023
Title	Advancement of the Professions Committee Report 12 2023.
Summary	To note the attached minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2023.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	N/A
Author	Stephanie Taylor Advancement of the Professions Administrator s.taylor@rcvs.org.uk

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	N/A

<b><sup>1</sup>Classifications explained</b>	
Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant

	committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation, or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

## **2Classification rationales**

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others</li> <li>2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation</li> <li>3. To protect commercially sensitive information</li> <li>4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS</li> </ol>
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation</li> </ol>

## Minutes of the Advancement of the Professions Committee meeting held in RCN at 2:30

<b>Members:</b>	Dr S Paterson (Chair)	RCVS President, Council Lead for Environment and Sustainability, Lead for Leadership & Chair of the Advancement of the Professions Committee
	Mrs B Andrews-Jones	VN Council Chair, Chair of Innovation
	Ms A Boag	Chair of Board of Trustees for RCVS Knowledge
	Dr M Donald	Senior Vice-President
	Dr L Allum	RCVS Council Member
	Dr T Gardiner	Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Chair, and Lead for Global Development
	Dr C Tufnell	Chair of RCVS Fellowship Board
	Ms L Lockett	RCVS CEO and Vet Futures Project Board
	Mr M Rendle	VN Futures Project Board
	Mr J M Castle	RCVS Lay Council Member
	Dr K Richards	Chair of Mind Matters Initiative
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mrs A Belcher	Director for Advancement of the Professions
	Mrs J Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Miss G Gill	Leadership and Inclusion Manager
	Mr M Sundhu	Policy and Public Affairs Officer
	Miss A Hanson	Media and Publications Officer
	Mr I Holloway	Director of Communications
	Mr Luke Bishop	Media and Publications Manager
	Miss J Macdonald	VN Futures Project Lead
	Mr B Myring	Policy and Public Affairs Manager
	Dr L Prescott-Clements*	Director of Education
	Ms A Youngs	Fellowship and Leadership Senior Officer
	Miss L Omoryui	AP Officer

\* apologies

### Welcome and apologies for absence

1. The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and introduced new members, Mark Castle and Melissa Donald
2. No apologies were received.
3. No new Declarations of Interest were reported.

### Minutes of the meeting held on 09 May 2023

4. The Chair discussed the matters arising from the minutes.
5. The committee were informed that due to external factors, the Fellowship Development Working Party had been delayed. However, the Projects and Engagement Officer had reached out to the Fellowship with suggestions on what the Fellowship could do to be more visible within the profession and had received some positive feedback and suggestions. The Fellowship Application Review Working Party had been formed of the current assessors were to be provided with a draft rubric and application form for review, which would then inform the guidance document provided for those wishing to apply for Fellowship.

### APC meetings going forward

6. The Chair updated that moving forward there will be two online meetings and one in person as per the Council decision earlier in the month. The panel suggested that meetings going forward can be held in a workshop style, noting that meetings should have a longer duration to allow detailed questions from members.

### Workstream updates

7. The Chair addressed elements of the workstream updates, starting with Diversity and Inclusion (DIG). The DIG Chair will be attending the Ethnic Diversity Scholars Networking Event, engage with scholarships recipients and subsequently provide feedback with the group regarding scholarships.
8. A discussion around potential keynote speakers for future Fellowship events was had. People are invited to recommend speakers or suggest topics. ,.
9. The Chair then shifted the discussion to Global report It was shared that the Federations of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) is actively working to establish a charitable organisation aimed at providing grants to veterinarians in need.
10. The panel were informed that a scoping meeting for a World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) statutory body twinning project between the RCVS and the Botswana Veterinary Council (BVC) was planned for March 2023, but this was cancelled due to local issues.

11. The Chair moved on the Knowledge (RCVSK) recognising the extensive update congratulating the ongoing work. The new CEO will be announced shortly.
12. It was shared that RCVS Knowledge and Fellowship are exploring opportunities for collaborative work, especially around sustainability work under FSAP.
13. It was noted that the brand new RVN 'starting out' course is being presented at BVNA Congress.
14. The Chair highlighted that there are updates on the Diversity and Inclusion and widening participation groups.

### Mind Matters Initiative

15. It was noted that there will be further engagement with rural communities as an area of priority. Students are also having a good amount of engagement with MMI, with various updates at vet schools and with VN training.
16. Mind Matters Initiative (MMI) will be restarting Lunch and Learns - there are currently different options being explored that will be piloted later this year.
17. The final in-person courses for the year have had an excellent sign-up rate, and thanks were given to the comms team for their support with the promotion of these.
18. The panel were informed that MMI are looking at how they can collaborate with different organisations, or through existing events, noting that the aim is to reduce time out of practices and cost of continuing professional development (CPD).
19. The committee were reminded that there are tickets available for the Mind Matters Initiative Research Symposium 2023. The event features a thorough programme covering various aspects including students, veterinary nurses, long term careers etc. The Mind Matters Initiative team also received positive feedback about the social media pages and speakers.
20. It was noted that Sam Hurley, Mind Matters Initiative (MMI) Senior Officer, will start the role soon.
21. The panel were informed that MMI is working with BSAVA to provide a stream for BSAVA Congress 2024. There will be an update given when the plan is finalised from BSAVA.
22. It was highlighted that the key focus is evidence-based medicine combined with lived experience, this will build on the success of the neurodiversity stream earlier this year.
23. A discussion took place around the location of the MMI training, the team were informed that suggestions into other areas will be considered.

### Discussion: VN Futures

24. Jill Macdonald presented 'Development of an outreach scheme for Veterinary Nursing' and gave an overview of the VN Futures plans.

