

RCVS REVIEW

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS: PART 1

2009

Putting you in
the picture



RCVS REVIEW 2009

1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009

Patron: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Communications

We began a review of 24-hour emergency cover requirements in the autumn to determine whether the profession was still prepared to provide it. Independent market researcher Mo Gannon describes her approach to getting vets' views.

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Veterinary Nursing

We've introduced e-exams for veterinary nurses, utilising the existing driving theory exam centre network around the UK. Karen Langner explains how she found the new system much less stressful than the old one.

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Education

We launched new careers materials in May to help broaden the base of applicants to vet school. Shomari Lyon explains how this sort of information can encourage some into the veterinary profession who might not otherwise have considered it.

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Collaboration and clarity

If I had to choose a theme to unite activities this year it would be 'Working Together'. A lot of our efforts have been to demonstrate that the RCVS is not remote and unapproachable, that we can respond promptly, politely and positively, and that we work with members, the public and other professional organisations to improve the knowledge, understanding and delivery of our activities.

Much has been done to this end: the Veterinary Legislation Group, which includes representatives from both inside and outside

the College, has worked hard to identify the

immediate priorities for reform for consideration by Council in June; we have carried out an evidence-gathering exercise to understand better how out-of-hours emergency cover is delivered; and, have developed

innovative ways of communicating how the disciplinary system works, including an interactive programme trialled by the Society for Practising Veterinary Surgeons (SPVS).

On the veterinary nursing front, there have been major changes to the way we deliver examinations, and we are developing a disciplinary mechanism for Registered Veterinary Nurses.

"It's important to communicate what the College does beyond the profession itself."

As ever, listening and communicating has been important this year, with useful meetings held with the Office of Fair Trading around the cessation of the three-year ban on prescription charges. We used information from the Practice Standards Scheme (PSS), surveys by external organisations and SPVS, as well as our own complaints records, to demonstrate how compliance had been monitored during the period, and to check progress once prescription charges were reintroduced.

The registration of practice premises under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations was a real case of team work. It required numerous meetings and a lot of staff time to implement the Register and communicate the changes to the profession. Being Chairman of the Practice Standards Group was extremely useful in allowing me to work with the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) to ensure that both PSS and VMD inspectors were fully briefed and took a consistent approach.

To help practices prepare for the new medicines legislation, we hosted a joint presentation with

VMD at this year's British Small Animal Veterinary Association Congress. We also now host PSS 'surgery' sessions before each of our Regional Question Time meetings.

The Practice Standards Group has been working to complete its first five-yearly review of the Standards, which will be implemented in 2010. This has been another good example of collaborative working as the Practice Standards Group includes representatives from all of the main veterinary organisations.

It's important to communicate what the College does beyond the profession itself. We put the 'meat' into Meet the RCVS Day this year when we invited the Business Managers from the Meat Hygiene Service, who are mainly non-veterinary, to see the workings of the RCVS, and learned about their concerns.

Every presidential year, a range of meetings are held with the officers of the various veterinary and veterinary nursing organisations, and with members of the House of Commons and House of Lords. On a personal note, I have had the great pleasure of working with friend and fellow Cornwall practitioner Nicky Paull, as BVA President. Those who attended the Liverpool Alumnus Dinner were able to share at first hand the experience of the RCVS and BVA working in harmony, by joining the chorus in our rendition of the Cornish National Anthem, 'Trelawney'!



Jill Nute
President

Closer to you

I am pleased to present the second edition of our new-style annual report – the *RCVS Review*. We have been encouraged by positive feedback on the new format, which we launched last year in place of the more traditional report, and were delighted when it, together with its partner publication, *RCVS Facts*, won a MemCom (Membership Communications) award this year.

In this year's *Review* we hear directly from those involved with, and affected by, our key activities. The stories show how the College is listening and responding, using modern technology, and, I hope, delivering a better service to the profession, their patients, clients and the public at large.

We have ventured into a number of new territories this year, some of which may surprise readers who have a more traditional image of the College. We may have 19th century antecedents but we try to move with the times. For example, we now have a presence on YouTube for our 'Walks of Life' careers videos (www.youtube.com/vetcareers) and a digitally-interactive brochure (www.walksoflife.org.uk).

It is too early to gauge the project's success in terms of attracting those into the profession who might otherwise have gone elsewhere, but you can view the materials and judge for yourself.

The new Register of Veterinary Practice Premises was launched on 1 April 2009, amid the inevitable flurry of queries as the College and its members came to terms with a new statutory requirement. We continue to try to convey the message that we are here to help, that it is better to ask for advice than to walk into a problem, and that we are happy to deal with enquiries from the public and the

profession. On this theme, we launched Practice Standards Scheme 'surgeries' this year, taking our team of experts on the road to answer questions from practices thinking about joining the Scheme, on their home territory.

