



RCVS NEWS / FEBRUARY 2019

*Text-only version of
RCVS News email*

Put a question to RCVS Council candidates

Earlier this month we announced that nine people were standing for three places in this year's RCVS Council election. Now we want veterinary surgeons to get in touch with a question for the candidates which you can submit via an online form or by emailing vetvote19@rcvs.org.uk by midday on Monday 4 March. Each candidate will choose two questions to answer out of all those received and record a video which will be uploaded to our YouTube channel.

VN Council agrees post-Brexit registration of EU VNs

The RCVS VN Council has agreed changes to how it registers veterinary nurses who qualified in the European Economic Area (EEA) should the UK depart the EU without a deal on March 29. The changes are in line with new regulations drawn up by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Changes to the registration regime for veterinary nurses educated in the EEA were discussed at the most recent meeting of VN Council on Wednesday 6 February 2019 with the proposals suggesting a closer alignment of the process for EEA applicants to that which exists for applicants from without the EEA.

Under current rules, for example, EEA applicants who have a veterinary nursing qualification that differs significantly from the minimum level of competences and skills outlined in the RCVS Day One Skills and Competences for veterinary nurses are able to join the Register by choosing to complete either a period of supervised adaptation for up to three years (in which their practice would be closely monitored and assessed by a clinical coach) or passing our pre-registration examination for veterinary nurses.

Non-EEA applicants in a similar situation would, however, be more likely to have their application rejected outright. All other non-EEA applicants are required to pass the pre-registration examination which is held three times a year.

At the VN Council meeting, members were therefore invited to consider closer alignment of the processes for EEA and non-EEA applicants, meaning that anyone whose veterinary nursing qualification is considered similar in content and scope to UK accredited qualifications would be required to pass the pre-registration examination.

These applicants will continue to be able to apply for permission to work in a veterinary practice while preparing for the examination. Where there is significant differences in content and scope then these applications will be rejected. The option to make up any deficient areas while working in practice will no longer be available.

Holders of qualifications accredited by the Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education (or ACOVENE) will normally continue to have direct access to the Register as its accreditation criteria is based on UK standards. Currently all UK veterinary nurse course providers in both further and higher education are ACOVENE accredited, as well as five educational establishments in the Republic of Ireland and one each in Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal.

VN Council accepted the proposals put forward by the College. Commenting on the decision Julie Dugmore, our Director of Veterinary Nursing (pictured right) who is also Chair of ACOVENE, said: "It is important to remember that the numbers of non-UK EEA veterinary nurses who join the Register each year is much lower than for veterinary surgeons – normally being somewhere between 40 to 60 individuals each year, the majority of whom have qualified on an ACOVENE accredited veterinary nursing course. We will continue to welcome applications from those holding other EEA and non-EEA qualifications.

"If we depart the EU without a deal will be able to introduce more flexibility when deciding whether applicants should be accepted, rejected or accepted on condition of passing the pre-registration examination. This will be based on how well aligned their education and clinical experience is with our registration criteria."

The decision was made by VN Council on the day that the House of Lords passed a Statutory Instrument that would, similarly, allow the RCVS to continue to register EEA veterinary surgeons with qualifications accredited by the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) after the UK leaves the EU.

Employers are reminded that veterinary nurses working in the UK must be registered with us. This includes veterinary nurses educated outside the UK. Further information on the registration process can be obtained by contacting the veterinary nursing department vnoverseas@rcvs.org.uk or 0207 202 0788.

New poster to support client/practice partnership

Thanks to an idea suggested by one of our practising members, we will shortly be mailing all veterinary practice premises in the UK with a new poster designed to help clients of veterinary practices better understand what they can expect from their veterinary team and, similarly, what is expected of them as animal owners.

In a letter to be enclosed with the poster, our Director of Communications Ian Holloway, explains:

“Every so often, an idea comes along that seems so simple and effective that it makes you wonder why it hasn't been tried before.

“Well, this idea has been tried before, but in France, not the UK, and was kindly brought to our attention by www.vetsurgeon.org after it was shared on the veterinary community website by Basingstoke-based veterinary surgeon Jonathan Wray MRCVS.

“Whilst travelling through France, Mr Wray happened to visit a local veterinary practice and noticed a poster on the waiting room wall that clearly and politely set out both what the practice expected of its clients and, in return, what clients could expect of their practice.