25. The committee were informed that the resources around the veterinary nursing and veterinary medicine on the RCVS website needed updating, and it was suggested that the VN Futures resources could be used on the RCVS website and as a guide for creating veterinary focussed materials. A discussion was also had around potential ideas for future consideration. A meeting will be planned with key stakeholders
26. It was noted that VN Futures is currently in communication with STEM Ambassadors around sharing VN Futures School Ambassadors resources on the STEM website. ambassadors can make and accept offers for talks in different areas on the STEM website, and there are plans to create a simple guide for doing this to make the process simple to navigate. The ambassadors are located all over the UK to ensure a geographical reach.
27. It was highlighted that the resources for the ambassadors going out to schools are suited for both primary and secondary school.
28. The panel were informed that there is ongoing work around reaching out to further education colleges by the VN committee members, as they could facilitate a meet and greet and discuss VN Futures.
29. It was noted that there is more work to be done to gain credibility from teachers.

**ACTION:** VN Futures to share an update regarding the resources, STEM and ambassadors in February APC meeting.

#### Oral update: Fellowship and FSAP working groups

30. The Chair then moved on discuss updates with Fellowship and Fellowship Science Advisory Panel (FSAP) group over the next year, where it was noted that Fellows On Tour would be revisited, with Fellows volunteering to speak at veterinary schools on their areas of expertise.
31. The Chair informed the panel that the Fellows On Tour will be supported by 37 fellows who will visit veterinary schools within a close geographical range to deliver four or five short talks. The Fellows will be visiting nearby schools to avoid costs associated with travel expenses and accommodation.
32. It was suggested that to ensure consistency, a template, checklist or guidance notes be created to provide to those conducting the talks/debates as part of Fellows On Tour
33. The Chair discussed 'Fellows of the week', which could consist of self-recorded videos serving as career resources to increase visibility of the Fellowship. These 30 second videos could be put out on social media to increase engagement.
34. It was suggested to create a press list featuring Fellowships members from various specialities who can be contacted by the media to provide specialist commentary. Please note they would not represent RCVS.
35. It was suggested to create an additional element to the directory of Fellows to highlight those available for keynote speakers and their specialist areas, to enhance visibility of the Fellowship.



36. An update on Antimicrobial Awareness week was given and the NHS plans included materials for medical staff visiting schools to discuss Antimicrobial Awareness. It was suggested that this approach would be useful for Fellows to also carry out school visits and discuss Antimicrobial Awareness.
37. The Chair praised Dr Emma Milne for her contribution as Projects and Engagement Officer of the Fellowship Board.
38. The Chair discussed the subgroup of the Fellowship Science Advisory Panel (FSAP) relating to sustainability work, noting that there are two sub-groups within this. The title is still yet to be finalised, though a working title is Net Zero. One sub-group will be surgically orientated and the other will be medicine orientated.
39. A Chair has been selected for both groups, and an announcement will be made in the future.
40. The panel were informed that the UKHACC Chair of the Net Zero surgery will be at the London Vet Show in November providing a talk on the topic of sustainability.

#### Oral update: Chronic Illness Survey

41. An update on the Chronic Illness Survey was given. The survey ran for a six week period in May and June in partnership with BVCIS. There were over 60,000 people contacted in total, emphasising the range of perspectives. Participants did not need to have a disability or chronic illness to take part. It was noted that there was a total of 4,375 responses, with 2,781 completions and 1,594 partial responses. In total there was 3,411 responses to analyse. It was highlighted that over 1200 people gave permission to be contacted for further research which illustrated the interest in the topic. The panel were informed that the results are unable to be shared in this meeting. The IES will present their findings on the survey in the DIG meeting scheduled on 22 September 2023. It was noted that the results may be presented in the APC November meeting and more detail will be provided in the APC February meeting.

#### Survey of the Professions: Feedback from the Committee

42. The committee were asked to give feedback on the new 2024 Survey of the Professions

#### AOB

43. The committee were reminded about the commitment to look at sustainability and climate change in one APC meeting per year. This will be discussed during the APC meeting in November.
44. It was suggested that there could be a long- term focus around the impact of climate change of veterinary professions.

**ACTION:** Details on the workshop to be provided ahead of the meeting in November

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Advancement of the Professions Committee
Date	14 November 2023
Title	Environment & Sustainability - Progress Report
Summary	This paper summarises the history of the College's environment and sustainability work, and outlines current projects and workstreams.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Annex A – E&S Working Party Report 2021
Author	Ben Myring Policy and Public Affairs Manager b.myring@rcvs.org.uk

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	
Annex A	Unclassified	

## RCVS Environment & Sustainability – Progress Report

1. As a Royal College that regulates, the RCVS is committed to supporting and demonstrating sustainability both within our own workforce and within the veterinary professions.
2. The RCVS vision holds One Health at its core, promoting the interconnection between people, animals, flora & fauna and the global ecosystem. It is, therefore, essential that RCVS recognises its own environmental impact as an organisation, and promotes the importance of this to those on our Registers and to practices through the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme (PSS).
3. In 2021 the RCVS Environment & Sustainability Working Party (ESWP) was established as a task and finish group to develop both internal and external E&S policies. The report of the working party can be found in Annex A. The report established an internal E&S policy for the RCVS. It also recommended that the College's external, profession-facing policy should focus on the Practice Standards Scheme. Details of activities under both policies can be found below.