Another new technological venture, aimed at 'decentralising' services, has seen us offer student veterinary nurses the opportunity to sit their multiple-choice examinations electronically in one of 150 driving theory test centres, instead of the previous restriction to five examination halls. The new approach reduces journey length and time out of the practice.

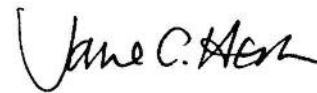
"We continue to try to convey the message that we are here to help, that it is better to ask for advice than to walk into a problem."

The '24/7' debate continues and we still face the conundrum of how the profession can provide out-of-hours emergency services and comply with the Working Time Regulations. I hope that commissioning the data collection exercise outlined in the *Review* has made us better able to make informed decisions about what our *Guide to Professional Conduct* requirements should be, and to help the profession find practical ways of doing what is generally agreed to be in the best interests of animals.

As ever, there is much more I could mention, and I remain indebted to all the staff in both the College and the Trust, and my fellow Officers, for their commitment and hard work.

Finally, if you are reading this, you have got beyond the front cover, which is intentionally controversial: so many

RCVS publications go unnoticed – but hopefully this one will not! Apart from grabbing attention, the pictures make the point that animals and people are inextricably linked in the work of the veterinary profession. If you have views on this *Review*, please let us know what you think by completing the feedback form on the back cover, or online at www.rcvs.org.uk/reviewfeedback.



Jane C Hern
Registrar



Emergency calls

Is the profession still prepared to offer 24-hour emergency care, and at what financial and personal cost? These were some of the issues tackled by a survey carried out in the autumn, which aimed to build an evidence base to support decisions about our guidance on the subject. Independent marketing and market research specialists Noesis Market Intelligence were tasked with the job – Director Dr Mo Gannon explains their approach.

One need not look far to see that there is some disquiet within the profession about whether the current RCVS requirement for practices to make provision for 24-hour emergency cover remains practical and appropriate.

At the start of this project, the College was keen to stress that it required evidence on which to base a decision on whether to retain the 24/7 obligation. This evidence base, however, should cover the issues and concerns of the profession, rather than be led by the College. To this end, we recommended a two-stage research process.

The first stage was to visit vets in their practices to discuss their thoughts and attitudes to the requirement to provide emergency cover, to encourage vets to discuss candidly how practices implement this and to understand the effect this had on them both personally and as a practice. The 12 vets interviewed comprised those who were most likely to be adversely affected by the regulation, for example, vets in remote practices and one-vet practices.

The views of those interviewed, together with anyone who contacted Noesis or RCVS directly, were taken into account and informed a questionnaire that was constructed for the

second stage of the process. This was to conduct telephone interviews with a larger sample of vets – around 440. Again, quotas ensured that the opinion of the smaller stakeholder groups deemed most likely to be adversely affected by the retention of the 24/7 regulation were represented and their voices heard.

“The College was keen to stress that it required evidence on which to base a decision on whether to retain the 24/7 obligation.”

Topics in the questionnaire included how out-of-hours work is covered currently, home visits, Working Time Regulations and the views of the profession on the future of the 24/7 obligation. At the end of the questionnaire, and having spent time thinking about each of these areas, vets were given three options and asked to choose. The options were: to retain the 24/7 obligation as it currently stands, to be able to opt out with prior written agreement from the College, or to be allowed to opt out if practice policy made this clear to clients.

Although, for some, the practicalities of implementing the 24/7 obligation were clearly onerous and they felt that their health was

being affected as a result, the majority of vets in each of the quota groups surveyed said that, given the choice, they would vote to maintain the status quo. Vets felt that animal welfare would suffer if 24/7 were dropped, and also that the public perception of the profession would be damaged.

The results of the survey suggest that the question is not whether there should be a requirement to make provision for 24/7 emergency cover, but how this should be implemented. The next step is for RCVS Council to explore with other professional bodies ways in which 24/7 can continue to be delivered, practically and legally. It is also going to look at whether its guidance should be amended or clarified to help the profession meet the obligation. Not an easy task, I think you will agree!

Read the current 24/7 guidance at www.rcvs.org.uk/guide





Other communications-related activities include:

- Producing new careers materials, including a DVD, brochure, website and PR campaign
- Hosting three Regional Question Times, five Meet the RCVS Days, three parliamentary functions, eight student meetings, a Fellows Dinner and RCVS Day
- Attending a range of veterinary congresses
- Posting 107 items of Latest News (www.rcvs.org.uk/latestnews), together with press releases, features and regular columns in the media
- Responding to eight consultations
- Winning the MemCom (Membership Communications) Best Annual Report award for *RCVS Review* and *RCVS Facts*
- Developing a new style of manifesto booklet for the RCVS and VN Council elections, together with special areas on www.vetsurgeon.org and www.vetnurse.co.uk to enable voters to challenge the candidates
- Publishing an MPs Toolkit, including factsheets, on ePolitix (www.epolitix.com)
- Publishing three issues of *RCVS News* and two *RCVS News Extras* (an overview of the Survey of the Veterinary Nursing Profession and one for practice managers).