“By stating the expected parameters around which the client-practice partnership should be based, the poster helped to remind clients about their own responsibilities as animal owners, whilst reassuring them as to the standards of service and professionalism the practice team provided.

“Our version – ‘Getting the best for your animal’ – has been approved by our Standards Committee and follows the current provisions of the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct.

“We're very grateful to Mr Wray and vetsurgeon.org for sharing this idea with us, and hope all practices will find it useful.”

The poster, which can be used at either A4 or A3 size, is also available to download as a PDF version and we hope to produce a digital version in due course, to show on waiting room display screens.

If you have any feedback about this initiative, do please get in touch via communications@rcvs.org.uk.

Sarah Brown mental health research grants

The Mind Matters Initiative (MMI) is pleased to announce that applications are now open for the first Sarah Brown Mental Health Research Grant, named for an elected RCVS Council member who tragically passed away in 2017.

One £20,000 grant will be awarded each year for five years, starting in 2019 (making a £100,000 total by 2023) to fund research that focuses on mental health and wellbeing within the veterinary professions, including areas such as prevention, diagnosis, intervention and treatment.

Eligibility notes:

Applications are welcome from individuals at all stages of their research careers, including those who have not previously been published.

We welcome research proposals relating to any aspect of mental health or wellbeing in the veterinary professions. Researchers must be affiliated with a university and ethical approval must be in place.

To apply:

To apply for the 2019 Sarah Brown Mental Health Research Grant, please send your research proposal along with a CV and short biography for all lead researchers to Lisa Quigley, Mind Matters Initiative Manager, at l.quigley@rcvs.org.uk by 5pm on Friday 31 May 2019.

The proposal should be a maximum of 3,000 words and include aims, methods, ethical considerations, proposed timelines, and a bibliography. Please ensure any academic literature referred to within your proposal is accurately referenced.

The winner will be decided in June, with the winner receiving their award at Royal College Day, which takes place in London, on Friday 12 July 2019.

The recipient of the Sarah Brown Mental Health Research Grant for 2019 will be invited to present their research findings at the biennial Mind Matters Initiative Research Symposium in 2021.

We welcome applications from those at an early stage in their research career. Guidance on how to prepare a good research grant proposal can be found on the Economic and Social research Council website.

ViVet innovation workshop resources now available

The College's ViVet innovation initiative has published the resources used at its recent innovation workshops for the benefit of those who were not able to attend either event.

The first of the innovation workshops took place at the Moller Centre in Cambridge on 16 January and was led by professional innovation consultant Greg Dickens MRCVS from Innovia Technology who was also joined by guest speakers Andrew Francis, the founder of South Coast Cardiology, a visiting specialist referral service, and Adrian Nelson-Pratt, founder of the Emerge Veterinary Project, a coaching and personal development product aimed at improving veterinary wellbeing and performance.

The first workshop introduced tools and techniques to help individuals and organisations think creatively about how to identify needs and opportunities for innovation in the animal health/ veterinary sector, and how to turn an identified need into an idea. Attendees were given practical advice on how to find opportunities, brainstorming and assessing ideas.

The second session took place on 20 February and built on the theme of the first workshop with information on how to develop an idea and bring it to market. The first part of the day, led by Greg Dickens and fellow veterinary innovator Guen Bradbury, looked at how ideas and concepts could be tested to gain feedback and then refined.

The second part of the day saw RCVS Director of Leadership and Innovation Anthony Roberts talk to delegates about how to develop and refine business models to maximise your product or service's success and the power and impact of business model innovation. This session addressed issues such as identifying and segmenting your customer-base, how to reach and communicate with your customers or clients, and how to best organise and exploit the resources at your disposal to provide a sustainable competitive advantage.

This session also covered the vital role of storytelling in winning support and funding for an idea, how to successfully pitch for funding and other forms of support.

Anthony Roberts (pictured right) said: "I'm delighted that feedback from these inaugural innovation workshops showed that attendees found the sessions useful, informative and, most importantly, inspiring as regards developing their own ideas, services and products.

"The topics we covered, however, are relevant to all veterinary surgeons and nurses, and for this reason we're sharing all the resources from both events on the ViVet website".