### Internal policy and activities

#### Investors in the Environment

4. In July 2021, following a recommendation from the ESWP, RCVS partnered on a voluntary basis with Investors in the Environment (iiE), an environmental accreditation scheme designed to help businesses reduce their environmental impact, raise awareness amongst colleagues and save businesses money on their energy costs where possible.
5. In September 2021, the staff-led RCVS Green Team wrote and implemented an environmental policy that is available to all staff.
6. The Green Team oversaw improvements internally at the College and in March 2022, RCVS achieved Bronze level membership from iiE for successfully introducing a robust environmental policy and established processes to measure the organisation's use of resources, including gas and electricity. The Green Team intends to achieve a minimum of Silver level membership once we are in our new home in Hardwick Street.

#### Engagement events

7. The Green Team also support the College in helping to plan staff engagement events and initiatives around sustainability and environmental issues, such as celebrating Earth Day and running sustainable Christmas competitions. In addition to encouraging staff through environmental policy to reduce power use, improve waste and recycling, and make travel more sustainable.
8. To coincide with the King's Coronation and the 'Big Help Out', the Green Team organised a litter pick in which staff could volunteer their time whilst all being geographically in different locations. The RCVS created a Just Giving page and raised £505 for the London Wildlife Trust.

9. The Green Team regularly circulates its 'GreenZine' newsletter to keep staff up to date on relevant developments and opportunities.

## Divestment

10. The Working Party also made a recommendation to the Finance and Resource Committee (FRC) to consider the College's investment portfolio and divest from fossil fuels. The FRC voted to look at this as part of a wider review into the development of an ethical investment policy. As a result, the College divested from all fossil fuel businesses because of their contribution to the climate crisis.
11. At the last meeting of FRC metallurgical coal was discussed and it agreed to divest of that as well (unlike thermal coal, metallurgical coal is not considered as a fossil fuel).

## External policy and activities

### Practice Standards

12. In July 2021 the Working Party recommended that the Practice Standards Group (PSG) take forward a project to work with an external consultant on putting environment and sustainability requirements into the PSS.
13. The new and amended standards were developed by the PSG in collaboration with the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare (CSH), a charitable organisation with extensive experience of supporting human healthcare services to implement sustainable practices.
14. Following changes agreed by RCVS Council on 9 June 2022, the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) published new environmental sustainability requirements, updates to current standards to incorporate sustainability, and a new Environmental Sustainability Award that aims to encourage and support the professions to lead the way in addressing the global climate crisis.
15. These measures were introduced in the following phases for veterinary practices:
  - a. The social sustainability changes and other minor clarifications effective immediately and assessed from October 2022
  - b. The new Environmental Sustainability Award, which allows practices to demonstrate that they have embedded environmentally sustainable behaviours and are excelling with their sustainability goals. The Award includes points for reducing waste, consolidating medicines orders and minimising drug wastage, and calculating the practice's carbon footprint and setting reduction targets, with assessments starting from January 2023.

- c. The new and amended Core Standards and General Practice level environmental sustainability standards effective from June 2023
16. Core standards of the Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) were updated in June requiring practices to have a policy covering the prescription of antiparasitics. The policy should reflect that antiparasitics should be prescribed only where it can be justified based on the needs of the individual animal, e.g. ectoparasiticide control advised with fluralaner as high risk tick area, oral product preferred as dog swims. The policy should not outline a 'blanket' or 'standard' approach to prescribing and will cover the prescription of POM-VPS and AVM-GSL products, as well as POM-Vs.

### UK Health Alliance on Climate Change

17. The RCVS is also a member of the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change (UKHACC), which coordinates action, provide leadership, and amplifies the voice of health professionals across the UK.
18. RCVS participated in a net-zero surgery focus group which resulted in 'The Green Surgery Report', commissioned by UKHACC, an evidence-based guide on how to mitigate the carbon footprint associated with surgical practice. The Report will be launched at the Future of Surgery Conference in London, UK on 14 November, 2023.
19. RCVS also contributed to the 'Biodiversity, Climate Change and Health Policy Report', commissioned by UKHACC, which sets out the impacts of biodiversity loss and climate change on health.
20. The RCVS was co-signatory of a UKHACC 'Zero Hour' letter to the Department of Health, calling for the Minister to support the enactment of the Climate and Ecology Bill.

### The Fellowship

21. Fellowship Day 2023 will feature a break-out discussion on the topic of Net Zero. Suggested topics include: preventative care; infections control; obesity; regenerative agriculture; medicines stewardship and sustainable prescribing. Fellowship day will also feature a keynote speech from Dame Sally Davies on One Health and Antimicrobial Resistance. This follows a keynote speech at RCVS Day from Doris-Ann Williams MBE on 'Antimicrobial resistance: the hidden pandemic. A one-health perspective'.
22. The Fellowship Science Advisory Panel has identified Net Zero as an area to explore due to the growing environmental concerns within the professions, and taking a lead from practices making significant progress in their ambition to reduce their carbon footprint.

23. Other activities within the Fellowship include holding discussions with schools (both Primary and Secondary) on antimicrobial resistance during November, especially during AMR week. Those taking part have been provided with presentation packs to ensure consistency.