VN exams closer to home

In July 2008, our veterinary nursing theory exams went electronic. Instead of trekking to one of five exam locations on a specified day, candidates can now book a slot during one of three exam periods at any one of Pearson VUE's 150 computer-based test centres, from Lerwick to the Channel Islands. Recently-qualified veterinary nurse Karen Langner RVN, from the Rhyd Broughton Veterinary Group in Wrexham, was impressed with the new system.

I hate being stressed before an exam, so when I took my Level 2 exam, in December 2007, and had to travel two and a half hours to Sheffield, I was nervous about getting lost and being late. So I booked a night in a hotel the night before – which made things a bit less stressful but was an extra expense.

“I prepared myself well, looking at past papers, reading information on the RCVS website and even taking the online Pearson Vue ‘virtual tour’.”

By the time I took my Level 3 exams, the electronic system had been introduced and I was able to go to Chester, which was about half an hour from my training practice in Ellesmere Port. I am pretty familiar with Chester, but with it being that much closer I was able to visit the centre beforehand and suss out where the parking was, what kind of change I needed and other practicalities. It makes a big difference on the day if you don't have to worry about those relatively trivial things and can concentrate on the exam.

I found the whole process pretty straight forward, from the online booking through to the

day itself. I prepared myself well, looking at sample papers, reading information on the RCVS website and even taking the online Pearson Vue 'virtual tour'. It was a new experience for my college, Lite Limited in St Helens, too, but they gave me plenty of information

I managed to book the date I wanted without any problems, and when I got to the centre I found the staff to be very friendly and reassuring. They take you in hand the moment you walk through the door and see you through the whole process, from finding a locker to secure your things, to setting you up with the test. In fact, I arrived 20 minutes early, expecting to have to wait around for a bit, but they set me up to start straightaway.

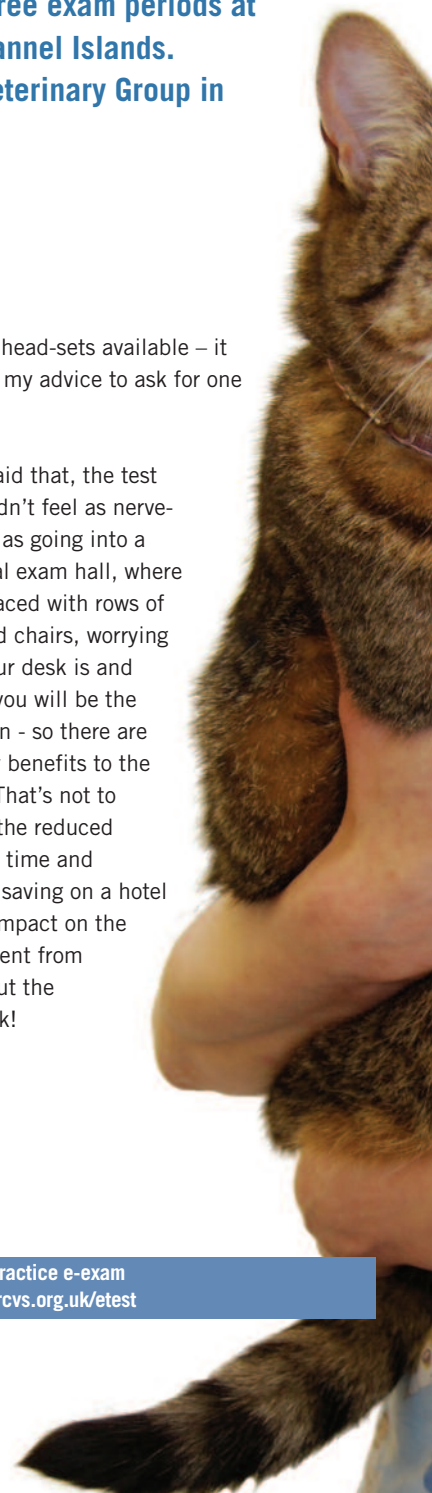
It's the first time I have done a computer-based exam, but I use computers every day at home and at work so I wasn't unduly stressed by it.

The one downside is that the test centres are also used by people taking their driving theory tests. This is a shorter test than the VN exam so there is a bit of disruption with people coming and going. On the day I took my exam I was the only VN there, I guess it might be different if there are a larger numbers of VNs working to the same timings as you. I have since found out that the centres have noise-

reducing head-sets available – it would be my advice to ask for one of those!

Having said that, the test centre didn't feel as nerve-racking as going into a traditional exam hall, where you are faced with rows of desks and chairs, worrying where your desk is and whether you will be the last one in - so there are definitely benefits to the e-exam. That's not to mention the reduced travelling time and expense, saving on a hotel and the impact on the environment from cutting out the paperwork!