One of those who commented positively on the workshop was Rachel Dean, Director of Clinical Research and Excellence in Practice at VetPartners who said:

"Today was really interesting; I was encouraged to go to the event by my company. The best bit about today was meeting other people that also see that we need to innovate, and need to try and work out how we do that in various different settings."

Another delegate, equine vet Malcolm Morley, added: "I came on the course thinking that I had some innovative ideas that I wanted to take further, but actually I realised that on the course I learnt ideas that would apply to other aspects of what I do. So I'm going home with take-home messages for other things too."

The materials from the workshop are available to view and download from the resources section of the ViVet website.

MMI to hold 'Vet Wellbeing in Practice' events

Our Mind Matters Initiative (MMI), the Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons (SPVS) and Veterinary Management Group (VMG) are joining forces to hold a series of four events entitled 'Vet Wellbeing in Practice'.

The dates and venues are as follows:

Thursday 14 March, Kents Hill Park Training and Conference centre in Milton Keynes, 10:00am - 16:00pm

Wednesday 27 March, Double Tree Hilton in Edinburgh, 10:00am - 16:00pm

Wednesday 18 September, Willows Vets in Solihull, 10:00am - 16:00pm

Thursday 3 October, The Marriott hotel in Preston, 10:00am - 16:00pm

This training will be led by Emma Mamo, Head of Workplace Wellbeing at the mental health charity Mind, Tracey Morley Jewkes from Willows Veterinary Care, and Sean Gilgallon from Citation Professional Solutions.

Emma Mamo, who has spoken at two Mind Matters streams within SPVS/VMG Congresses previously, will explain to delegates exactly what workplace wellbeing looks like, and will offer practical tips and advice about how to achieve this in your own workplace.

Emma will also help explain how mental ill-health can be recognised and acted upon successfully amongst team members. Emma will be attending all events apart from the session on Wednesday 27 March in Edinburgh, in which Mind Scotland will take the session in her place.

Tracey Morley Jewkes will talk to the delegates about her time at Blacks Vets, and how they recently managed to achieve a SPVS/MMI Vet Wellbeing Award. Tracey ran her own businesses before entering the veterinary profession as Managing Director for Blacks Vets.

At the heart of her business plans for Blacks Vets, Tracey wished to invest in team wellbeing. She will explain how this was achieved, as well as sharing some of her best wellbeing initiatives in practice. Tracey is now Hospital Director for Willows Veterinary Centre and Referral Service.

Sean Gilgallon will also offer his expertise, having worked in health and safety for many years, both in the Royal Air Force and at the CVS Group. Sean now works for Citation Professional Solutions, a company that provides health and safety support and HR & Employment Law services for UK businesses and over 20,000 clients.

Sean will discuss the legal requirements surrounding stress management and wellbeing within the workplace, and explain how to create a 'stress management risk assessment' which can then form the basis of a 'stress management policy'.

Lizzie Lockett, RCVS CEO and Director of Mind Matters, said: "The response to the SPVS/MMI Wellbeing Awards has been great, and this roadshow of events now takes this a step further by providing the opportunity for practices to learn from the experts about practical changes they can make in their own businesses to raise standards of wellbeing and support. They are set to be worthwhile and enjoyable events and I look forward to seeing people there."

All days will last from 10:00 until 16:00 and there will also be an optional 'Introduction to Mindfulness' session, conducted by Sean Gilgallon, from 16:00 until 17:00.

The events cost £85 person, and could count towards delegates' continuing professional development (CPD). Refreshments will be provided throughout the course of the days.

If you are interested in attending any one of these events, please visit the SPVS VMG Events webpage for tickets.

VN Council increases referrals for CPD non-compliance

At the VN Council's meeting on Wednesday 6 February, members decided to expedite the referral process for veterinary nurses who have not complied with their continuing professional development (CPD) requirement for three or more years.

The decision came following the presentation to VN Council members of the results of last year's audit of veterinary nurses regarding their compliance with the Code of Professional Conduct's requirement for VNs to carry out at least 45 hours of CPD over a rolling three-year period.