### RCVS Knowledge

24. RCVS Knowledge is the independent charity partner of the RCVS sitting at the heart of the veterinary professions with a mission to advance the quality of care for the benefit of animals, the public and society.
25. As part of its work, Knowledge runs VetTeamAMR, an initiative that champions the responsible use of antimicrobials within companion animal, farm animal, and equine veterinary teams. This major collaborative project, part sponsored by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, brings together a cross-industry consortium to use and create the evidence base to support continuous improvements at the point of care.
26. As part of this offering, in May 2021, the charity launched Farm Vet Champions. This is an initiative that works to build a supportive community of farm animal veterinary professionals to collaborate and share knowledge to apply preventative measures and active management plans to establish and embed good antibiotic principles. In addition to working together to achieve continuous improvements, Farm Vet Champions commit to taking a series of learning modules, created by veterinary AMR experts across the professions. In November 2022, Farm Vet Champions won an award for an 'Innovative Approach to Antimicrobial Stewardship' from the Commonwealth Pharmacists Association and the International Pharmaceutical Federation. It was also shortlisted for the Antibiotic Guardian Shared Learning Awards 2022 by the UK Health Security Agency.
27. In November 2021, RCVS Knowledge launched the AMR Hub. A collection of freely accessible, evidence-based knowledge and resources from across the veterinary sector about antimicrobial use, covering antibiotics and anti-parasiticides, including anthelmintics. This is intended to provide a one-stop-shop for veterinary teams.
28. In May 2022, the charity launched its online Farm Vet Champions' SMART Goals tool. This enables veterinary teams to work together, regardless of their location, to set goals within self-selected teams, to help target, track and improve their antimicrobial prescribing.
29. In July 2022 it announced the inaugural annual RCVS Knowledge Awards for Antimicrobial Stewardship. The first winners were announced in May 2023. The charity is now accepting applications for next year's awards round.
30. In November 2022, RCVS Knowledge joined forces with others across the sector to run the first pilot Antibiotic Amnesty. This is being repeated throughout November 2023, alongside the World Health Organisation's 'World Antibiotic Awareness Week' which runs from 18 – 24 November 2024.

31. In June 2023 the charity launched the free learning modules for Companion Animal and Equine teams. The audit and benchmarking tool for companion animal and equine veterinary teams will enable them to measure and track change related to antimicrobial stewardship and use. This will be in use in 2024.

### Outreach

32. RCVS President Sue Paterson emphasised the key role of the veterinarian and wider team members in meeting sustainability goals in the food chain during a speech at the 2023 North of Ireland Veterinary Association (NIVA) gala dinner.
33. Sue Paterson will also be on a Net Zero Surgery workshop panel at London Vet Show 2023, with Fellows along with a representative from UKHACC to consider the newly launched report.

### Looking forward

34. The Working Party also recommended that the Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC) dedicate time at least once per year to discuss the sustainability work at the College and assess what more can be done.
35. The range of environment & sustainability-related activities carried out by the College is now rather broader than those proposed in the ESWP's report. There is an argument that a fresh statement of principles and related policy aims would be timely. Such a statement needs to recognise the limits of the College's ability to require compliance through regulation, along with the flexibility afforded by being a Royal College that regulates, for instance through the Fellowship, RCVS Knowledge, and the voluntary aspects of the PSS.

### Area of work

#### Diversity and Inclusion

**Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B.** Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.

#### Disability and Chronic illness survey

IES presented headline survey findings at the Diversity and Inclusion Group meeting on 22 September. The presentation was very well received. The full report is now in the review and editing stage. Further analysis of the data is also being undertaken. It is expected that the report will be ready for publication at the end of January/beginning of February 2024.

#### Black History Month 2023

This year, interviews, blogs and other content released for Black History Month 2021 and 2022 was reshared on social media. A blog was also published by the Diversity and Inclusion Senior Officer in which he shared his thoughts and personal reflections on the significance of Black History Month and importance of equity, diversity and inclusion.

**Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B.** Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.

#### Disability History Month

For the first time, the College will celebrate Disability History which runs from 16 November- 16 December 2023. There will be social media campaign and spotlight interviews featuring veterinary professionals with a breadth of different disabilities and conditions. Key aims of the campaign are:

- Showing people what is possible as a vet with a disability.
- Myth busting - dispelling myths that exist.
- Ensuring that we are creating a platform for multiple narratives to be heard.

#### Unconscious bias training

The leadership and inclusion manager is working with the Academy team to develop a generic course open to veterinary professionals on the Academy platform. It will be piloted and launched early in 2024.

Fellowship assessors will be required to complete this training before they can progress to the new Fellowship Assessor Training course.



**Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.**

**Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce?**

There are synergies between MMI, the Focused Licensure Working Group and Disability and Chronic Illness Survey, and the Fellowship Assessor training.

**Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee?**

**Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention?**

<b>Area of work</b>
<b>Global strategy</b>
<b>Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B.</b> Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.
<p><b>American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB)</b> The CEO attended the AAVSB Conference in Kansas in September, where delegates were particularly interested to hear about our recent Under Care changes, VetGDP and compassionate regulation.</p> <p><b>International Veterinary Regulators Network (IVRN)</b> In October, the CEO attended a meeting of the IVRN to start to plan the 2024 CPD events, and also discuss a potential joined-up approach to the regulation of AI in the veterinary space.</p> <p><b>Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)</b> The CEO has been asked to join the Minimising Practitioners Distress Expert Advisory Group of the AHPRA.</p>
<b>Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B.</b> Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.
<p><b>Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE)</b> The next FVE General Assembly will be held on 16-17 November in Brussels, and will include a meeting of the new Statutory Bodies Working Group, with RCVS representative Dr Kate Richards. We have also proposed a presentation on VetGDP during a session on graduate support, and are awaiting to hear if we have a slot.</p> <p>The following GA meeting will be held 14-16 June 2024 in Crete, Greece.</p> <p>The CEO will attend the first full meeting of the FVE Foundation Taskforce in December.</p> <p>She is also involved with the final stages of the work of the FVE Survey Taskforce, which has been working to produce a survey of the European profession.</p> <p>The CEO is also due to be a co-author on a paper around mental health in the European veterinary community, driven by the FVE secretariat. A presentation of some of the data was made by FVE at the recent Mind Matters Mental Health Research Symposium.</p>
<b>Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.</b>