Take a practice e-exam
at www.rcvs.org.uk/etest





Other VN-related activities include:

- Publishing the first joint *List and Register of Veterinary Nurses*, to incorporate the new VN Register
- Putting plans in place for the introduction of a disciplinary mechanism for Registered Veterinary Nurses in 2010
- Producing new VN careers information to reflect the removal of the lower age limit for enrolment on VN training
- The re-election of Dot Creighton and election of Kathy Kissick to VN Council.

And via the Veterinary Nursing Awarding Body:

- Securing EU funding for the PEPAS project to develop pan-European practical examinations (www.pepas.net)
- Launching a new training course for A1 assessors
- Co-hosting, with Warwickshire College, the annual conference for VETNET – the European association for veterinary nurse educators
- Taking the Acovene (www.acovene.com) project to develop European standards for VN course accreditation through a successful pilot – nine colleges are now approved across Europe.



A professional eye on complaints

This year, the Preliminary Investigation Committee formalised its team of veterinary investigators. One of the four investigators is Peter Aylmer BVSc CertZooMed MRCVS, of the Chipping Norton Veterinary Hospital. He explains the role of the investigators in the complaints process.

I had been a Practice Standards Scheme Inspector for the College for some time – and before that for the British Small Animal Veterinary Association's accreditation scheme. When I heard that the College was seeking veterinary surgeons to help with the investigation of complaints, I was a bit dubious at first, wondering how I would feel being involved with complaints against professional colleagues. But then I realised that if, heaven forbid, I ended up in hot water, I would much rather a veterinary colleague with many years' experience in practice was helping to investigate the case, as they would have a good understanding of the issues clinical practitioners face.

I also think it's better for the complainant that someone investigating their issues is able to put their dissatisfaction into context and help explain what a 'normal' outcome might have been. Sadly, some of the cases that come before the Preliminary Investigation Committee involve quite extreme behaviour from the veterinary surgeon. The majority are less clear-cut and the unrealistic expectations of the client play a part in their perception of what might be a problem.

It's not the College's style to come down like a ton of bricks – we need to be fair to both sides and try to understand what has happened. Often the complainant is seeking

an explanation of what went wrong and to ensure it doesn't happen again.

Frequently, talking the situation through with both parties helps to identify if there really is a case to be pursued by the Committee. This cuts down the time it takes for a complaint to progress to the next stage – which in turn reduces stress for both vet and complainant. In some cases, robust investigation at an early stage will save the College the considerable expense of an unnecessary disciplinary hearing.

I joined the team in January and have been on three visits so far. In each case the veterinary surgeons and complainants reacted well to the 'double-act' of a College barrister and a veterinary surgeon looking into the case. One complainant we visited in the Midlands seemed surprised and impressed that the RCVS had taken the time and trouble to visit and take her complaint seriously.

Following the investigation process, which may include unannounced visits, my role is to make a report and recommendations to the Preliminary Investigation Committee. I may on occasion have to present the findings to them directly, and if one of the cases goes to a Disciplinary Hearing, I may have to give formal evidence.

Many complaints are based on the behaviour of an individual, but some also relate to the practice and its facilities. In fact, the environment in which a vet practises is a good indication of the way in which he or she works. So my experience as a Practice Standards Scheme Inspector is also helpful in noting where related legal or professional conduct issues arise. However, it's worth reassuring practitioners that when I am on a Practice Standards inspection, I am definitely not wearing a Preliminary Investigation hat. Although the skills and knowledge for the two roles are complementary, they are very separate activities and the College is keen to ensure that I do not investigate a practice that I have already inspected, and vice versa.

I am aware that the College had been using veterinary surgeon members of the Preliminary Investigation Committee to assist with its investigations for some time but I am pleased that this role has now been formalised using non-Council vets. Based on what I've seen so far, I believe our input is beneficial to the profession and the public alike.

For more information about our complaints procedures, see www.rcvs.org.uk/complaints

“When I am on a Practice Standards inspection, I am definitely not wearing a Preliminary Investigation hat.”



Other complaints- and guidance-related activities include:

- Publishing new guidance for those giving evidence in court and new Advice Notes on Working Time Regulations, Veterinary Medicines Regulations, Controlled Drugs and Equine Pre-Purchase Examinations (www.rcvs.org.uk/advicenotes)
- Holding formal training for Preliminary Investigation (PIC) and Disciplinary Committee (DC) members, provided in conjunction with external solicitors
- Increasing our assistance to authorities investigating alleged breaches of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966
- Handling 687 complaints made about veterinary surgeons, and undertaking 72 investigations on behalf of the PIC, including 59 interviews (see *RCVS Facts* www.rcvs.org.uk/facts)
- Putting eight separate cases before the DC during the period under review (see *RCVS Facts*)
- Increasing the amount of detail we hold about complaints against veterinary surgeons, to enable trends to be monitored.