For the audit, the RCVS requested the CPD records of 1,016 veterinary nurses comprising the following groups:

a random selection of around 10% of the profession who declared they were compliant when they renewed their registration;
veterinary nurses who declared they were non-compliant upon renewing their registration;
veterinary nurses who took part in the previous year's audit who were not compliant;
and, veterinary nurses whose records were requested in the previous year whom did not respond.

Out of the 1,016 whose records were requested, 939 responded and, of these, 672 (72%) were found to be compliant and 267 (28%) were non-compliant. Reasons given by respondents for their failure to comply include maternity leave, family commitments, lack of time or opportunity and illness.

Particularly concerning to members of VN Council was the fact that eight members of the profession had been included in a total of seven of the previous annual audits and, each time, were found to be non-compliant.

As a result members decided that any veterinary nurse who was audited and found to be non-compliant in three consecutive years should have their records sent to the CPD Referral Group, a subcommittee comprising members of RCVS and VN Council who review cases of CPD non-compliance for both vets and VNs.

The CPD Referral Group makes decisions on how to follow-up these cases including, in the most serious instances, referring individuals on to the College's Professional Conduct Department for further investigation.

Racheal Marshall, Chair of VN Council, commented: "The issue of CPD non-compliance has been discussed at VN Council for a while and I am glad that members decided to take stronger action on those who continually fail to comply with their professional obligations on learning and development.

"It is particularly disappointing that eight members of the profession have, for seven years and despite repeated prompting, decided that they do not want to comply with their Code of Professional Conduct.

"More generally, it is disheartening that a substantial number and proportion of the profession still aren't compliant and that this proportion has remained static for the last three years with the same reasons occurring year after year including family commitments and lack of time and opportunity.

"However, CPD need not be onerous or expensive and can be done from the comfort of your own practice or home, it could, for example, involve reading relevant clinical papers in a veterinary magazine or journal, reflection on your professional practice, in-house training, participation in webinars and research for presentations as well as organised courses, lectures and webinars.

"The key is that CPD should be relevant to you and your role and should keep your skills, knowledge and competences up-to-date to ensure that you are providing the best possible care to your patients and clients.

"We do not want to paint an overly negative picture however, and we do recognise that the majority of veterinary nurses do understand the importance of CPD to their development and comply with the CPD requirement which is why, over the coming year, we will be looking to highlight some best practice examples of veterinary nurses undertaking CPD around work, and their home lives."

For more information about the CPD requirement for both vets and vet nurses, what activities might count as CPD, how to record your CPD and a series of frequently asked questions about CPD please visit our dedicated page. The full results of last year's VN CPD audit can be found in the papers for VN Council.

Those who need further advice about CPD can also contact our CPD Officer Jenny Soreskog-Turp on cpd@rcvs.org.uk

Registrations open for EBVM conference

We are delighted to announce that registration is now open for our next major conference, VET19, held at the Kia Oval, London on Thursday, 27th and Friday, 28th June 2019.

Following on from the success of Veterinary Evidence Today 2016 in Edinburgh, VET19 will bring together voices from across the entire spectrum of the veterinary profession (and others) to deliver world-class clinical lectures, explore quality improvement, and ultimately discuss the future of evidence-based veterinary medicine.

By joining us, you will enjoy an event packed with hot topics, expert opinions, networking and more, all relevant to the veterinary team, academics & students and those in related fields.

You will also be the first to hear about our latest award winners, in an evening celebration of inspiring teams and individuals nominated for our Knowledge Awards, as well as students from across the country who have produced outstanding research for our Veterinary Evidence Student Awards.

The list of confirmed speakers for VET19 can be found below - expect to hear more about all of them and the topics they will be delving into over the coming months.

The conference website contains all the information you will need to attend, including how to purchase a ticket, information about travel and accommodation, bursaries, and the conference programme.

VET19's confirmed voices so far are:

Professor Trish Greenhalgh – Professor of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford

Professor Peter Cockcroft - Head of Veterinary Education, University of Surrey. Editor-in-chief, Veterinary Evidence

Dr Rachel Dean - Director of Clinical Research and Excellence in Practice, Vet Partners

Jacqui Molyneux – Chair, RCVS Knowledge

Mark Morton - RCVS Specialist in Small Animal Orthopaedics, ChesterGates Veterinary Specialists

Dr Sally Everitt – Chair, inFOCUS

Carol Gray - Doctoral researcher, Birmingham Law School. RCVS Ethics Review Panel

Pam Mosedale – Vice Chair, RCVS Knowledge Quality Improvement Advisory Board

Professor David Morton – Chair, RCVS Ethics Review Panel

Lizzie Lockett – CEO, RCVS

Amanda Boag – Clinical Director, Vets Now. President, RCVS

Contribute your views to European-wide veterinary survey

The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) is currently running VetSurvey2018, its second Europe-wide survey of the veterinary profession and is calling on UK-practising veterinary surgeons to respond with their views.