<b>Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce?</b>
<b>Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee?</b>
<b>Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention?</b>
<p>It is worth highlighting that in its recent announcement (13 October) that it would be forming a veterinary regulator, the Government of Singapore referenced that it had studied the set up of the RCVS. We will reach out to see if they require any assistance.</p>

<b>Area of work</b>
<b>Mind Matters Initiative</b>
<b>Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Successful MMI Symposium held in Manchester on World Mental Health Day. Showcasing the latest updates from all Sarah Brown Grant holders, and celebrating the latest grant being awarded.</li> <li>- Welcomed our new MMI Senior Officer – S Hurley</li> <li>- Worshipful Company of Farmers – Health and Wellbeing Forum. Attended by Chair and Director. Excellent opportunity for further collaboration in the rural space, hugely welcoming group. Will be continuing to engage</li> <li>- Continuing to offer MMI speakers at various student and veterinary events</li> <li>- Building the operations and marketing plans for 2024</li> <li>- Finalising training (MHFA) for the last two months of the year, with a focus on ambulatory, geographical isolated veterinary professionals and students</li> <li>- New format of Campfire Chats has been planned out and speakers are being asked. Promotion of this will start shortly.</li> <li>- Meeting of the MMI Taskforce – positive and good contributions from all attendees.</li> <li>- Over 400 delegates have undertaken the MMI sponsored Line Manager training with VMG.</li> <li>- MMI is supporting the BSAVA Congress Wellbeing stream and EDI stream.</li> </ul>
<b>Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>
<p>Work is being carried out in alignment with the MMI Strategy. A new tracker has been built to allow for reporting against key targets.</p> <p>Risk Register is being updated and a check of all policies will be undertaken</p> <p>Meeting dates for 2024 Taskforce meetings are being planned, with the aim of holding one in person meeting.</p> <p>Lunch and Learning style training being looked at via a virtual option to enable more practices to benefit from introductions to key mental health topics</p> <p>Continuing to attend industry events and requested speaking slots at various conferences</p>
<b>Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.</b>
N/A
<b>Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce?</b>

Opportunities to collaborate internally with EDI work, the Academy on various webinars and training modules that support MMI strategic aims.

**Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee?**

n/a

**Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention?**

n/a

### Advancement of the Professions Committee reporting Framework

This template provides a framework for reporting activity by workstreams that come within scope of the Advancement of the Professions Committee. It can also be used as a means to raise issues for discussion and/or a decision by the Committee that are not of a scale that warrant a substantive paper. You should note that all sections of the template will be included in the report bundle – whether completed or otherwise.

<b>Area of work</b>
<b>RCVS Knowledge</b>
<b>Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream’s agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>
<p><b>Publication of the Inaugural Annual Report of the Canine Cruciate Registry</b></p> <p>The revolutionary inaugural annual report of the RCVS Knowledge Canine Cruciate Registry has been published to provide veterinary professionals and owners around the world with the evidence they need to navigate clinical decisions with confidence.</p> <p>Since the Registry’s launch two years ago, data from 735 surgical procedures performed on dogs at all stages of life – from 9 months to 15 years - have been logged by veterinary surgeons and dog owners across the country. This builds an evidence base on the effectiveness of different techniques for individual patients. It is the first time that a web-based registry such as this has been done at scale, incorporating feedback from both veterinary professionals and animal owners.</p> <p>The Registry found that 78.3% of patients suffered a complete cruciate tear, with the majority of procedures performed being osteotomies. On examination, pain in the stifle was the most common clinical finding, with Labrador Retrievers, English Springer Spaniels, and Golden Retrievers being the most recorded breeds to undergo surgery. At follow up assessment, the majority of owners reported that their dogs were better than before surgery. The full report provides further insights.</p> <p>The Registry aims to improve patient outcomes by collecting data on surgeries which can be used by veterinary surgeons to guide evidence-based decisions in practice. The data are provided by owners and veterinary surgeons across the UK who diligently contribute information on the canine cruciate surgeries they carry out.</p> <p>Mark Morton, Clinical Lead for the Registry, said: “This prospective longitudinal study combines surgical data with owner reported outcomes on a national scale, for the first time. The amount of data will only continue to grow as more cases are enrolled and we follow up patients over longer time periods. We need to gather data from across the profession, incorporating all procedures so we can make valid comparisons.</p> <p>“To the veterinary surgeons and colleagues already submitting cases, a huge thank you. This project relies on your continued involvement, and we are grateful for your assistance. Please encourage your colleagues to get involved.”</p>

You can download the RCVS Knowledge Canine Cruciate Registry Annual Report here  
<https://ccr.rcvsknowledge.org/annual-report-2023/>

**Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B.** Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.

### **Antibiotic Amnesty Campaign 2023**

After a successful campaign last year, the veterinary profession is coming together again this November to hold an Antibiotic Amnesty. Working together we will encourage clients to return any unused or out-of-date antibiotics to the practice.

Antibiotics are essential to treat many conditions in both humans and animals. But they must be used carefully, to ensure they are effective when patients really need them.

Clients will often have a stash of antibiotics at home, either from a previous pet or a current prescription that they didn't finish giving. The temptation to self-treat their pet, or a neighbour's pet, is higher if they are easily accessible.