Surgeries support Standards

Facing a Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) inspection can be daunting – whether it's your first time or a re-inspection – so this year we introduced some 'surgeries' to help practices prepare. The PSS team travels around the country to answer questions in free, private sessions. Kath Thornton CertVPM, Practice Manager at the Hollybush Veterinary Group, found that our March event in Kidderminster boosted her confidence.

We had been thinking for a while about joining the Practice Standards Scheme but it was the need to register our premises for the medicines regulations this year that gave us the final push to apply. Our inspection date is fixed for the end of June, so the RCVS team coming to Stone Manor Hotel near Kidderminster in March was perfect timing for us.

“Now we know what to do, it's just a question of doing it... This is still quite daunting, but I have found the Practice Standards document checklists very helpful.”

Hollybush is an innovative 12-vet mixed practice. In addition to a main practice in Bridgnorth and a branch in Cleobury Mortimer, we also operate a remote consulting room from a leisure centre in Highley. This is great for the community as we are able to provide veterinary services where they are most accessible. However, we weren't quite sure where this type of premises fitted within the Scheme, so it was ideal that we were able to ask the team directly during our session.

We also had some specific queries about the new medicines regulations – in fact,

I spoke to all my colleagues and drew up a long list of queries beforehand to make sure I covered everything.

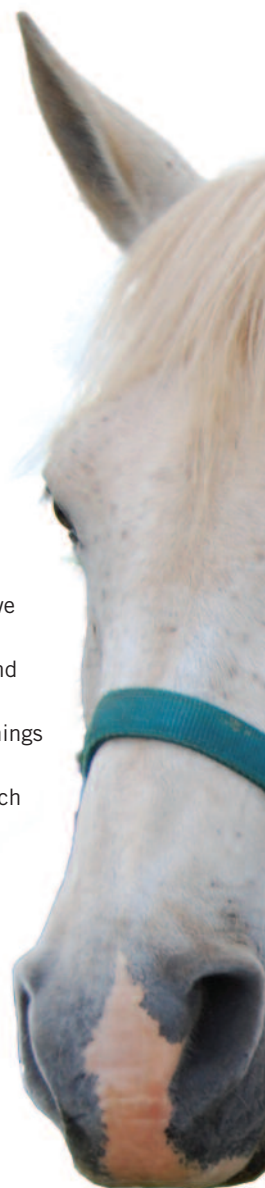
The venue was easy to find, quiet and comfortable, and the advice we received was very useful. Colleagues and I were impressed that Jill Nute, RCVS President and Practice Standards Chairman, was personally available to spend such a generous amount of time with us - nearly an hour and a half in the end – and how approachable and knowledgeable she was. I came away feeling much more positive and would absolutely recommend the surgery sessions to anyone joining the Scheme.

Now we know what to do, it's just a question of doing it... This is still quite daunting, but I have found the Practice Standards document checklists very helpful. I have been at Hollybush for about seven years, before that I was at the Riverside Veterinary Centre in Abergavenny, where, under the excellent mentorship of partner Glynne Davies, I assisted in getting the practice through British Small Animal Veterinary Association accreditation. I don't think the RCVS accreditation is going to be much more difficult, as we are doing most things in the Standards already. It's just a question of getting the paperwork in order, which can seem a bit excessive in places.

Once it's done, we will have the benefit of knowing everything is up-to-date and that we are following best practice – including the things we need to do for the medicines legislation, which means that once we are accredited we won't need to pay separate premises registration fees or face (and pay for!) routine inspections from the Veterinary Medicines Directorate. I am also hoping that accreditation will help us with the recruitment of new staff.

We are quite a marketing-focused practice so I am planning some activities to promote our accreditation – although I am not counting my chickens yet. And once we're through, there are lots more developments on the horizon, including a new equine clinic. Sometimes there seems no end to the challenges... but that's what keeps me motivated!

To read about the PSS, visit www.rcvs.org.uk/practicestandards





Other practice-related activities include:

- Developing and implementing the Register of Veterinary Practice Premises, which as of 31 March, included 3,991 premises linked to 2,459 practices
- Holding a joint press conference with the Veterinary Medicines Directorate to promote the Register to the profession, and a joint session at BSAVA Congress
- Producing comprehensive guidance for the profession on which premises require registration (www.rcvs.org.uk/premisesregister)
- Promoting and encouraging enrolment to the Practice Standards Scheme, with 96 applications received in the first three months of 2009 alone (compared with 61 in the whole of 2008); there were 2,225 accredited premises at the end of the reporting year, linked to 1,118 practices (31 March 2009)
- Reviewing the Scheme's standards, via the Practice Standards Group, for implementation in 2010.



