

Summary	
Meeting	VN Council
Date	12 May 2021
Title	RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Annual Report to VN Council
Summary	This report sets out the work of the Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC)
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
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Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	N/A

¹Classifications explained

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"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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

Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

Annual Report to VN Council

Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Veterinary Nurses Council, there have been two meetings of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee, which took place on 23 February and 6 April 2021.

RVN Concerns received / registered

2. Between 23 January 2021 and 19 April 2021 there were 9 new concerns relating to RVNs. Of these 9 new concerns:
 - Three were closed at Stage 1 of the concerns process.
 - Six are currently under investigation by the Case Examiner Group (a veterinary nurse and lay member on RVN PIC and a Case Manager).

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. There have been two new concerns considered by the RVN PIC between 23 January 2021 and 19 April 2021. The first case was closed with advice issued to the RVN. The second case was referred to external solicitors for formal statements to be taken. At the meeting on 6 April, the RVN PIC referred one ongoing case to the RVN Disciplinary Committee.

Ongoing Investigations

4. Three concerns are currently under investigation and these will be returned to the RVN PIC for a decision in due course.

Health Concerns

5. One RVN is currently being managed in the context of the RCVS Health Protocol.

Performance Concerns

6. There are currently no RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Performance Protocol.

Referral to Disciplinary Committee

7. Since the last report, the RVN PIC has referred one case to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. The hearing will be listed in due course.

A disciplinary hearing took place between 18 and 21 January 2021 in respect of Karen Tracey Hancock. The Veterinary Nurse Disciplinary Committee found all the charges against Mrs Hancock proven and directed the Registrar to remove her name from the Register. Mrs Hancock did not appeal the Committee's decision and her name was removed from the Register on 22 February 2021.

A disciplinary hearing took place on 3 and 4 March 2021 and has been reported on the RCVS website. The Disciplinary Committee directed the Registrar to remove the Respondent's name from the Register. The Respondent did not appeal the Committee's decision and their name was duly removed from the Register.

Professional Conduct Department

8. The table below shows the number, categories and stages of the **37** concerns relating to RVNs between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021.

RVN concerns registered between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021

Category	Number of Concerns	Currently under consideration by the Case Examiner Group (CEG)	Closed at Stage 1	Referred to Stage 2 - RVN PIC
Veterinary Care	21	7	12	2
24-hour emergency first aid and pain relief	2	2		
Veterinary Medicines	1			1
Communication and Consent	2		2	
Clinical and Client records	1	1		
Miscellaneous	3	3		
Conviction / notifiable occupation notification	6		4	2
Registration investigation	1		1	
Totals	37	13	19	5

In the preceding five years, the total number of concerns registered against RVNs for each year is as follows:

- 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020 – **27**
- 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019 – **37**
- 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018 – **30**
- 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017 – **35**
- 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016 – **47**

Cases considered by RVN PIC

9. Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, the RVN PIC considered **8** new cases. Of these, 4 cases closed with advice to the RVN. 1 case was adjourned for further investigation and 3 cases were referred to the Disciplinary Committee. During the same period, the RVN PIC referred 1 ongoing case to the Disciplinary Committee.

Disciplinary Hearings

10. Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, there have been three DC hearing involving RVNs. The Veterinary Nurse Disciplinary Committee directed the Registrar to remove the names of all three RVNs from the Register.

Year overview

11. As a Committee the RVN PIC continues to work well and has adjusted to holding virtual meetings during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Two virtual training sessions were held in November 2020, with training being delivered by the College's lawyers via Zoom. As it can be difficult to maintain concentration for prolonged periods in this format, these were half-day sessions attended by PIC members and Profcon staff. Among the topics covered were dishonesty (including allegations of lying to the regulator), relevant recent case law, requests by PIC for further information (legitimate enquiry vs "fishing expeditions") and social media. A further training session is scheduled to take place in June.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee and in particular to Sarah Bedwell whose term comes to an end in June. Sarah has been a lay member on the Committee since 2013 and we are very grateful for the contribution she has made to the Committee over the last eight years.