Antibiotics disposed of inappropriately, such as in the water system or in the bins, can lead to environmental contamination, increasing the risk of resistant bacteria, damaging the environment and affecting local wildlife.

More information about how practices can get involved, and links to the Campaign Toolkit and resources for practices, can be found here <https://knowledge.rcvs.org.uk/amr/antibiotic-amnesty/>

### **Veterinary Evidence Peer-review mentorship program**

*Veterinary Evidence* is excited to introduce a significant new initiative: the peer-review mentorship program.

The program will connect mentees with experienced reviewers, strengthening the reviewing skills of researchers and practitioners and expanding their professional development.

The overall aim of *Veterinary Evidence* is to enhance the quality of care provided to patients. It does this by publishing content relating to evidence-based veterinary medicine (EBVM) and its application in veterinary practice. This new program is set to help fulfil this aim. By participating as either a mentee or mentor, you will help contribute to the progress of your field and the development of the evidence base for the veterinary professions.

*Veterinary Evidence* also hopes this initiative will drive its commitment to be more diverse and inclusive; helping to attract and grow a pool of reviewers from different disciplines and backgrounds that reflects the veterinary professions and readership. By doing so, *Veterinary Evidence* aims to promote a broader range of perspectives and expertise in the peer-review process, ultimately leading to high quality evidence-based content.

#### **How it works**

1. Once registered on our peer-review system, Editorial Manager, you and a mentor will be assigned to a relevant paper by our Editorial Office and put in touch with one another.

2. You can communicate with one another via email, or online calls.
3. You will be given guidance on how to review a paper.
4. The mentor will provide feedback on your review.
5. A combined review will be submitted.

<https://veterinaryevidence.org/index.php/ve/Peer-review-mentorship-program>

### **£100,000 2024 Plowright Prize open for nominations**

The biennial Plowright Prize is now open for submissions and this year the winner will receive £100,000.

The Plowright Prize recognises an individual working in Europe or the Commonwealth who has made a significant impact on the control, management and eradication of infectious diseases of animals. Anyone who can demonstrate animal, humanitarian, or economic benefit in this area is eligible to be nominated. This includes veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses and research scientists.

Nominees may be working in a research setting, in academia, in practice, or in other related sectors. Individuals must be nominated for the award. The prize is not open to organisations.

To be considered for the Plowright Prize, nominations must be received by **31 March 2024**. Full information is available here <https://knowledge.rcvs.org.uk/grants/the-plowright-prize/>

**Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.**

**Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce.**

**Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention.**

### **RCVS Knowledge has appointed Katie Mantell as our new CEO**

Katie has more than two decades' experience in the human health and science sector, and we are excited that she will soon be applying this expertise to the global veterinary community. She will join us from UCLPartners, where, as Chief Engagement Officer, she leads communications and member engagement for a health partnership that seeks to solve the biggest human health challenges through research and innovation.

Her previous experience includes leading communications and digital engagement at The King's Fund – an independent charitable organisation working to improve health and care in England. During her time there, Katie established a multi-award-winning digital team, provided oversight of library services, and led work to explain the complex health and social care system to a broad audience.

Katie started her career in science journalism, working for an academic publisher and then as a news editor on science and technology for global development. She has also been a trustee of St George's Hospital Charity and is a member of a trustee subcommittee of the Mental Health Foundation.



#### Area of work



**Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B.** Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.

#### RVN Starting Out

The 'RVN Starting Out' course, launched on the RCVS Academy in May 2023, has been reviewed, and based on feedback from learners, additional self-assessments and exercises have been added.

Feedback includes: *"More quizzes to test my knowledge of the information read in the course, as they help me think and digest the information i have been given"* (a recurrent comment, and addressed during the course review), and: *"I thoroughly enjoyed this course and it was very relevant as I have recently qualified and very informative. The activities throughout were engaging."*

There are areas of feedback which suggest that the course is not as interactive as learners would appreciate, and that interactive resources would be more engaging than video presentations, for example. This is something we will follow feedback on and aim to review over the coming months if necessary.

#### Nurse Return

The RVN Nurse Return course was launched during BVNA Congress.

This course provides guidance on completing and submitting documentation for the Period of Supervised Practice (PSP) for those nurses who have spent more than five years off the Register, alongside support for RVNs who are returning after a period away from clinical practice, but who have no obligation to complete PSP. The course integrates the PSP process into the course and provides additional material to help nurses transition back to clinical practice.

Two enrolments to the course to complete PSP are underway.

Feedback so far includes: *"[...] the course was easy to follow, and there were plenty of resources available. Good examples of completed documents such as action plans and mentor reviews."*

And not so positive: *"To be honest, I'm really disappointed with this course. I was expecting this to be a 5 hour refresher course, and so was looking forward to a recap of anaesthesia, calculating drug doses and fluid rates, up to date info on vaccination programs etc. I didn't really find this to be*

*much use, as I already have a clear understanding of the areas that I need to get back up to speed in."*

During creation of the course, making it clear that this was not a clinical course was discussed, and it was felt that we had made it sufficiently overt. We may need to review this.

### **Nurse mentor**

Initial development of a course to support those mentoring veterinary nurses has included a survey which was circulated at BVNA congress and within the latest edition of VN Education. The survey aimed to capture the key attributes of a 'great mentor', and the skills that were required, from the perspective of both mentors and mentees. Responses stand at just over 100 and provide useful data to inform course development. The data aligns with the initial ideas we have had on course content, and 'what an effective mentor looks like'.

A draft outline of course content and learning objectives has been completed, and a meeting to shape the course further is being held on November 8.