Knowledge-seeking made easy

The RCVS Trust Library houses a collection of around 25,000 contemporary books and journals and 3,000 antiquarian volumes, in addition to providing access to 2,600 full-text electronic journals. We are always adding more resources, such as VetMed, a veterinary science database with over a million article extracts, made available to Library members this year. Gerry Polton MA VetMB MSc MRCVS, oncologist at North Downs Specialist Referrals in Bletchingley, Surrey, makes good use of the Library's services.

I am currently on a seven-year journey towards becoming a Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Internal Medicine, in the sub-specialty of Oncology. Before I embarked on this particular voyage, I completed a Master of Sciences degree in Oncology at the Institute of Cancer Research in Birmingham. And when the dust has settled after completion of my Diploma, I may consider an RCVS Fellowship, which I would hope to achieve via the thesis route. So you could say I have a thirst for learning... and that goes for keeping my knowledge up to date for everyday practice, too.

I was drawn to oncology shortly after graduating. One of my clients became ill with cancer and, through the treatment of his pet, I became involved in his life as well. This touched me greatly and I realised that solving the mystery of cancer was something to which I wanted to contribute.

Oncology is a very dynamic field and, not surprisingly, a lot of the developments happen first in human medicine, so I often turn to the RCVS Trust Library to help me stay up to date with what's new. The Library team helps me track down the latest human medical journals or sends me the full text of articles flagged up in the electronic digests and online tables of contents to which I subscribe. The Library is

also useful for sourcing articles from back-issues of veterinary journals when I need to research how to tackle a particular case.

Even though the practice is only a stone's throw from London, I don't have cause to come to visit the Library in person very often - I find I can get most things I need online or through the post. But whenever I have made the journey, the staff have been friendly and helpful. The online turnaround of requests is speedy too. You can usually have books or journals on loan for a month, but extending that by phone or email is pretty straightforward.

"The Library team help me track down the latest human medical journals or send me the full text of articles flagged up in the electronic digests and online tables of contents."

In the past, I have been a member of other libraries, but I now find I can get everything I need via membership of the Trust Library - either from their own collections or via the interlibrary loans. So that saves me some time and money.

I only recently appreciated that the Library was run by the RCVS Trust, as opposed to the College itself, and the range of grants that the Trust offers, such as the Travel Scholarships. A lot of the leading oncology seminars are held overseas, so once I have my Diploma sorted, I might well look into that!

Want to join the library? Visit www.rcvstrust.org.uk/library





Other Trust-related activities include:

- Boosting the number of Library members by around 25%
- Attracting a number of specialist groups to Library membership, including the Veterinary Cardiovascular Society
- Consolidating our links with other libraries working in animal health
- Adding the comprehensive VetMed Resource to our portfolio of resources, enabling members to access over a million article extracts, drawn from more than 30 years of research
- Increasing the level of support from veterinary organisations to enable us to enhance the Library's holdings
- Co-ordinating a fundraising programme, including sponsored runners in the Royal Parks half-marathon and British 10K
- Being selected as one of the beneficiaries of National Pet Month 2009
- Continuing to support the Veterinary Benevolent Fund's Vet Helpline and www.vetlife.org.uk
- Making grants worth £1,080,000 in 2008 as part of our Golden Jubilee year activities.



Encouraging choice, improving diversity

With the help of funding from the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills, and six of the seven vet schools, last year we developed some new careers materials to encourage a broader range of students to apply to vet school. A DVD, brochure and website were launched in May, and second-year Bristol vet student Shomari Lyon helped us to publicise the message that veterinary science is for 'all walks of life'.

I have wanted to be a vet for as long as I can remember, but as one of the rare non-white vet students in the UK, I know that makes me unusual. For me it seemed a logical choice: I love animals and was into the sciences. Although we never had a pet at home, my Aunt works at London Zoo and I used to visit often, so I became obsessed with animals from a young age. I am also keen on drawing, and think that when I was sketching animals I was also learning about anatomy, although I didn't appreciate it at the time.

Although my immediate family were very supportive of my choice, my extended family and friends were somewhat bemused – a career in human medicine, dentistry or law would have been more typical. My school, in Croydon, was also encouraging – even though no pupil had been to vet school for several years - but they didn't have any specific careers materials to offer me. The most useful thing was actually when an old pupil, who is now a vet, came to a careers day to talk to us. He encouraged me to visit his practice to get some experience and see if the reality of being a vet would be right for me, which was really helpful.

Since getting into vet school, I have been asked back to my school to give a talk to

students: unfortunately, I couldn't make the date, but I was delighted to be asked to help promote the new 'Walks of Life' careers materials. I think the DVD and brochure are pitched just right for the teenage audience and do a good job of outlining the broad range of career options available to a vet. In my experience it's not that those from the black community have any negative associations with being a vet, it's just that they may not have really thought about it as a career.