The purpose of the FVE survey is to provide information about a number of different aspects of the veterinary profession, for example, in terms of demographics, the state of the job market and financial indicators. This information will be invaluable in helping FVE to understand similarities and differences in terms of issues affecting the profession across the 24 FVE member countries.

The survey takes around 10 to 15 minutes to complete and there is the facility to save and come back to complete the survey should it be needed. Over 13,000 veterinary surgeons from across the FVE member states responded to the previous survey, which revealed a number of interesting findings; it is hoped that this survey will deepen the information the organisation can draw upon.

A promotional video about the survey can be accessed from the FVE website. And you can directly access the survey [here](#).

The survey closes on 28 February 2019 and the first tranche of results will be presented at the FVE General Assembly in Bratislava in June 2019.

VMD publishes 'no-deal' Brexit info

The RCVS has agreed to share details of a new Veterinary Medicines Directorate 'information hub' for veterinary surgeons and other stakeholders on what will change if the UK leaves the European Union without a deal on 29 March 2019.

Throughout the government's negotiations to leave the EU on 29 March the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) has developed plans for all possible outcomes including no deal.

It has now published, on GOV.UK, its EU Exit Information Hub which sets out what vets and other stakeholders will need to do differently if the UK leaves the EU without a deal. It also sets out the areas of veterinary medicines regulation where there will be no change.

For vets the key areas in which you will need to do things differently in the event of a 'no-deal' Brexit are:

Applying for a Special Import Certificate/Special Treatment Certificate

Operating the prescribing cascade

Please visit the Veterinary Medicines Directorate's EU Exit Information Hub for detailed advice and guidance on the above areas and all areas of veterinary medicines regulation that will and won't be changing in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

The VMD will continue to assure the safety, quality and effectiveness of all veterinary medicines authorised in the UK to protect animal health, human health and the environment.

AMBS to conduct well-being research, supported by Mind Matters

The Alliance Manchester Business School (AMBS) is conducting a research study on well-being and work demands for veterinary surgeons working in the UK. The project has been reviewed by the University of Manchester Proportionate Research Ethics Committee and will be carried out by Principal Researcher Dr Elinor O'Connor, Senior Lecturer in Occupational Psychology at AMBS and a supporter of the Mind Matters Initiative, along with fellow Lecturers in Organisational Psychology at AMBS, Dr Sheena Johnson and Dr David Hughes. Participation will be confidential and the study will be conducted online, for convenience. The total number of participants in the study is not pre-determined, and the study is unpaid.

The aim of this study is to investigate work-related demands and well-being experienced by veterinary surgeons practising in the UK, as well as the role of personality style on the relationship between work demands and well-being. The study is split into two phases, with the first offering an online questionnaire which will take roughly 15 minutes to complete. This includes questions about the demands experienced in work, well-being, and personality style. After completing this, the participant will be asked if they are then happy to take part in the second, follow-up phase of the study, which will involve completing a second online questionnaire in three months' time. This will predominantly include questions about well-being and will take roughly 5-10 minutes to complete. Participants can decide to opt out of the second questionnaire if they so wish.

It is anticipated that study findings will be published in academic journals and practitioner publications, as well as presented at psychology and veterinary conferences. If you would like to participate in the study please read the Participant Information Sheet where you will find a link at the end to the survey.

The survey can be accessed [here](#).

For further information, please contact Principal Researcher Dr Elinor O'Connor.

Practical case studies on communication and consent in clinical practice

In January 2018 the RCVS updated its guidance on communication and consent with more advice on discussing informed consent with clients and who is responsible for gaining consent.

The Codes of Professional Conduct for both veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses stress the need for effective communication with clients and ensuring that informed consent is obtained and documented before treatments or procedures are carried out.