The course aims to equip nurses and vets to support nurse mentees and develop leadership skills, to provide an adjunct to support the 'Clinical Supervisor' course and help mentors to support those new to the Register and returning to practice.

### **School ambassadors Scheme (SAS)**

The process of integrating registration with the scheme with STEM has been started, and once a data sharing agreement has been approved (currently under consideration with the data security team at RCVS) this will go ahead. This will enable us to visualise the number of VN STEM ambassadors and the activities ambassadors have completed.

The process for creating a veterinary nursing careers resource section on the STEM site (for teachers and careers advisors) is underway. This will enable basic information on veterinary nursing to be offered to students from these groups.

### **Careers materials**

An internal meeting has been organised to discuss and collaborate on development of veterinary and veterinary nursing careers materials which are available via the RCVS. We also aim to develop a digital careers pack which can easily be sent out to those wanting careers information to share at, for example, practice open days and careers fairs.

### **VN Futures Board meeting**

A board meeting was held at BVNA Congress on October 8.

A summary of the items discussed is provided below.

**Board members:**

Belinda Andrews-Jones (Chair of RCVS VNC)

Matthew Rendle (Vice-Chair of RCVS VNC)

Lyndsay Hughes (BVNA President)

Craig Tessayman (Junior VP of BVNA)

The above Board membership will be effective following the BVNA AGM (which followed the VNF Board meeting).

Update:

Date of meeting	Sunday October 8 2023
Location	BVNA Congress, the International Centre, Telford
Present at the meeting	Matthew Rendle (Vice-Chair RCVS VN Council) Belinda Andrews-Jones (Chair, RCVS VN Council) Charlotte Pace (President, BVNA Council) Craig Tessayman (Honorary Treasurer BVNA) Julie Dugmore (Director of Veterinary Nursing, RCVS) Nicola Ruedisueli (Editor of the VNJ, BVNA and secretariat 2023)
Apologies	Lyndsay Hughes (Junior Vice President, BVNA) Jill Macdonald (Project Lead, VN Futures, RCVS)
Topics discussed	<p>* There was an update on the RCVS Academy 'RVN Starting Out' course for newly registered veterinary nurses, launched in May 2023. This flexible online learning supports veterinary nurses in the transition from student to registered nurse. Following feedback from those who have completed the course, the RCVS will include additional self-assessments to aid the learning process.</p> <p>* The Academy has also launched 'Nurse Return', a course for RVNs returning to practice, which includes completion of the Period of Supervised Practice (PSP) which is mandatory for those who have been absent from the Register for 5 years or more. The course is also applicable to those who have been working outside of clinical practice, or who have had a shorter break from practice.</p> <p>* The Clinical Supervisors standardisation course has recently been updated to include interactive videos of tasks for small animal and equine where CS can identify Day One Skills and then check their answers.</p> <p>* The BVNA are in the process of launching their Clinical Coach network where CCs can meet in a safe place to discuss best practice and challenges. The aim is to meet twice a year, in person at BVNA Congress and online around Mar/April. There will be a resource hub of resources including the different task-logging platforms, how to run a professional discussion and informative coaching videos on topics such as supporting students and time management.</p> <p>* It was agreed that there will be a half-day stream at BVNA Congress 2024 focussing on challenging communication and delegation scenarios that will be sponsored by VNF.</p>

\* There was a discussion about ensuring equine VNs are involved with any Schedule 3 guidance as there was a recent panel with BEVA that was well received.

\* The School Ambassadors scheme is running well with lots of RVNs joining and using the resources when visiting schools. However, monitoring exact take-up and progress is difficult. As part of the scheme, ambassadors register to become STEM ambassadors. It was agreed that STEM would hold the resources and manage registration so that ambassadors can easily access everything they need on the STEM site, whilst continuing to promote the scheme going forward. This would also enable RCVS to monitor impact.

\* This was Charlotte's last meeting on the VNF board, and she thanked everyone and mentioned how valuable she had found being part of the board.

Lyndsay Hughes (BVNA President) and Craig Tessayman (BVNA Junior Vice President) will continue next year as board members.

Key outcomes and actions from the meeting

1. Arrange a meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 11-12 to plan the Communication stream sponsored by VNF at BVNA Congress 2024.
2. Consider the feasibility of planning schedule 3 and guidance discussion panel roadshow.
3. Transfer of the School Ambassador resources and registration onto the STEM website.

**Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B.** Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.

### Nurse and Vet Return campaign

A campaign to encourage and support nurses in returning to clinical practice had been discussed following development of the Nurse Return course. This would be a College initiative rather than VN Futures, but clearly has some tie-in with the Project. The opportunities to include returning veterinary surgeons has been highlighted, and this will be taken forward during a meeting between Julie Dugmore, Angharad Belcher and Linda Prescott-Clements, October 31.

### Nurse mentor

Continued development of the Nurse Mentor course for the Academy.

### London Vet Show

A VN Futures Q+A session is being planned for the upcoming London Vet Show. This will be presented by VN Council members.

### School ambassadors/careers materials

Potential future activities are:

- Online networking and Q+A sessions to further support ambassadors
- Develop a simple guide for navigating the STEM site so that ambassadors have the tools to access opportunities effectively (or encourage STEM to provide this)
- Incorporate 'Vet Team in a Box' in the current resources provided via the SAS
- Reach out to online careers hubs and sites which share careers information, and share relevant resources on veterinary nursing
- Update the careers materials which are currently on the RCVS website, and create alignment with the information provided on careers in veterinary medicine.
- Hold a workshop at BVNA 2024 so that we can engage with potential ambassadors, walk them through the process, and gain feedback/input on resources and methods

**VN Futures' Future**

We are now 8 years into the project and wish to re-engage with the profession, gain input and ideas to feed into future work and ensure that the project is meeting the current needs of the profession.

A series of online and in-person activities is currently being planned. More to follow.

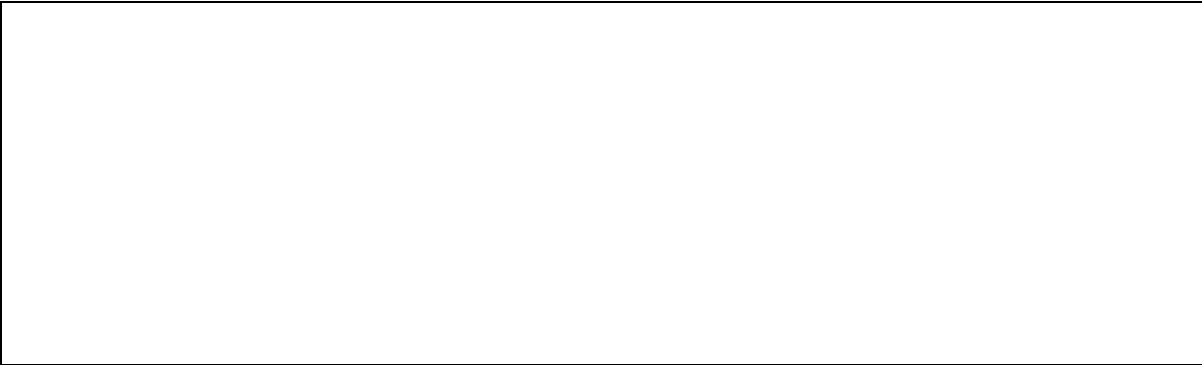
**Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.**

**Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce?**

The learning programme that we are developing via the Academy aims to have a positive impact on both newly Registered Veterinary Nurses, nurses returning to practice, and the mentors who support these groups - and therefore has synergy with activities supporting workforce issues.

**Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee?**

**Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention?**



**Area of work**
**Fellowship**

**Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B.** Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.

**Updated Application Guidance and Forms**

Some feedback has been obtained, but pinning down examples of what might fit into the criteria for the rubric has proved difficult for the Meritorious Contributions to Knowledge (MCK) route.

The final draft versions of application forms and rubrics will be sent to the Board for approval, awaiting feedback.

**Academy Courses**

The Academy courses for the Fellowship application assessors are almost complete, with the final versions being prepared. A selection of assessors who have stated they are willing to undertake the testing of the modules will be contacted in due course.

**Fellowship Day**

The number of reserved tickets reached capacity very quickly, which was unexpected. There are several people on the waiting list for tickets. The Events Team have planned to reach out to all who have reserved tickets to ask that should they not be able to attend, to release their ticket so that we can allocate to the waiting list.

**The Fellows of the Future Student Competition (FOF)**

This year, we received a very high number of applicants -38- and received entries from around the globe. The judges have completed their shortlisting and have selected the three finalists to present at Fellowship Day. All applicants have been informed.

Due to the high calibre of abstracts submitted, the FOF Judging Panel Chair had suggested that the unsuccessful applicants be asked if they are willing to share their abstracts on the RCVS website to showcase the quality of research undertaken by the students, and hopefully increase student participation in the future. All students were contacted and those who give consent will be featured on the Fellows of the Future Student Competition webpage which will be linked to in the Fellowship Day programme.

**Fellowship Science Advisory Panel**

The first meeting of the formed Animal Behaviourism Working Group had taken place on 9 October 2023 with all but one member present. A productive discussion had taken place and tasks had been assigned for completion ahead of the next meeting, due to take place in January.

**Antibiotic Guardian / Antibiotic Awareness Week 2023**

The Fellows have been contacted with a school pack that gives background, lesson plans, letter of introduction and further resources so that they can look at supporting Antibiotic Awareness Week 2023. This work has been heavily supported by RCVS Knowledge – our thanks to them – and we look forward to hearing how this worked and any feedback for 2024's activities, and so that we can

share the materials more widely with the professions as this is within the skillset of all STEM professionals.

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**Guidance documents-** creating clear and transparent guidance to support Fellowship applications and to clearly state how an application can be successful or unsuccessful will ideally encourage more applications, particularly from those within the profession who are underrepresented within the Fellowship.

**UB & Assessor training-** To ensure that our assessors are up to date with their Unconscious Bias (UB) training, the UB and Assessor training modules will be a mandatory component ahead of assessing Fellowship applications. This is to give confidence to assessors and the wider public that all of our assessors are appropriately trained have access to and can reference the guidance from the training when assessing applications. Although it is worth noting that UB training was offered this year as well as in the previous year to the assessors, but the Academy platform version will provide flexibility for the assessors so that they can complete at a time that is most convenient to them, whilst also reducing the costs by no longer needing to host multiple UB sessions with an external organisation.

**Fellows of the Future Student Competition-** To increase engagement with students, taking advantage of the high number of applicants for the competition, we have asked the unsuccessful applicants if we can showcase their exceptional work on the RCVS website, which we can promote to the vet schools to encourage more participation with future veterinary professionals.

**Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.**

No budgetary risks or other risks identified at present.

**Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce?**

The FSAP Net Zero group aim to produce guidance on how to achieve net zero carbon which can support the work undertaken by the PSS team. The Fellowship and Academy working together to produce courses- as mentioned previously.

**Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee?**



None.

**Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention?**

None.