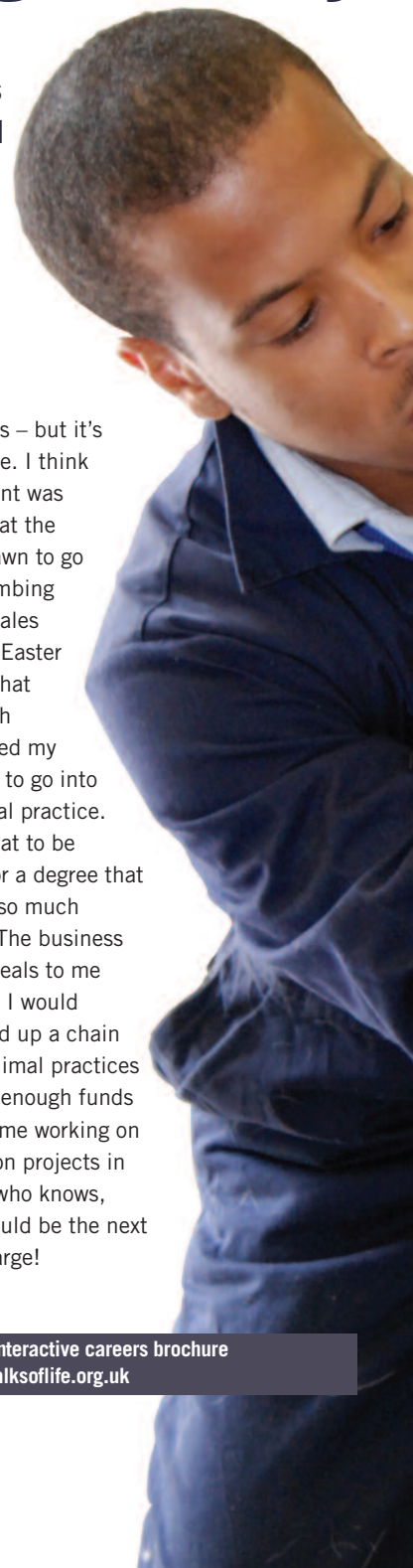
"I was delighted to be asked to help promote the new 'Walks of Life' careers materials. I think the DVD and brochure are pitched just right for the teenage audience."

I was pleased to join the 'Walks of Life' launch at the Rainforest Café in London last year. I have also since been involved with interviews and adverts in publications aimed specifically at the ethnic minority audience - it all helps to get the message across.

So far, I have really enjoyed the course here at Bristol; it's hard work – particularly compared with the workloads of my non-vet-student

housemates – but it's manageable. I think the low point was getting up at the crack of dawn to go into the lambing sheds in Wales during the Easter holidays. That pretty much strengthened my resolve not to go into large animal practice. But it's great to be studying for a degree that allows me so much flexibility. The business aspect appeals to me and ideally I would like to build up a chain of small animal practices to give me enough funds to spend time working on conservation projects in Africa. Or who knows, maybe I could be the next TV vet at large!

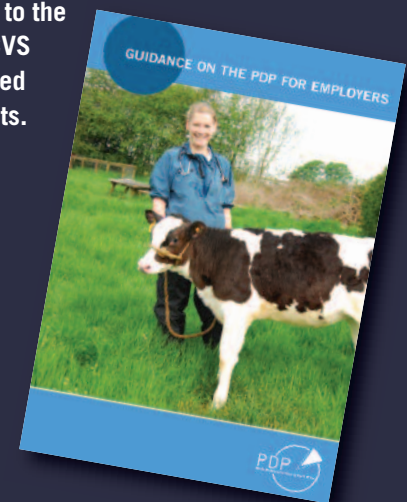
View our interactive careers brochure at www.walksoflife.org.uk





Other education-related activities include:

- Undertaking the first official visitation to the University of Nottingham's new School of Veterinary Medicine and Science, as part of our responsibility to quality-assure undergraduate education
- Instigating a review of Extra-Mural Studies in the undergraduate veterinary curriculum, including consultation with the profession
- Expanding the team of Professional Development Phase (PDP) Postgraduate Deans to four, and producing new guidance for employers
- Enrolling 585 new graduates (2008) for the PDP and signing-off 247 graduates (2007) who had completed their PDP
- Awarding 110 Certificates and ten Diplomas across 20 different subject areas
- Enrolling 315 candidates for modules for the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice (78 modules now available for assessment, across seven universities – www.rcvs.org.uk/modcerts)
- Awarding two new Diplomas of Fellowship (FRCVS) and adding 16 new veterinary surgeons to the List of RCVS Recognised Specialists.



RCVS COUNCIL

4 JULY 2008 – 3 JULY 2009

RCVS Council comprises 24 elected Members, two appointees from each of six UK veterinary schools and four persons appointed by the Privy Council - as specified in the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966.