At its January meeting our Standards Committee approved changes to chapter 11 ('Communication and consent') of the supporting guidance to the Codes to provide further advice to the professions on matters that should be discussed with clients to ensure informed consent is gained, provide clarification on who can gain consent for a procedure and give some additional guidance on consent forms.

We have now published a series of case studies highlighting some of the issues commonly encountered in practice around gaining sufficient levels of consent for procedures, with learning points from the College about how the process could have been improved and references to the recent updates we have made to the guidance.

The case studies can be accessed here:

<https://www.rcvs.org.uk/news-and-views/features/practical-case-studies-on-communication-and-consent-in-clinical/>

Meet your new VN Council members

Although there will be no election of candidates to VN Council this year, as only two candidates came forward for the two available elected places, we wanted to make sure that members of the profession knew more about who will be joining VN Council at this year's Royal College Day in July.

The two candidates who put themselves forward were Liz Cox, current Vice-Chair of VN Council and former Chair of the Council from 2015 to 2018, and Jane Davidson, a freelance writer, educator and vet nurse. Please find below their candidate biographies and statements.

Elizabeth (Liz) Cox RVN Candidate biography

I have worked in various practices from single handed, hospital and University, for both corporate and independent companies as a locum nurse and employed. Coaching, mentoring, standards and an immense passion for the Veterinary Nursing profession has always led my career.

Recently, I became the Group Nursing Advisor for Independent Vetcare. My role being to advise on, support, champion and develop veterinary nursing.

In addition to being in practice I have also been an elected member of VNC since 2011 and Chair 2015-2018. I've been actively involved in areas of the college, from Practice standards to Operational Board and now as one of the first RVNs to sit formally on RCVS council. I aim to ensure that the word and role of the RVN, is included within the colleges work. However I am most proud of Chairing the Schedule 3 review, and VN Futures report. Looking to what nurses do now, and for the future as an essential part of the veterinary team. I have presented at numerous conferences, events and organisations

I am a member of BVNA and volunteer for Street Vet. Home life is with family and the obligatory rescue pets that come with being a veterinary nurse.

Candidate manifesto statement

I am an active RVN, I am very proud to be. I know the world of Veterinary Nursing well, I have been in the role for many years! I have the pleasure of meeting, and listening to RVNs thoughts and ambitions, I'm in a practice every day.

I have worked on numerous projects, notably Schedule 3 and VN Futures. The future of Veterinary Nursing is set for change. I want to ensure that Nurses remain a key part of the Veterinary team. I want our skills to be better recognised and that we have an enhanced role. With telehealth, wearables and unimaginable developments ahead of us, the role of all RVNs won't be the same as today.

We are now professionals in our own right, and are encouraged to develop nursing as a profession and advance how we nurse our patients. The TLC that has immeasurable benefits won't go, but how we work will. We are already well trained but not able to use all of skills under current regulation. This may change with a potential amendment to VSA or Schedule 3. Regulation changes take a long time and whilst work is ongoing, I want to continue being part of that to ensure it's what nurses and practices want.

No matter for who, or where a nurse works, we need to ensure that all roles are considered, supported and championed. Some nurses move into industry, academia, and referral or undertake further studies and some choose to stay working in their original training practice. Sadly, we still have practices that do not employ an RVN, this needs to be addressed.

Considering the future and new advanced qualifications ahead, I want to ensure RVNs are first choice for practice and patients.

Jane Davidson RVN
Candidate biography

After an MA in History and a career in the wine trade I qualified with my NVQ in 2005. Since then I have worked in small animal first opinion hospitals in charity and private clinics as well as in education.

I have taught on Diploma and BSc courses in several colleges, covering theory and clinical skills. I am an external examiner for a VN BSc and currently work as a freelance writer, educator and vet nurse. I enjoy writing about and for vet nurses and have created an online learning community under the award winning #PlanetRVN.

Post-qualification I gained my Post Graduate Diploma in Clinical and Professional Veterinary Nursing at the RVC. I have the Diploma to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) and have a PgCert in Clinical Education which gained me Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. I'm always excited to improve my skills and the majority of my CPD has been self-funded.