Elected Members	Attendance	Appointed Members	Attendance
Christopher Chesney MRCVS	3/3	Alistair Barr MRCVS (B)	3/3
Beverley Cottrell MRCVS	3/3	Malcolm Bennett MRCVS (Lv)	2/2
Sheila Crispin FRCVS	3/3	Alison Bruce (G)	3/3
Jerry Davies MRCVS	3/3	Caroline Freedman MRPharms (E)	3/3
Roger Eddy FRCVS	3/3	Michael Hertage MRCVS (C)	2/3
Mark Elliott MRCVS	3/3	Duncan Maskell (C)	0/3
Bertie Ellis MRCVS	2/2	Stephen May FRCVS (Ln)	3/3
Catherine Goldie MRCVS	2/2	Quintin McKellar MRCVS (Ln)	2/3
Neil Gorman FRCVS	3/3	Stuart Reid MRCVS (G)	3/3
Charles Gruchy MRCVS	2/2	Frank Taylor MRCVS (B)	2/3
David Harding MRCVS	1/3	Sandy Trees MRCVS (Lv)	3/3
Lynne Hill MRCVS	3/3	Elaine Watson FRCVS (E)	2/3
Peter Jinman MRCVS	3/3		
Barry Johnson MRCVS	2/3	Privy Council Appointed Members	
Jacqui Molyneux MRCVS	3/3	Brian Jennings	1/3
Bob Moore MRCVS	3/3	Martyn Jones MP	3/3
Jill Nute MRCVS	3/3	Nigel Gibbens MRCVS	1/2
Bob Partridge MRCVS	3/3	Barbara Saunders	3/3
Christine Shield MRCVS	2/3		
Geoffrey Skerritt FRCVS	2/3		
Richard Stephenson MRCVS	2/2		
Nigel Swayne MRCVS	3/3		
Clare Tapsfield-Wright MRCVS	3/3		
Bradley Viner MRCVS	3/3		

Note: Universities: B = Bristol, C = Cambridge, E = Edinburgh, G = Glasgow, Lv = Liverpool, Ln = London.

VN COUNCIL

4 July 2008 – 3 July 2009

VN Council comprises eight elected veterinary nurses, six appointed veterinary surgeons (including three from RCVS Council), two lay members and one Lantra representative.

Elected Members	Attendance
Elizabeth Branscombe RVN	3/3
Dot Creighton RVN	3/3
Andrea Jeffery RVN	3/3
Katherine Kissick RVN	2/2
Hilary Orpet RVN	3/3
Sophie Pullen RVN	3/3
Jennifer Thompson RVN	3/3
Josephine Yates RVN	3/3
Appointed Members	Attendance
Anthony Birbeck	2/3
Stuart Craig (Lantra)	1/3
Catherine Goldie MRCVS	2/2
Richard Hooker MRCVS	2/3
Alan Hughes MRCVS	2/3
Donna Hunter MRCVS	0/1
Jacqui Molyneux MRCVS	3/3
Jill Nute MRCVS	3/3
Penelope Swindlehurst	1/2
Helen Torrington MRCVS	2/2

3/3 = attendance at Council meetings during the year under review, ie. 01/04/08 – 31/03/09 (denominator indicates total number of possible meetings for each Council Member).

PERMANENT STAFF AS AT 31 MARCH 2009

Alexei Allie	Libby Earle	Jane Hern	Jenny Orme
Annette Amato	Janet Etheridge	Gordon Hockey	Marilyn Pablo
Freda Andrews	Lesley Evans	Richard Holford	Nicola Page
Duncan Ash	Lucy Evans	Ian Holloway	Vivienne Pankhurst
Emma Baxter	Eleanor Ferguson	Judith Hylton	Stephanie Platt
Clare Boulton	Bonnie Fernley	Christine James	Thelma Rees
Gabi Braun	Christine Fraser	Anne Jerney	Alison Rengert
Dorothy Brereton	Jeff Gill	Lo Kei Kwok	Joanne Till
Paulette Brown	Janet Gordon-Jones	Lizzie Lockett	Liz Troman
Cherry Bushell	Alexandra Gould	Rupa Makwana	Danielle van den Berg
Mike Byrne	Andrew Grainger	Corrie McCann	Martyn Webster
Viv Carbines	Pam Greening	Claire Millington	Juliet Whatley
John Collins	Fiona Harcourt	Christopher Murdoch	Sue Whall
Ashley Doorly	Jenny Harris	Ben Myring	Tom Winters
Myai Du	Victoria Hedges	Sandra Neary	
Julie Dugmore	Michael Hepper	Jordan Nicholls	

Special thanks to all those who agreed to be featured in this *RCVS Review*, for giving up their time and for their patience; thank you also to those who allowed us to take photographs on their premises.

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RCVS FACTS
This is Part I of our
reporting on RCVS activities
in 2009. For everything
from the number of
UK veterinary students,
through the distribution of
vets and VNs across the
country, to our accounts,
see Part II: *RCVS Facts*
(www.rcvs.org.uk/facts)

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF
T: 020 7222 2001 F: 020 7222 2004 E: admin@rcvs.org.uk www.rcvs.org.uk