I am a co-founder of the successful Learning without Landfill campaign to reduce waste in the veterinary field. I am proud to be part of the VN Futures career progression group and am part of the RCVS outcome based CPD pilot.

Candidate manifesto statement

I believe I have the skills and passion to work positively with our regulator and bring a fresh view from my experience in clinic, education and as a successful user of social media.

Current issues

Number of spaces for VN training

Retention of vet nurses in the industry

Support for RVNs to work confidently within current regulations

Improve professional decision making for the veterinary team

There are small increases annually in TP numbers but we need to consider more ways to increase the number of clinical training spaces for SVN's. Retention of RVNs can be improved as part of supporting the entire team with issues around delegation and the SIII framework.

Emerging issues

Social media has changed the way we communicate with the public and each other but we must do so within the law and the current Code of Conduct. I would like to use some of my time on VN Council to address the issues of:

Personal branding of vets and veterinary nurses

Promoting best practice and complying with the Code of Conduct online

Brexit

A potential lack of veterinary surgeons post Brexit may require the veterinary team to consider different ways of working to ensure patient care standards are maintained. We need to have a workforce confident in their own roles and abilities to enable them to support change. Having researched and written on this topic I believe I can help.

What can I offer?

Patient welfare centred approach

A passion to listen to and work for the vet nursing community

Good communication skills

Committee skills from VN Futures/education roles

Understanding of education and clinical issues

Experience in setting up and running successful campaigns – Learning Without Landfill and #PlanetRVN

Assessing the landscape of quality improvement in the veterinary profession

Dr Tom Ling, Head of Evaluation and Senior Research Leader at RAND Europe, introduces the landscape assessment of quality improvement he and his team have been commissioned to undertake by RCVS Knowledge.

Noone in a caring profession wants to do a bad job and we all care about the quality of the work we do. The question is not about professional motivation, but about how best to organise the profession to deliver improving care and provide the best possible care for animals.

Until recently, improving quality in the veterinary profession involved ensuring that professionals are kept up to date with new treatments and diagnostics, discussing practice with peers, mentoring new recruits and, of course, learning from experience.

These are all things that need to continue but, in the face of the opportunities created by new technologies, changing challenges to animal health and welfare, rapidly evolving science, and new organisational structures, many within the profession are wondering whether a more structured approach to quality improvement (QI) might be needed.

As Dr William Taylor pointed out in a blog in 2017, a structured approach to improving quality involves good quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement. QI has been established as part of the NHS in recent decades, where they have acknowledged that quality planning plus inspection and regulation are not enough and have therefore drawn upon a variety of approaches to QI.

What is QI anyway?

QI involves stepping back from routine tasks and taking a structured approach to:

- A data-led analysis of the problem

- An approach based on understanding the processes of providing care

- An analysis of the demand, capacity and flow of the service

- Identifying suitable and acceptable tools to achieve change

- Evaluating and measuring change achieved

RCVS Knowledge has asked RAND Europe to find out more about what supports the embedding of QI in the veterinary sector and the barriers to this. I am delighted to have this opportunity. I have been involved as an evaluator in many of the most important QI initiatives in and around the NHS over the past 15 years and I think that there are many lessons to learn.

One of these is that QI does not always lead to improving quality – it has to be shaped to the needs of professionals and the nature of the work to be done, as well as taking into account the realities of the organisational setting.

Therefore, as part of this work we will be inviting many of you to participate in a survey. This is very important to help us inform the profession about the current state of play.

Whatever your level of familiarity with QI, please help the research team at RAND Europe by completing this short survey.

Events

Mind Matters: Mental Health Awareness Training - York

4 March, Kings Manor, University of York, Exhibition Square, York YO1 7EP

Mind Matters: Resilience Training Pilot - London

4 March, RCVS, Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

RCVS Council - March 2019

7 March, RCVS, Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Mind Matters: Mental Health Awareness Training - Yeovil

25 March, Holbrook Manor, Wincanton, Somerset BA9 8BS

Mind Matters: Mental Health Awareness Training - Belfast

1 April, Hilton Belfast, Lanyon Place, Belfast BT1 3LP

BSAVA Congress

Thursday 4 to Saturday 6 April, Arena Birmingham, King Edwards Road, Birmingham B1 2AA

VN Council - May 2019

8 May, RCVS, Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF