

# **The 2010 RCVS Survey**

of the UK Veterinary and Veterinary Nursing  
Professions

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During January and February 2010, the RCVS surveyed veterinary surgeons (VSs) and veterinary nurses (VNs) on its database using postal and on-line questionnaires. The survey of VSs yielded a response rate of 37.4 per cent (8,829 responses) and the survey of VNs yielded a response rate of 31.4 per cent (4,106 responses). For both surveys, one in ten opted to complete the questionnaire online. This summary report presents an overview of the key findings from the surveys, taken from the full report '*The 2010 RCVS Survey of the UK Veterinary and Veterinary Nursing Professions*'. For the purposes of these surveys, unless otherwise specified, VN is shorthand for qualified, unqualified and student veterinary nursing staff.

### VSS AND VNS: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

| <b>VS Survey</b>  | <b>VN Survey</b>   |
|---|--|
| Fifty per cent of respondents are female, fifty per cent male.  | Ninety-eight per cent of respondents are female, two per cent male.  |
| The average age of VSs is 45.5 years.   | The average age of VNs is 31 years.  |
| Two per cent are from an ethnic minority group.   | One per cent are from an ethnic minority group.  |
| Over one-third of respondents have dependent children living with them and five per cent provide care to a dependent adult. | Just under a quarter of respondents have dependent children living with them and two per cent provide care to a dependent adult. |
| Eight per cent of respondents have a disability or medical condition.   | Four per cent of respondents have a disability or medical condition  |
| A quarter are not currently a member of any veterinary organisations (apart from RCVS).                                     | Just under half of respondents do not hold membership of any VN organisation.  |
| The average year of qualification is 1991 and seventy-nine per cent qualified in the UK.                                    | The average year of qualification is 2003 and almost all qualified in the UK.  |

## THE 'FEMINISATION' OF THE VETERINARY PROFESSION

An overwhelming majority of VNs are female, with just two per cent male, whilst VSs are evenly split, suggesting different issues may be important in each profession. The fifty-fifty gender divide in VSs highlights the increasing 'feminisation of the profession', especially when comparisons are made with earlier surveys. In 2000, 34 per cent of respondents were female; by 2002, this had increased to 37 per cent and in 2006 this rose further to 45 per cent. Yet whilst there is a fairly equal gender split amongst VSs overall, when looking at VSs working within the profession and in clinical practice, a slightly higher proportion of females than males are found to work within clinical veterinary practice and indeed the profession itself. In addition female VSs are generally younger than their male colleagues with a higher proportion of females, than males, under 40 years of age (71 per cent of those under 40 are female). Common to both VSs and VNs however, is that minority ethnic representation continues to be very low.

## VETERINARY NURSING: 'A YOUNGER PROFESSION'

Across both professions, those who work outside the profession are, on average, older than those who work within and this is particularly the case for VNs. The average age of VNs in full-time work is much lower than VSs; VNs are, on average, nearly 15 years younger than VSs, demonstrating that the VN profession is generally a 'younger' profession. This reflects the fact that the VN profession is nearly 50 years old, whilst the RCVS Royal Charter was awarded in 1845. The findings are further supported by the average year of qualification between the two professions which shows that the average year for VSs is 12 years earlier than that of VNs.

## DISABILITIES HIGHER IN VSS

The proportion of VS respondents reporting a disability or medical condition that limits them at work is twice that of VNs. The most common conditions across both professions are back, neck and joint problems. Amongst VSs, arthritis is particularly prevalent. This is consistent with the older age profile of VSs.

## QUALIFICATIONS, ESPECIALLY INTERNATIONAL, HIGHER IN VSS

The VS profession is more highly qualified than the VN, which is not surprising given that entry to veterinary schools is very competitive. The percentage of VNs who hold additional qualifications is not as high as VSs.

VSs are expected to undertake a minimum of 105 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) every three years, whilst Registered Veterinary Nurses are required to spend a minimum of 45 hours every three years on CPD activity. In line with this, the survey results indicate that VSs spend, on average, slightly more days away from work receiving CPD than VNs and give more hours to different CPD methods. Weekend courses are also more popular CPD for VSs than VNs, who prefer courses during the working week.

Whilst still in the majority, a smaller proportion of VSs qualified in the UK compared to VNs (78.5 per cent vs. 98.7 per cent respectively). VSs are much more varied in their country of qualification, indicating that the VS profession is more mobile across international borders.

## VSS AND VNS AT WORK

The majority of VSs and VNs are in full-time employment, with a slightly higher percentage of VNs being full-time. VSs who are employed on a full-time and part-time basis work more hours on average than VNs who are employed in the same capacity. Ninety-five per cent of VSs who are currently working (*ie* are not unemployed, taking a career break or fully retired)

say that their main employment is within the profession<sup>1</sup> and of these 84 per cent are working in clinical veterinary practice. This is slightly higher amongst VNs where 92 per cent of respondents are working within clinical veterinary practice. The remaining eight per cent say they are either working outside clinical practice but in work using their VN qualification, or working outside the VN profession entirely.

## PROFILES

Profiles of respondents working within or outside their profession or clinical veterinary practice are shown in the boxes below.

### VS AND VN PROFILES

#### **Profiles: VSs working outside the profession**

- Nearly half of VSs working outside the profession work in an animal-related organisation and over two-thirds have managerial or supervisory responsibility within their current role.
- The average basic weekly hours worked are 33.7, with average weekly overtime hours of 19.6. Being paid for overtime worked is very unusual, in that 86 per cent never get overtime pay. The average salary of those working outside the profession is just under £51,000.
- The vast majority have, at some time, worked in clinical practice, on average for 12.6 years, yet less than 15 per cent are considering a return to veterinary practice, suggesting that the majority are lost to the profession.

#### **Profiles: VSs working within the profession**

- Just over 80 per cent of VSs working in the profession say that their main employment is in practice, with the largest proportion of these working in small animal practice.
- Those working in equine practice, veterinary schools, mixed practices, small animal/exotic practices, and farm/production practice work the longest hours on average (over 40 hours a week). The highest on-call but not on premises commitment is found in practice, where the average commitment is often over 25 hours.
- The average basic salary of those who work full-time within the profession (excluding unsocial hours, benefits and overtime) is just under £49, 000.
- Eighty-three per cent intend to stay in the profession for the foreseeable future. However the reason cited by three-quarters of those who intend to leave the profession for reasons other than retirement was a dissatisfaction with veterinary work (eg hours, stress).

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<sup>1</sup> The definition of 'working outside the profession' is working in employment in which membership of the RCVS, or an equivalent overseas professional body, is not mandatory or desirable, and which does not require a veterinary qualification or the use of veterinary skills.

### **Profiles: VSs working within clinical veterinary practice**

- Forty-three per cent of those currently working within clinical veterinary practice are working as a full-time assistant or employee of a limited company. The average number of full-time assistants/employees in VS practices is four.
- Forty-one per cent of VS practices have partnership ownership, whilst a quarter are owned by a sole principal. Just over one-third of consultants and over half of locums work in more than one practice (with an average of six).
- Twenty-one per cent of VSs working in clinical practice say that they use the services of technicians/therapists in their practice and over one-third have clinical specialists/consultants working in their practice.
- In terms of allocation of working hours, the largest proportion of VS working time (35.7 per cent) is spent on dogs and 29 per cent on cats, with a total of 69.4 per cent of their time spent on small animals overall. Seven per cent of VS working time is spent with cattle and 10 per cent with horses.
- Sixty-eight per cent of those who are currently working in clinical veterinary practice personally carry out routine (*ie* not out-of-hours) visits to their clients. In terms of out-of-hours work, sixty per cent say that their practice generally covers its out-of-hours work itself and two-thirds personally undertake out-of-hours work. Over half of VSs undertake domiciliary visits out-of-hours to provide emergency veterinary care. The majority of VSs say they are on-call for 10 vets or less.
- With regard to the Working Time Regulations, half of VSs working within clinical veterinary practice do not have a minimum 11-hour rest period every 24 hours and of these only 12 per cent have signed up to a workforce agreement that provides other compensatory rest.
- Over two-thirds of VSs believe the current economic climate is having an impact on the practice(s) where they work. In particular a majority report an increase in bad debts and a substantial minority report an increase in euthanasia numbers.

### **Profiles: VNs working outside clinical veterinary practice**

- The vast majority (90 per cent) of VNs working outside clinical veterinary practice are in current employment. Of these nearly three-quarters work in an organisation which is animal related and just under two-thirds have managerial or supervisory responsibilities within their current role.
- The average basic working week for full-time workers is 38 hours, and respondents worked an average of 18 hours overtime in the month prior to survey completion. The average take-home pay for the same month was £1,458, and full-time workers receive an average basic annual salary of £23,260.
- The vast majority have worked in clinical veterinary practice in the past (98 per cent) and the average time spent outside clinical veterinary practice is six years. However, despite a history of working in clinical veterinary practice, only twenty per cent are intending to return, suggesting that many may be lost to practice.

### **Profiles: VNs working within clinical veterinary practice**

- Almost one-third say they are a head nurse in their practice.
- Fifty-four per cent of those working as a locum work across more than one practice, working across an average of three practices.
- The average basic working week of full-time VN working in clinical practice is 39 hours. Over 70 per cent work in small animal practice and work an average of 37 hours in a basic working week.
- Full-time VNs worked an average of 22 hours overtime in the month prior to survey completion, with 15 per cent working in excess of 40 hours overtime. A quarter never receive extra payment for overtime worked, however just over two-thirds are entitled to 'time off in lieu'.
- The highest proportion of VN working time, on average, is spent with small animals and half of VNs working in clinical practice are involved in nutrition nursing clinics.
- Fifty-three per cent consider themselves to have a particular area of expertise – for around forty per cent this expertise relates to weight management or being a VN assessor/verifier.
- The average take-home pay, in the month prior to survey completion, for respondents working full-time within clinical veterinary practice was £1,162, and their average basic annual salary (excluding unsocial hours, benefits and overtime) is £16,379.
- As part of their role, over a quarter personally carry out visits to clients.
- With regard to the Working Time Regulations, seventeen per cent of VNs do not receive an 11-hour rest period every 24 hours.
- Over three-quarters plan to stay in clinical practice for the foreseeable future. Nearly a quarter are planning to leave within the next five years for reasons other than retirement, with the largest proportion of these intending to leave on the grounds of pay.

### **ALLOCATION OF WORKING HOURS WITHIN CLINICAL VETERINARY PRACTICE**

The allocation of time of VNs working within clinical veterinary practice shows that the largest proportion of VN time is spent working with small animals. Compared across previous surveys, this year has seen a slight increase in the proportion of working time spent on dogs between 2002 and 2010 and on the time allocated to small animals overall since 1998. Table 1 shows past, present and future predictions of working time breakdowns. Text in red shows where there are discrepancies, however minor, between the 2006 predictions and the current proportions of time spent on various species. Whilst it was predicted that by 2011 the amount of time spent with small animals would decrease, in particular that spent with dogs, in 2010 the actual trend shows an increase in the proportion of time spent with dogs, with a corresponding decrease in the proportion of time spent with rabbits and birds. In addition, the proportion of working time spent with farm animals has halved since 1998. Yet despite predictions, the time spent on small animals looks set to increase if the current trend is maintained in coming years.

**Table 1: Past, present and future predictions of VS working time breakdowns, percentages**

|                                | 2001<br>(actual) | 2006<br>(actual) | 2010<br>(actual) | 2011 (2006<br>prediction) | 2015 (2010<br>prediction) | 2006 predicted<br>trend | Actual<br>trend |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Dogs                           | 33.8             | 33.5             | 35.7             | 31.7                      | 33.11                     | ↓                       | ↑               |
| Cats                           | 27.6             | 29.1             | 29.1             | 29.8                      | 28.88                     | ↑                       | Same            |
| Rabbits                        | 3.4              | 4.8              | 4.66             | 5.3                       | 4.91                      | ↑                       | ↓               |
| Birds                          | 1                | 1.1              | 1.02             | 1.1                       | 0.96                      | Same                    | ↓               |
| Other small<br>animals         | 1.2              | 1.6              | 1.83             | 1.5                       | 1.64                      | ↓                       | ↑               |
| <i>Total small<br/>animals</i> | 67               | 70.1             | 72.3             | 69.4                      | 69.5                      | ↓                       | ↑               |
| Horses                         | 9.2              | 9.2              | 9.98             | 9.8                       | 10.98                     | ↑                       | ↑               |
| Beef cattle                    | 3.8              | 3                | 2.66             | 2.5                       | 2.56                      | ↓                       | ↓               |
| Dairy cattle                   | 6.8              | 5.2              | 4.56             | 4.7                       | 4.77                      | ↓                       | ↓               |
| <i>Total cattle</i>            | 10.6             | 8.2              | 7.2              | 7.2                       | 7.3                       | ↓                       | ↓               |
| Sheep                          | 1.6              | 1.3              | 1.1              | 1                         | 1.12                      | ↓                       | ↓               |
| Pigs                           | 0.8              | 0.5              | 0.5              | 0.5                       | 0.38                      | Same                    | Same            |
| Poultry                        | 0.5              | 0.4              | 0.31             | 0.4                       | 0.27                      | Same                    | ↓               |
| Exotics                        | 0.6              | 0.6              | 0.75             | 1                         | 0.87                      | ↑                       | ↑               |
| Meat Hygiene                   | 1.3              | 1.1              | 0.17             | 0.8                       | 0.12                      | ↓                       | ↓               |
| Fish for food                  | 0.1              | 0.1              | .0.1             | 0.1                       | 0.07                      | Same                    | Same            |
| Local Veterinary<br>Inspector  | 3.2              | 2.7              | 2.31             | 1.8                       | 1.47                      | ↓                       | ↓               |
| Practice mgmt/<br>admin        | 3.7              | 5                | 5.29             | 6.1                       | 6.35                      | ↑                       | ↑               |
| Other                          | 1.4              | 0.8              | 0.72             | 1.5                       | 1.06                      | ↑                       | ↓               |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

The allocation of the time of VNs working in clinical practice shows that the highest proportion of their time, on average, is spent with small animals. However the proportion of time spent with this animal group has decreased by 11 per cent since 2008. However this year we added the option of ‘cleaning’ which may have previously been included in work with small animals in previous years (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Breakdown of VN average working time, mean percentage**

| Species/Discipline/Activity     | 2010 | 2008 |
|---------------------------------|------|------|
| Dogs                            | 28.4 | 33.9 |
| Cats                            | 24.2 | 29.2 |
| Rabbits                         | 5.9  | 6.7  |
| Birds                           | 1.4  | 1.4  |
| Others (eg. tortoises, gerbils) | 2.1  | 1.7  |
| Small animals                   | 61.9 | 72.9 |
| Exotics                         | 0.96 | 1    |

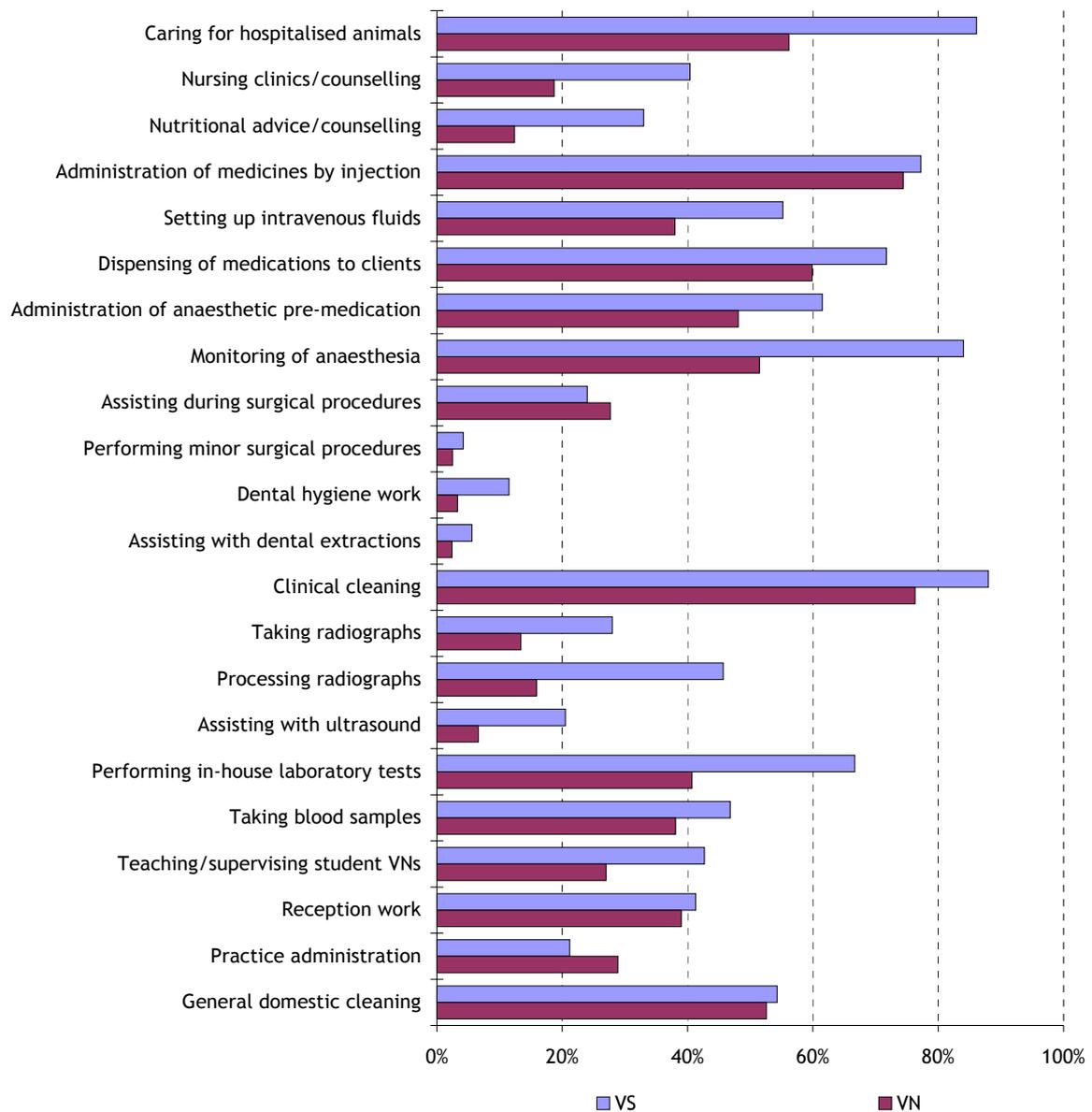
| Species/Discipline/Activity | 2010 | 2008 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|
| Horses                      | 1.7  | 1.7  |
| Farm animals                | 0.5  | 0.5  |
| Practice mgmt/admin         | 9.9  | 11.5 |
| Reception                   | 10.8 | 10.9 |
| Cleaning*                   | 17.3 | 0    |
| Other                       | 1.6  | 2.1  |

Notes: \*No data for 2008

Source: VN Survey, 2010 and 2008

### VSS OVERESTIMATE HOW FREQUENTLY VNS PERFORM CERTAIN TASKS

**Figure 1: VS and VN views on the work of VNs in practice, percentage who state that VNs undertake the activity every day**



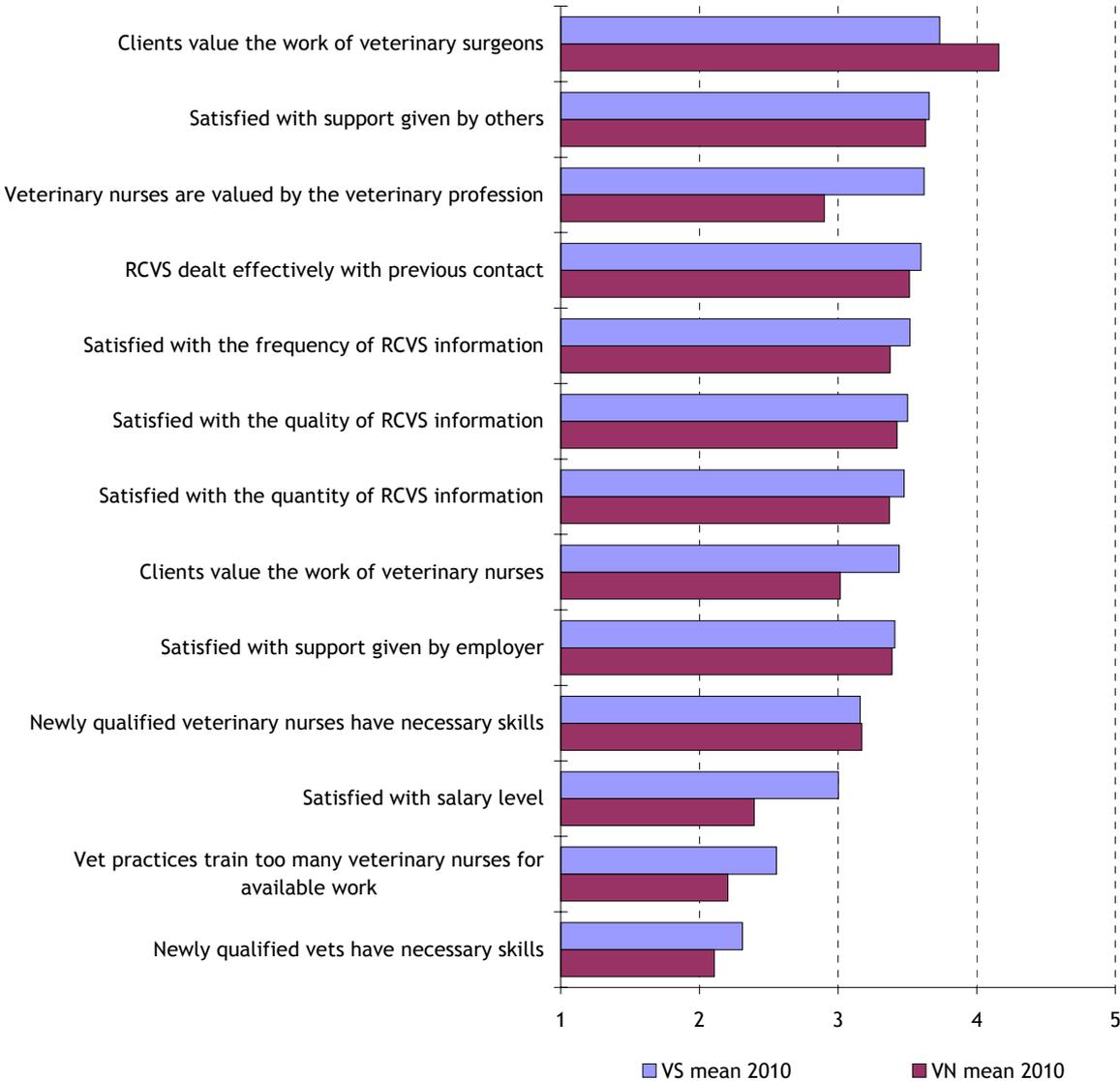
Source: VS and VN Surveys, 2010

For the first time this year VSs, as well as VNs, were asked to indicate the type of clinical and non-clinical work VNs undertake in their practice and how often (see Figure 1). When compared with the findings from the VN survey it is evident that VSs tend to overestimate how often VNs do many of the tasks such as caring for hospitalised animals, monitoring of anaesthesia, processing and taking radiographs and performing in-house laboratory tests. For example, 86 per cent of VSs who are currently working within clinical practice say that VNs care for hospitalised animals every day, compared to just over half of VNs.

**WHILST VSS AND VNS FIND THEIR ROLES VALUED BY CLIENTS, VARIED AND SATISFYING, THEY ALSO FIND THEIR WORK STRESSFUL**

Regardless of whether respondents work in clinical practice or not, both VSs and VNs are generally in agreement that they find their role valued by their clients and they have variety and satisfaction in their work. They also both disagree that too many VNs are being trained. However, both have in common that they find their work stressful and are generally in strong disagreement with the views that newly qualified VSs have the necessary skills (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Views of VS and VNs about their profession: mean scores**



Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Source: VS and VN Survey, 2010

## VSS ARE MORE POSITIVE IN THEIR ASSESSMENT OF HOW VALUED VNS ARE BY THE VETERINARY PROFESSION

The views of both VSs and VNs show the greatest divergence concerning how valued VNs are by the veterinary profession with VSs being far more positive in their assessment. A similar pattern is seen when respondents are asked how much they agree with the view that clients value the contribution of each group. VSs are more positive that VNs are valued and VNs agree more strongly that VSs are appreciated.

## VSS ARE NEUTRAL IN THEIR ATTITUDE TO THEIR SALARY WHILST VNS SHOW DISSATISFACTION

**Table 3: Average salary for full-time VSs and VNs, mean**

|  |                          | Mean salary |
|--|--------------------------|-------------|
| VSs working outside the profession                                 |                          | £51,000     |
| VSs working within the profession                                  |                          | £48,951     |
| VNs working outside clinical veterinary practice (overall average) |                          | £23,260     |
| <i>Breakdown</i>   | Qualified VNs            | £24,188     |
|  | Qualified VCA/ANA        | £24,000     |
|  | Student VNs              | £6,742      |
|  | Unqualified VN assistant | £2,400      |
| VNs working within clinical veterinary practice (overall average)  |                          | £16,378     |
| <i>Breakdown</i>   | Qualified VNs            | £17,760     |
|  | Qualified VCA/ANA        | £13,084     |
|  | Student VNs              | £10,950     |
|  | Unqualified VN assistant | £11,780     |

Source: VS and VN Surveys, 2010

There is clearly disparity in the average salary received by VSs and VNs (Table 3) dependent upon whether they work within or outside of the profession or clinical veterinary practice. This year, the surveys found a difference in how satisfied VSs and VNs are with their salary levels. Overall VSs are neutral in their attitude to their salary whilst VNs show dissatisfaction.

There are some interesting differences in levels of satisfaction dependent upon the desire to become qualified and whether respondents would choose the same career again. For instance, unqualified veterinary nursing assistants who would like to qualify were generally dissatisfied with their salaries but satisfied with the support given to them by others in their practice and their employers. VSs who would choose the same career again are more likely to be satisfied with their salary.

When compared with other professions: UK hospital consultants in 2010/2011 receive between £74,504 and £100,446 dependent upon the number of years completed as a consultant (Broad, 2010). Trainee doctor salaries range between £23,533 and £65,392 depending on grade<sup>2</sup>. In 2010, the Information Centre for Health and Social Care published estimates of annual basic pay for NHS staff groups (excluding GPs and high street dentists)

<sup>2</sup> Broad M (2010), Hospital doctors' pay scales for 2010/2011, HospitalDr [online] Address: [www.hospitaldr.co.uk/features/hospital-doctors-pay-scales-for-20092010](http://www.hospitaldr.co.uk/features/hospital-doctors-pay-scales-for-20092010). Last accessed: 28.07.2010.

(see Table 4). They found the mean basic pay for qualified nurses was £29,200, whilst mean basic pay for consultants was £90,400.<sup>3</sup> In 2010, salaried GPs employed directly by PCTs earn between £53,781 to £81,158, dependent on factors such as length of service and experience<sup>4</sup>

**Table 4: Basic pay and earnings for Medical Staff groups**

|                                       | <b>Mean basic salary per Full-time equivalent</b> |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Foundation Yr 1/ House Officer        | £22,400   |
| Foundation Yr 2/ Senior House Officer | £29,100   |
| Registrar Group                       | £38,300   |
| Consultants                           | £90,400   |
| Associate Specialists                 | £76,600   |
| Staff Grade                           | £62,600   |

*Source: Information Centre for Health and Social Care NHS Staff Earnings Estimates, January to March 2010, Processed using data taken from the Electronic Staff Record Data Warehouse, as at May 2010*

The top three most commonly cited suggestions, given by VSs, on what would make their profession a better profession in which to work are: increased pay/fees/remuneration, which tops the list, followed by reduced out-of-hours/on-call work and more work-life balance/flexible working. In 2006 increased pay and remuneration was second to better work/life balance and more flexible hours.

As in 2008, pay also tops the list for VNs, followed by more respect and appreciation. Perhaps to be expected, therefore, is the finding that sixteen per cent of VNs in current work also have a second job. Of these, 60 per cent work in an animal-related field, with the remainder working in a non-animal related job. They work an average of 10 hours per week in their second job.

#### VSS WORKING WITHIN THE PROFESSION WORK THE LONGEST HOURS

**Table 5: Average hours in a basic working week for full-time VSs and VNs, mean**

|  | <b>Mean hours</b> |
|--|-------------------|
| VSs working outside the profession               | 33.7              |
| VSs working within the profession                | 45                |
| VNs working outside clinical veterinary practice | 38                |
| VNs working within clinical veterinary practice  | 38.9              |

*Source: VS and VN Surveys, 2010*

VSs working within the profession work, on average, more hours than those working outside. VNs working within the profession (Table 5), however, work, on average, similar hours to those working outside their profession. Overall, working within the VS profession appears

<sup>3</sup> The Health and Social Care Information Centre (2010), NHS Staff Earnings January - March 2010 [online] Address: [www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/workforce/nhs-staff-earnings/nhs-staff-earnings-january-march-2010](http://www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/workforce/nhs-staff-earnings/nhs-staff-earnings-january-march-2010). Last accessed: 28.07.2010.

<sup>4</sup> NHS Careers (2010) Pay for Doctors [online] Address: [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/details/Default.aspx?Id=553](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/details/Default.aspx?Id=553). Last accessed: 23.09.10.

tougher than working outside it, with longer hours (plus on-call commitment) and a high percentage working full-time at a slightly lower salary. Those working within the profession also score lower on well-being than those working outside it.

#### VSS ARE LESS LIKELY THAN VNS TO HAVE A MINIMUM 11-HOUR REST PERIOD

In terms of the Working Time Regulations, a higher proportion of VNs have a minimum 11-hour rest period every 24 hours than VSs. Half of VSs do not have a minimum 11-hour rest period and of these just 11.6 per cent have signed up to a workforce agreement that provides other compensatory rest. This is compared to the 17 per cent of VNs who do not receive the rest period, of which 10.5 per cent have signed up to a workforce agreement. However, similar proportions of VSs and VNs receive at least two days rest every 14 days with only a slightly higher (seven per cent) proportion of VNs receiving this.

#### FAMILY FRIENDLY PROFESSIONS?

Perhaps in line with the feminisation of the VS profession is the finding that the reasons for taking career breaks have changed somewhat since 2006. For instance there is a thirteen per cent rise in the proportion of VSs taking a career break for the reason of 'parental leave/looking after children', alongside a reduction in the proportion taking a career break on the grounds of travel or study. This has implications in terms of the profession needing to train more people to cover the same amount of work, and also needing to provide more flexible working arrangements.

Male VSs are more positive than their female colleagues about the veterinary profession being family friendly. VNs and VSs in their thirties, the age group most likely to have young dependent children living with them, find the profession the least family friendly. However, VSs and VNs who would choose the same career again are more likely to believe that the profession is family friendly.

#### WELL-BEING

For the first time this year, all respondents to both the VS and VN surveys were invited to complete a short section of questions on their well-being, not just in the work setting but about their feelings about their life in general. For this, the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS) was used, a 14-item scale of mental well-being.

**Please note:** differences in well-being scores between groups identified in the survey results must be interpreted with extreme caution because of the influence of confounding factors such as differences in the age and gender structure of the respective groups.

#### VNS AND VSS SCORE LOW ON WELL-BEING

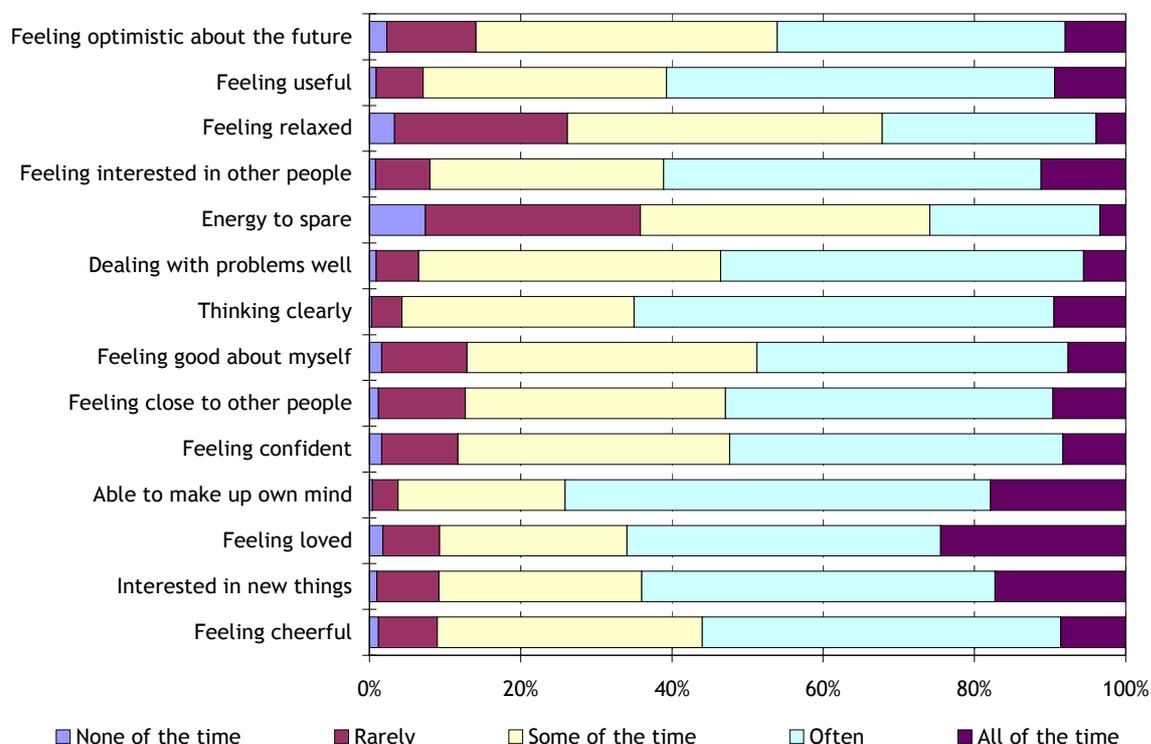
Overall VSs and VNs are positive in the way they rate factors associated with their well-being and their feelings about their life in general. However, in line with other research, for both VSs and VNs the means are significantly lower than the corresponding means for a representative general population sample from Scotland.

VSs who are young, female, have a disability and/or qualified after 2004 tend to score lower on well-being than those who are male, older, do not have a disability and/or qualified before 1964.

In terms of views on the profession, female VSs, tend to find the work more stressful than male VSs, with female VSs scoring higher on average. Veterinary work is also found to be most stressful by VSs in their twenties but this declines with age, with 20-29 year olds scoring

higher on average. VNs aged under 20 are generally the most positive in their views of the profession while those in their thirties are the least positive overall, scoring highest and lowest on average respectively.

**Figure 3: VS self-ratings for well-being statements**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

## OVERSEAS VSS AND VNS

Whilst the majority of those in both professions currently work in the UK, 11 per cent of VSs and just over one per cent of VNs do not. A substantial proportion of VSs (per cent) and a much smaller proportion of VNs (per cent) who work in the UK have come from abroad, mainly Ireland and Australia. Respondents who are not a British national but work in the UK were asked when they arrived and why they decided to come to the UK this time. The average year of arrival of overseas VSs is 2002, compared to 2000 for VNs. There is little difference in the reasons given for coming to the UK across both professions. The most common reason given by both groups is 'to work abroad'. However a slightly higher proportion of VNs come to the UK for marital or partner-related reasons than VSs.

## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FURTHER EDUCATION

For VSs, most CPD received is funded by employers/practices or respondents themselves, whilst for VNs most CPD received is funded by employers/practices or is free. Across both professions, being on leave/holidays is the most common reason for days away from work, whilst fewer days away from work are due to illness (average of 3.8 days for VNs and 2.4 days for VSs). This may reflect the general decline in sickness absence in the UK. According to the CBI, the average UK worker took 6.4 days off due to sickness in 2009; this was the lowest level since 1987 and a significant reduction since 2007, when absence stood at 6.7

days per average UK worker (Brockett, 2010)<sup>5</sup>. The average sickness days for VSs and VNs are therefore substantially than the UK average.

Amongst VSs, RCVS certificates are particularly popular as qualifications they are currently studying/planning to study for, whilst for VNs it is RCVS Diplomas in Advanced Veterinary Nursing. Books/journals/articles are the most used CPD method across both professions. VNs under 20 years old are far more likely to believe that veterinary nursing offers good career progression than older VNs.

Fifty-seven per cent of recently qualified VSs received appraisals or performance reviews during their first year in practice, whereas three-quarters of current student nurses and 2009/2010 VN qualifiers receive(d) appraisals or performance reviews during their training or after qualification.

## INTERNET USE

The majority of respondents in both professions have access to the internet at home and work. Only a small percentage of both groups do not have access to the internet at all. Of those who do have access, the majority across both professions access it at home, and these figures have increased since the previous surveys. Whilst VNs and VSs use the RCVS website, this is only occasionally/rarely in both cases. Student VNs are likely to visit the RCVS website on a more regular basis than non-student VNs and this figure has increased since the last survey in 2008. Both VSs and VNs use email regularly; however, both still prefer to receive RCVS communications via the post. VNs are more likely to use social networking sites (eg Facebook, Twitter) than VSs, although these are usually general sites rather than specific veterinary sites and use is more likely amongst student VNs than non-students. The majority of VSs state that their best sources of information are *RCVS News* or the RCVS website. However, there is no strong preference for VNs, who state that the RCVS website, *RCVS News*, the veterinary nursing press and the *RCVS VN Standard* are all similarly good sources of information for them.

Whilst there is an increase in the number of respondents in both professions who access the internet, it is interesting that there is no corresponding increase in the proportions who completed the survey online compared with previous surveys (2006 for VSs, 2008 for VNs).

## IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC CLIMATE

This year, for the first time, VS respondents were asked whether they think that the current economic climate is having an impact on the practice(s) where they work. Over two-thirds say it is (69 per cent). Those who feel the current economic climate is having an impact on the practice(s) where they work were asked about the kind of impact it has had and whether various elements had increased, decreased or stayed the same as a result. Table 6 shows the results, and highlights (in red) where there have been big increases or decreases. It is apparent that the numbers of staff in some practices has decreased in line with the demand for services, especially high-cost procedures. The majority report an increase in bad debts and a substantial minority report an increase in euthanasia numbers.

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<sup>5</sup> Brockett J (2010), Sickness absence 'at lowest level for 20 years', PM Online, Address: [www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/pm/articles/2010/06/sickness-absence-at-lowest-level-for-20-years.htm](http://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/pm/articles/2010/06/sickness-absence-at-lowest-level-for-20-years.htm). Last accessed: 28.07.2010.

**Table 6: VS perception of the impact of the economic climate, percentage**

|                                     | Increased | Decreased | Stayed the same |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
| Hours                               | 12.2      | 11.9      | 75.8            |
| Number of VSs                       | 5.9       | 20.4      | 73.7            |
| Number of VNs                       | 4.5       | 18.0      | 77.5            |
| Number of staff in practice overall | 7.4       | 29.3      | 63.3            |
| Bad debts                           | 73.9      | 2.0       | 24.1            |
| Demand for services overall         | 10.7      | 72.8      | 16.5            |
| Demand for high-cost procedures     | 3.7       | 73.7      | 22.6            |
| Client appointments not kept        | 45.4      | 3.3       | 51.3            |
| Charges                             | 38.3      | 7.2       | 54.5            |
| Number of clients insured           | 14.0      | 23.8      | 62.2            |
| Number of specialist referrals      | 4.5       | 41.4      | 54.1            |
| Euthanasia numbers                  | 38.3      | .8        | 60.9            |
| Other                               | 38.2      | 25.9      | 36.0            |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

For both VSs and VNs, increased income tops the list of things that, for them, would make their profession a better profession in which to work. VNs also see this as one of main challenges currently facing their profession, whilst VSs see the economic climate to be one of the main challenges.

#### THE TOP FIVE BEST THINGS ABOUT A CAREER IN THE VS AND VN PROFESSIONS

Both VSs and VNs were asked what the three best things are about a career in their profession (see Figures 4 and 5). There are notable similarities in their top five responses, for instance both VSs and VNs most commonly cite variety, job satisfaction, working with animals and client relationships as some of the best things about a career in their profession. However the emphasis placed on these slightly differs between the two groups, for instance VSs most commonly cite variety whilst working with animals tops the list for VNs. VNs also cite making a difference as one of the best things about the profession. This does not appear in the VS top five. Instead challenge is considered by VSs to be one of the top five.

**Figure 4: Top five best things about a career in the VS profession**



Source: VS Survey, 2010. Produced using Wordle™, Feinberg 2010<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Feinberg, J. (2010), Wordle [online] Address: www.wordle.net/ Last accessed: 28.07.2010.

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Figure 5: Top five best things about a career in the VN profession

**Working with animals**  
Building client relationships  
Making a difference

**Job satisfaction**  
**Variety**

Source: VN Survey, 2010. Produced using Wordle™, Feinberg 2010

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## IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Looking to the future, the trends identified in this report suggest that the outlook for the VS and VN professions may be as follows:

- The feminisation of the VS profession will continue in the coming years. This finding is evidenced by the fact that less than one quarter of veterinary students who started their degree (24 per cent) or obtained their veterinary degree (21 per cent) in 2009 are male<sup>7</sup>. In addition, male VSs have a notably higher average age than female VSs (53 compared to 38 respectively) and perhaps unsurprisingly therefore the trends indicate that there will be a rise in the proportion of males who are fully retired. However the current economic climate may impact upon this given that trends indicate a future decline in the proportion of VSs, overall, who intend to retire within the next five years, suggesting that VSs may need to continue working instead of retiring if the recession persists.
- The proportions of VSs who are taking career breaks on the grounds of parental responsibilities looks set to rise considering the 13 per cent rise this year, with career breaks for the reason of travel or study likely to lessen in coming years. This may be partially due to the current economic climate, but also demonstrates the increasing feminisation of the profession. Similarly, the proportion of VS respondents in part-time work may continue to increase with a corresponding decline in the proportion in full-time work for both males and females.
- Trends, together with public sector spending cuts, indicate that there may be a rise in the proportion of VSs working within the profession within practice, given the nine per cent rise since 2000, with a corresponding decline in the proportion working in government, following the six per cent decline since 2000.
- For VNs working in clinical veterinary practice, we may continue to see a decline in the average hours worked across nearly all types of practice given the slight decline since 2008 seen this year. There could also be a rise in the proportion of VNs who intend to stay in clinical practice for the foreseeable future given the three per cent rise since 2008.
- For VSs working within clinical veterinary practice, there may continue to be a reduction in the proportion who are sole principals and whose practice is under sole principal or partnership ownership, and an increase in the proportion owned by a limited company or corporate concern. For VNs an increasing number are termed 'head nurse' and this looks likely to continue.
- The allocation of work hours for VSs working in clinical practice may continue to favour dogs and small animals overall, with a corresponding decline in the time allocated to cattle. However this could be a short-term effect related to the recession, which seems to be leading clients to prioritise spending on certain animals over others. However the

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<sup>7</sup> RCVS (2010), *RCVS Facts: The Annual Report of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons: Part 2*

decline in VN working time spent directly with dogs and small animals overall may continue, if VNs spend increasing time on other activities such as running clinics and becoming involved in practice administration/management.

- The reduction in days VSs spend away from the workplace for CPD-related activity may be set to continue given the concern from VSs that one of the main challenges to the profession is the economic climate and therefore possible cost cutting may hit such activities.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

This report presents the results of the 2010 surveys of the Veterinary and Veterinary Nursing professions, carried out on behalf of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES).

The 2010 survey of veterinary surgeons (VSs) is the fifth survey carried out by the RCVS; VSs were also surveyed in 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2006. The 2010 survey of VNs is the third survey carried out by the RCVS; veterinary nurses (VNs) were also surveyed in 2003 and 2008.

Throughout this report, where possible and appropriate, results are compared with those of previous surveys.

The aim of these surveys is to provide RCVS, and other interested parties, with an evidence-based view of the VS and VN professions and the changes taking place within them.

This year, for the first time, veterinary professions were asked about their well-being, their rest periods and holidays, and the impact of the economic climate. This data has been analysed in detail, and provides important additional insights into the professions.

For the purposes of these surveys, unless otherwise specified, VN is shorthand for qualified, unqualified and student veterinary nursing staff.

### 1.2 SURVEY PROCESS AND PILOT

The questionnaires were compiled by IES using questions from previous surveys, together with additional questions and statements derived from discussions with experts at the RCVS and a variety of relevant organisations such as the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Copies of the questionnaires can be found in Appendix 1 and 2 of this report.

The surveys were launched in early January 2010, following small pilots of both the postal and online versions in November 2009, which used a sample of individuals taken from the RCVS VS and VN databases. The purpose of the pilot was to ensure that questions and routing instructions could be understood and were not ambiguous or misleading.

In the pilot of the 2010 survey of the VSs, 11 out of a possible 41 completed hard copies of the survey were received. This represented a response rate of 27 per cent. Five people out of a possible 39 completed the online version, representing a response rate of 13 per cent.

For the 2010 VN survey pilot, eighteen out of a possible 54 completed hard copies of the survey were received. This represented a response rate of 33 per cent. Ten people out of a possible 46 completed the online version, representing a response rate of 22 per cent. Of

these 18, 11 were registered small animal VNs, 5 were student VNs and 2 were listed small animal VNs (see Table 3.1 in Appendix 3).

Following minor amendments, as a result of feedback received during the piloting stage, the questionnaires were distributed, together with a reply-paid envelope. The survey of VSs was sent out to 23,594 people on the VS database, whilst the survey of VNs was sent out to 13,072 people on the VN database. In the covering letter from the RCVS, recipients were given the option, if preferred, of completing online versions of the surveys.

### 1.3 RESPONSE

By the time the surveys closed on Monday 1 March 2010, IES had received 8,829 completed surveys from VSs, representing an overall response rate of 37 per cent. Of these, 7,867 (89 per cent) completed paper surveys, whilst the remaining 962 (11 per cent) opted to complete the online version. This shows little change on the 2006 figures whereby 8,536 (88 per cent) people completed paper surveys and 1,135 (12 per cent) completed online. In comparison with previous surveys, response rates are, overall, slightly down on most previous years: in 2006 a response rate of 47 per cent was achieved, in 2002 29 per cent, in 2000 49 per cent and in 1998 61 per cent. This overall decline may be due to a combination of 'survey fatigue' (the upsurge in surveys in recent years) and also to the time required to complete the long questionnaires. Nevertheless, a response rate of 37 per cent can be considered as good, given the length and complexity of the survey questionnaires.

A total of 4,106 completed VN questionnaires were received, representing an overall response rate of 31 per cent. Of these, 3,730 (91 per cent) completed paper questionnaires, whilst the remaining 376 (9 per cent) opted for the online version. Again, we see a slight decline in the response rate on previous years. In 2008 a response rate of 35 per cent was achieved. In 2008, 3,471 (90 per cent) completed paper questionnaires, while the remaining 398 (ten per cent) opted to complete the online version, therefore showing little change this year.

A response analysis was carried out to compare survey respondents to the RCVS VS and VN databases as a whole. The results are shown in Table 1.1 and Table 1.2.

Table 1.1 Generally the response analysis shows that the VS and VN samples achieved were fairly similar to the RCVS databases as a whole.

**Table 1.1: VS Survey 2010 response analysis, percentage**

|        |        | Survey respondents | Membership database | Over/under response |
|--------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Gender | Male   | 50                 | 51                  | Slightly under      |
|        | Female | 50                 | 49                  | Slightly over       |
| Age    | 20s    | 17                 | 18.5                | Slightly under      |
|        | 30s    | 27                 | 30.5                | Slightly under      |
|        | 40s    | 21                 | 20.9                | Slightly over       |
|        | 50s    | 16                 | 14                  | Slightly over       |
|        | 60s    | 10                 | 8.5                 | Slightly over       |
|        | 70s+   | 10                 | 7.9                 | Slightly over       |

Source: VS Survey, 2010 and Voter Profiling Report, RCVS Council Election, May 2010

**Table 1.2: VN Survey 2010 response analysis, percentage of listed/registered VNs as of January 2010**

|        |          | Survey respondents | RCVS database | Over/under response |
|--------|----------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Gender | Male     | 2                  | 2             | Equal               |
|        | Female   | 98                 | 98            | Equal               |
| Age    | Under 20 | 0.1                | 0.1           | Equal               |
|        | 20s      | 42                 | 38            | Slightly over       |
|        | 30s      | 40                 | 43            | Slightly under      |
|        | 40s      | 13                 | 14            | Slightly under      |
|        | 50s      | 4                  | 4             | Equal               |
|        | 60s      | 0.3                | 1             | Slightly under      |
|        | 70s+     | 0.1                | 0.04          | Slightly over       |

Source: VN Survey 2010 and RCVS database

**Table 1.3: VN Survey 2010 response analysis, percentage of student VNs as of January 2010**

|        |          | Survey respondents | RCVS database | Over/under response |
|--------|----------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Gender | Male     | 3                  | 3             | Equal               |
|        | Female   | 97                 | 97            | Equal               |
| Age    | Under 20 | 17.6               | 6.2           | Over                |
|        | 20s      | 71.9               | 81.4          | Under               |
|        | 30s      | 7.5                | 9.6           | Slightly under      |
|        | 40s      | 2.1                | 2.2           | Equal               |
|        | 50s      | 0.7                | 0.6           | Equal               |
|        | 60s      | 0.1                | 0.03          | Slightly over       |

Source: VN Survey 2010 and RCVS database

#### 1.4 DATA INPUT AND SURVEY ANALYSIS

The survey responses were coded and input into the statistical package SPSS for analysis. The responses to open-ended, free-text questions (such as 'What are the three main challenges currently facing the profession?') were also coded to facilitate analysis. When carrying out the analysis, IES used key variables to provide breakdowns such as gender, age group and employment status, and also took account of any analysis undertaken for previous surveys.

#### 1.5 REPORT STRUCTURE

This report will detail the findings from the surveys of both VSs and the VNs, drawing comparisons between survey responses where appropriate, exploring trends with previous years, and highlighting profession-specific issues where found. Each chapter will present the data from both surveys independently and draw together key findings at the end.

## 2 PERSONAL DETAILS

This chapter gives details of the characteristics of respondents to both surveys including details of gender, age, ethnicity, responsibility for dependents, disabilities, membership of professional bodies and qualifications.

### 2.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

| <b>VS Survey</b>  | <b>VN Survey</b>   |
|---|--|
| Fifty per cent of respondents are female, fifty per cent male.  | Ninety-eight per cent of respondents are female, two per cent male.  |
| The average age of VSs is 45.5 years.   | The average age of VNs is 31 years.  |
| Two per cent are from an ethnic minority group.   | One per cent are from an ethnic minority group.  |
| Over one third have dependent children living with them; five per cent provide care to a dependent adult. | Just under a quarter have dependent children living with them; two per cent provide care to a dependent adult. |
| Eight per cent have a disability or medical condition that limits they work they can do.                  | Four per cent have a disability or medical condition that limits they work they can do.                        |
| A quarter are not currently a member of any veterinary organisations (apart from RCVS).                   | Just under half do not hold membership of any VN organisation.   |
| The average (median) year of qualification is 1991. Seventy-nine per cent qualified in the UK.            | The average (median) year of qualification is 2003 and almost all qualified in the UK.                         |

## 2.2 GENDER

### VS SURVEY

Overall, 50 per cent of respondents are female, 50 per cent male. Whilst equal numbers of males and females completed the survey, the 'feminisation' of the profession is apparent when looking at findings of previous surveys. In 2000, 34 per cent of respondents were female; by 2002, this had increased to 37 per cent and in 2006 this rose further to 45 per cent. By looking solely at VSs working within the profession who have replied to the survey (*ie* omitting those working outside the profession, and those who have retired), the division becomes wider with 54 per cent female, 46 per cent male. Narrowing this down further to VSs working in clinical practice shows that the gap becomes even wider, at 57 per cent female and 43 per cent male (see Appendix Table 3.2). Statistical analysis shows that female VS respondents are more likely to be under 40 years of age (62.6 per cent) than over 40 (37.4 per cent) compared to male VSs, where 75.3 per cent are over 40 years old compared to only 24.7 per cent who are under 40 years old. This is further support for the 'feminisation' of the VS profession. The feminisation of the VS profession may continue in the coming years.

### VN SURVEY

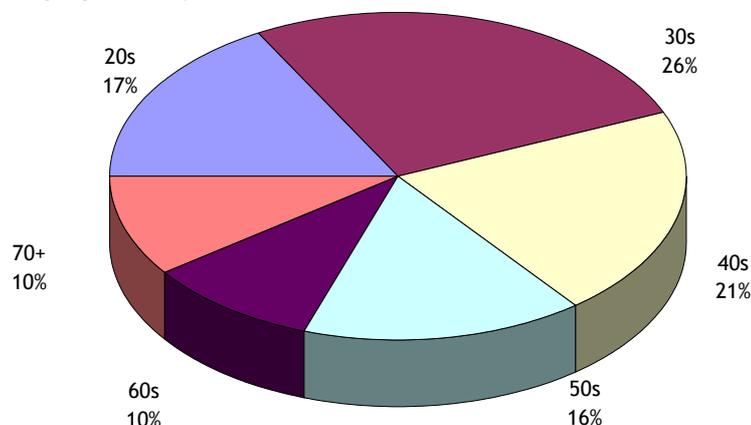
Overall, 98 per cent of respondents are female and two per cent are male; these percentages match those found in both 2008 and 2003. This highlights the extremely 'female' nature of the profession. Given the proportions of males is so low, it is difficult to make statistically valid gender comparisons for VNs in the same manner as for VSs.

## 2.3 AGE

### VS SURVEY

The age of respondents ranges from 21 to 97 years, a similar range and breakdown to that found in 2006 (22 to 95 years of age). 2010 age breakdowns are shown in Figure 2.1. The largest proportion of RCVS members is between 30 and 49 years of age (48 per cent, in 2006 this was 49 per cent). The overall average (mean) age of respondents is 45.5 years. Men have a notably higher average age than women; 52.8 compared to 38.2, as was the case in 2006 (51 compared to 37.5). Further breakdowns reveal that the average age of respondents working within the profession is 41 (similar to 2006). For those working outside the profession, the average is slightly higher, at 49.8 years.

**Figure 2.1: VS age groups, percentage 2010**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

The average age of VSs who are taking a career break is 37.5, slightly higher than in 2006 (35.5) (see Table 2.1). This lower average age may be explained partly by the fact that the majority (94 per cent) of those taking a career break are women, as women have an overall lower average age. The average age of VSs who are unemployed is 35.5. Again, this may be due to women accounting for a large proportion of those who are unemployed (75 per cent).

**Table 2.1: VS average age by employment status, mean**

| <b>Employment status</b> | <b>Average age (yrs)</b> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Full-time work           | 40                       |
| Part-time work           | 44                       |
| Partially retired        | 66                       |
| Voluntary work           | 61                       |
| Unemployed               | 35.5                     |
| Taking a career break    | 37.5                     |
| Fully retired            | 73                       |

*Source: VS Survey, 2010*

As would be expected, and was found in 2006, the average (mean) age of VSs in practice varies depending on their position, as Table 2.2 shows.

Sole principals have the highest average age, whilst full-time assistants have the lowest. Whilst the average ages in 2010 are not dissimilar to those found in 2006, there is a notable change in the average age of consultants, locums and sole principals, with the average age of consultants falling from 53 years to 49 years, and the average age of locums and sole principals rising by two years.

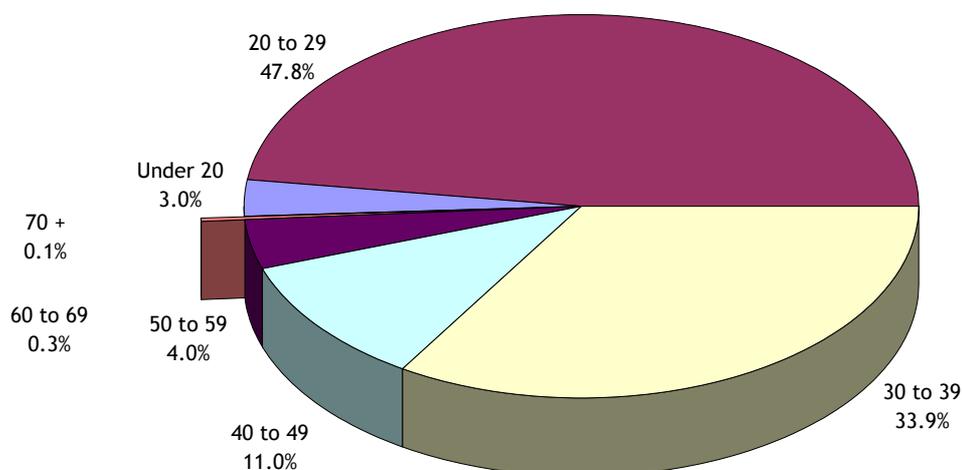
**Table 2.2: VS average age by position in practice, for those working within clinical practice, mean**

| <b>Position in the practice</b> | <b>Average age (yrs) 2010</b> | <b>Average age (yrs) 2006</b> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Sole Principal                  | 52                            | 50                            |
| Director                        | 46                            | No comparable data available  |
| Equity Partner                  | 48                            | No comparable data available  |
| Salaried Partner                | 41                            | 41                            |
| Full-time Assistant             | 32                            | 32                            |
| Part-time Assistant             | 41                            | 41                            |
| Consultant                      | 49                            | 53                            |
| Locum                           | 42                            | 40                            |
| Other                           | 39                            | 40                            |

*Source: VS Survey, 2010*

## VN SURVEY

The age of respondents ranges from 17 to 80. Age breakdowns are shown in Figure 2.2 and compares them with that of respondents in 2008. The percentage of respondents in each age group is fairly consistent with those in 2008.

**Figure 2.2: VN age groups, percentage 2010**

Source: VN Survey, 2010

The overall average (mean) age of VNs is 31 (compared to 30 in 2008), which is just under 15 years lower than the overall average age of Vets (45.5 years). As was noted in 2008, the VN profession remains a 'young' profession, although this may change as time passes, especially given the notable increase in those over the age of 30 since 2008, with a corresponding decrease in the proportions under 30. In 2008 56 per cent were under 30, this year this stands at 51 per cent. Accordingly, in 2008, 44.4 per cent were over 30 years of age, this year this stands at 49.4 per cent.

The average age of the small number of male respondents is 29.5, slightly lower than the female average of 31. Further breakdowns reveal that the average age of VNs working within VN clinical practice is 31, whilst for those working outside the VN profession this is slightly higher at 36 years and for those working outside clinical practice but in work using their VN qualification this is 37.

**Table 2.3: VN average age by employment status, mean**

|                                   | Average age (yrs) 2010 |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Full-time work                    | 30                     |
| Part-time work                    | 36.4                   |
| Clinical work experience (paid)   | 23                     |
| Clinical work experience (unpaid) | 21                     |
| Unemployed                        | 25                     |
| Taking a career break             | 32.2                   |
| Fully retired                     | 57.3                   |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

Table 2.3 shows that the average age of those in full-time work is 30, whilst the average age of those undertaking clinical work experience is 23 when being paid and 21 for those who are unpaid. The average age of unemployed respondents is 25, which is slightly lower than the average recorded in 2008 of 28 years. The average age of those taking a career break is the same as in 2008. Unsurprisingly, the average age of VNs who are currently working in a practice depends on their position within the practice, as was noted in 2008 (see Table 2.4).

**Table 2.4: VN average age by position in practice, for those working within clinical practice, mean**

|                                    | Average age (yrs) 2010 | Average age (yrs) 2008       |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Student nurse                      | 24                     | 23                           |
| Unqualified VN assistant           | 31                     | No comparable data available |
| Nurse                              | 31                     | 30                           |
| Head nurse                         | 33                     | 32                           |
| Assessor/training manager          | 33                     | No comparable data available |
| Practice manager/administrator     | 36                     | 36                           |
| Locum                              | 33                     | 32                           |
| Practice owner or partner/director | 38                     | 37                           |
| Other                              | 34                     | 32                           |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

## 2.4 ETHNICITY

### VS SURVEY

As was the case in 2006, just two per cent of respondents are from a minority ethnic group. Broken down, this two per cent is made up of: Asian/Asian British 0.7 per cent (0.6 per cent in 2006), Black/Black British 0.2 per cent (2006: 0.2 per cent), Chinese 0.3 per cent (2006: 0.3 per cent), mixed ethnicity 0.6 per cent (2006: 0.5 per cent) and other ethnicity 0.4 per cent (2006: 0.4 per cent).

### VN SURVEY

As in 2008, just one per cent of respondents are from a minority ethnic group. This one per cent is made up of: Asian/Asian British 0.1 per cent (0.1 per cent in 2008), Black/Black British 0.2 per cent (2008: less than 0.1 per cent), Chinese 0.1 per cent (2008: 0.1 per cent), mixed ethnicity 0.7 per cent (2008: 0.6 per cent) and other ethnicity 0.1 per cent (0.2 per cent).

As the proportion of respondents from minority ethnic groups is so low across both the VS and VN surveys, further analysis on this variable would not be statistically valid.

## 2.5 DEPENDANTS

### VS SURVEY

Over one-third (34 per cent) of respondents have dependent children living with them, whilst five per cent provide care to a dependent adult. Similar figures were found in the 2006 survey: 35 per cent and 5.5 per cent respectively. Of those who have dependent children, nearly three-quarters (72 per cent) are aged between 30 and 49 years old and there is a fairly even split across genders, with 52 per cent male and 48 per cent female. A wider gender split becomes apparent when exploring those who provide care to a dependent adult, with 65 per cent male and 35 per cent female and over two-thirds (69 per cent) above the age of 50.

Further breakdowns show that 62 per cent of those who have dependent children living with them, and over half of those who provide care to a dependent adult (53 per cent), are in full-time work (see Appendix Table 3.3). For VSs in current work, 96 per cent of those with dependent children, and 91 per cent of those with dependent adults, are working within the veterinary profession.

## VN SURVEY

Just under a quarter of respondents (24 per cent) have dependent children living with them and two per cent provide care to a dependent adult. In 2008 this was 22 per cent and 1.5 per cent respectively, and in 2003, 21 per cent and three per cent respectively. Of those with dependent children, over three-quarters (78.5 per cent) are aged between 30 and 49, similar to VSs, and the majority (82 per cent) of those providing care for a dependent adult are aged between 20 and 49 years. Further breakdowns reveal that over half (57 per cent) of those living with dependent children, and nearly one-third (32 per cent) of those providing care to a dependent adult, are working part-time, compared with those with no dependents, at six per cent and 18 per cent respectively. Nine per cent of those with dependent children are taking a career break, compared to one per cent of those with no dependants (see Appendix Table 3.4). Of those with dependent children, 85 per cent work within clinical practice and four per cent work outside the profession. This compares to 94 per cent of those with no dependent children working within clinical practice and two per cent working outside the profession.

## 2.6 DISABILITY

### VS SURVEY

Eight per cent of respondents have a disability or medical condition that limits they work they can do, the same proportion as in the 2006 survey. When asked to provide further details, respondents descriptions fell under the conditions shown in Table 2.7. The most common of these relate to back, neck and joint problems, in particular arthritis.

### VN SURVEY

Four per cent of respondents have a disability or medical condition that limits the work they can do, a figure only slightly higher than the three per cent found in the 2008 survey. When asked to provide further details, VNs' descriptions fell under the conditions shown in Figure 2.3. The most common of these relate to back, neck and joint problems.

As the proportion of respondents with a limiting disability or medical condition is so low across both the VS and VN surveys, further analysis on this variable would not be statistically valid.

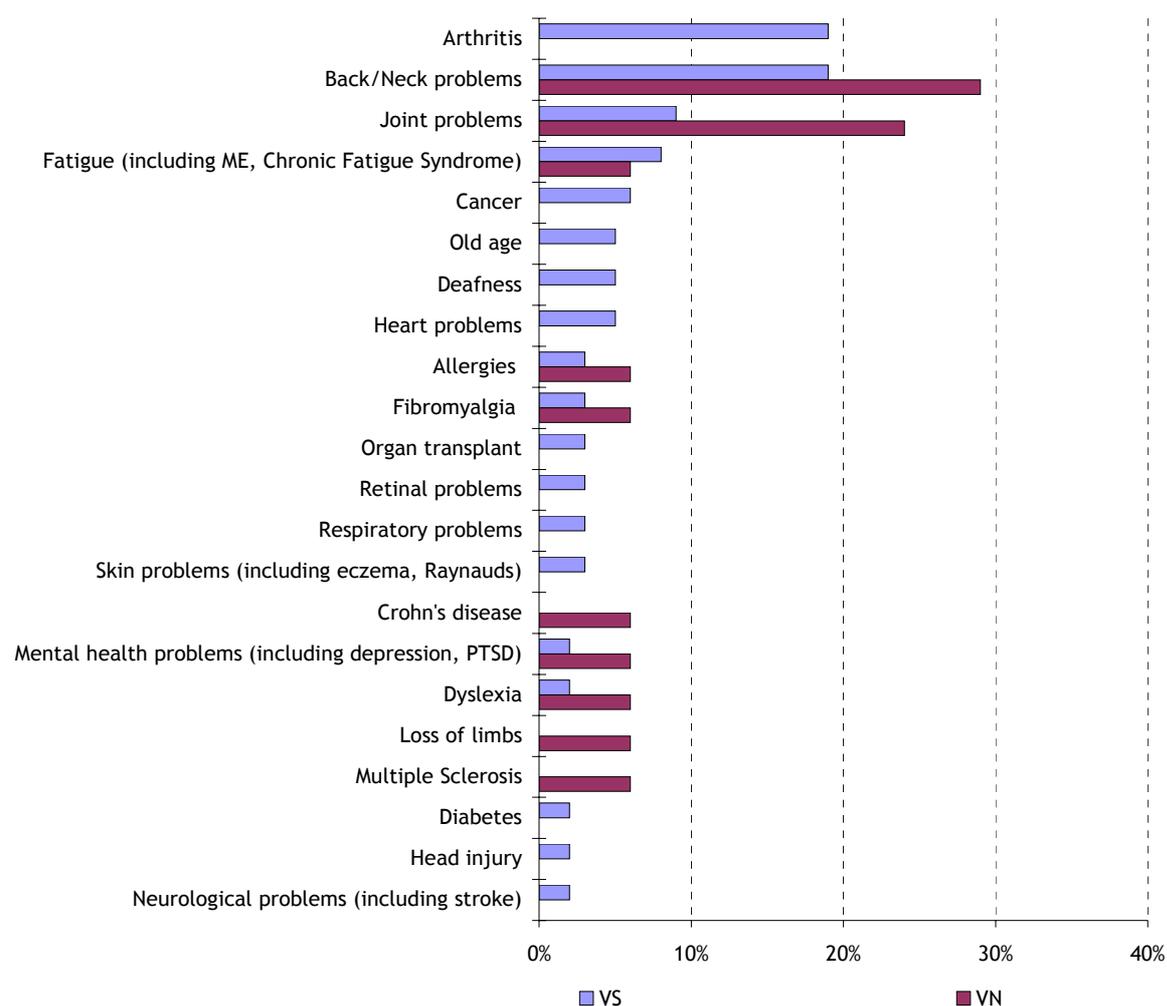
## 2.7 MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES

### VS SURVEY

A quarter of respondents (25 per cent) say they are not currently a member of any veterinary organisations (apart from RCVS). Of those who are (75 per cent), 50 per cent of these hold membership with the British Veterinary Association (BVA), 43 per cent are members of BVA specialist divisions, 11 per cent have membership of BVA Territorial Divisions, 21 per cent are members of other UK associations, and 17 per cent say they belong to international associations.

### VN SURVEY

Just under half of respondents do not hold membership with any VN organisation (49 per cent). Of those who do, just under half (49 per cent) belong to the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA), four per cent are members of other UK organisations, and one per cent are with European/International organisations.

**Figure 2.3: VS and VN nature of disability/medical condition, percentage**

Source: VS and VN Surveys, 2010

## 2.8 STATUS OF VNS

### VN SURVEY

Eighty-four per cent of respondents are qualified VNs (in 2008, this was 78 per cent), 18.5 per cent are students (2008: 21 per cent), one per cent qualified Veterinary Care Assistant (VCA)/Animal Nursing Assistant (ANA), one per cent unqualified VN assistant and a further one per cent 'other'. There is some overlap as a small proportion gave more than one status. The status of qualified VNs and the mean age of respondents according to status is shown in Table 2.5. The average (mean) age of qualified VNs is 36 compared with an overall survey average of 35.

**Table 2.5: Status and average age of VN respondents, mean**

|                                      | Percentage | Average age (yrs) |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Registered small animal VN           | 63         | 35                |
| Registered equine VN                 | 1          |                   |
| Listed small animal VN               | 16         | 40                |
| Listed equine VN                     | 0.5        |                   |
| Qualified VN (not Listed/Registered) | 4          | 37                |
| Student VN                           | 18.5       | 27                |
| Qualified VCA, ANA                   | 1          | 32                |
| Unqualified VN assistant             | 1          | 35                |
| Other status                         | 1          | 47                |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

If respondents gave their status as 'qualified VCA, ANA' or 'unqualified VN assistant', they were asked whether they would like to qualify as a VN. Of those responding, 71 per cent say they would like to qualify, 29 per cent would not. A total of 58 per cent of those seeking to qualify as a VN are within the 20 to 29 age group, 24 per cent in the 30 to 39 age range and 14.5 per cent aged between 40 and 49.

Those who wished to qualify were asked what was preventing them from training. Reasons included difficulties in finding an approved training centre that can afford to take on a student, the location of the nearest available college, financial difficulties, such as the course fees and day release, and depression.

Those who do not wish to qualify were asked why not. Only two people responded to this question and both offered the same reason - they felt 'too old'.

## 2.9 EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF VNS

### VN SURVEY

Table 2.6 shows the highest educational level of respondents reached before embarking on their veterinary nursing qualification. Nearly one-third had reached A level or equivalent, and nine per cent had obtained a degree. The findings closely resemble those from the 2008 survey in most respects, although a higher percentage of 2010 respondents had vocational qualification such as NVQs (28 per cent compared to 23 per cent).

**Table 2.6: Highest educational level reached before embarking on VN qualification, percentage**

|                                  | 2010 | 2008 |
|----------------------------------|------|------|
| GCSE, O level or equivalent      | 29.5 | 34.6 |
| A level or equivalent            | 31.5 | 32.6 |
| Diploma/level 2 NVQ/SVQ (non-VN) | 21.5 | 17.7 |
| HND/level 3 NVQ/SVQ (non-VN)     | 6    | 4.9  |
| Level 4-5 NVQ/SVQ (non-VN)       | 0.6  | 0.3  |
| Degree                           | 9    | 8.1  |
| Postgraduate qualification       | 0.5  | 0.6  |
| Masters Degree                   | 0.2  | 0.2  |
| Doctorate                        | 0    | 0    |
| Other                            | 1    | 1    |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

Table 2.7 shows the highest educational level reached before embarking on a VN qualification by those who are currently studying.

**Table 2.7: Highest educational level reached before embarking on VN qualification of those in current study**

|                           | Percentage currently studying |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| GCSEs or equivalent       | 28.9                          |
| A Level or equivalent     | 34.1                          |
| Vocational qualifications | 28.9                          |
| Degree or higher          | 8.1                           |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

Table 2.8 shows the average (mean) salaries by prior qualifications of those working full-time (ie whose basic working week, excluding on-call and overtime, is 37.5 hours or more) in a clinical post, broken down by age. Overall, the 2010 findings suggest that those with A Level or equivalent earn slightly higher average salaries across all age groups (with the exception of under 20s) than those holding a degree or higher. This was also reflected in the 2008 findings.

**Table 2.8: Average (mean) salaries of VNs working full-time in a clinical post, by age and prior qualification**

|                           | Under 20 |         | 20 to 29 |         | 30 to 39 |         | 40 to 49 |         | 50+     |         |
|---------------------------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|
|                           | 2010     | 2008    | 2010     | 2008    | 2010     | 2008    | 2010     | 2008    | 2010    | 2008    |
| GCSEs or equivalent       | £9,202   | £11,108 | £15,454  | £16,557 | £19,089  | £18,696 | £18,472  | £19,927 | £15,951 | £19,720 |
| A Level or equivalent     | £7,956   | £10,482 | £15,584  | £16,415 | £19,646  | £18,817 | £21,151  | £20,730 | £18,815 | £23,463 |
| Vocational qualifications | £8,774   | £11,000 | £14,668  | £15,821 | £17,252  | £17,978 | £16,195  | £14,070 | £13,830 | £13,700 |
| Degree or higher          | -        | -       | £15,161  | £16,055 | £18,392  | £17,732 | £19,066  | £18,743 | £13,902 | £15,000 |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

## 2.10 QUALIFICATION PREDOMINANTLY USED

### VN SURVEY

Respondents were asked which qualification they predominantly use or, if they are students, which they are working towards. Almost all (98 per cent), as in 2008 (98.5 per cent), say a small animal VN qualification and two per cent say an equine VN qualification (2008: 1.5 per cent). It is difficult to make statistically valid comparisons between these two groups as the latter is so small.

## 2.11 YEAR OF QUALIFICATION

### VS SURVEY

Respondents' year of qualification range from 1933 to 2009. A detailed breakdown is given in Table 2.9. The average (median) year of qualification is 1991.

**Table 2.9: Year of qualification, VS percentage**

| Year         | 2010 |
|--------------|------|
| 1930 to 1939 | .05  |
| 1940 to 1949 | 1.4  |
| 1950 to 1959 | 4.7  |
| 1960 to 1969 | 8.9  |
| 1970 to 1979 | 13.0 |
| 1980 to 1989 | 19.3 |
| 1990 to 1999 | 21.1 |
| 2000 onwards | 31.6 |

*Source: VS Survey, 2010*

### VN SURVEY

The qualification years of qualified VNs range from 1965 to 2010. A detailed breakdown is given in Table 2.10. The average (median) year of qualification is 2003.

**Table 2.10: Year of qualification, VN percentage**

| Qualification year | 2010 |
|--------------------|------|
| 1960 to 1969       | 0.2  |
| 1970 to 1979       | 2.4  |
| 1980 to 1989       | 6.0  |
| 1990 to 1994       | 8.1  |
| 1995 to 1999       | 15.3 |
| 2000 to 2002       | 14.1 |
| 2003 to 2008       | 40.4 |
| 2009 to 2013       | 9.9  |
| Unknown            | 3.7  |

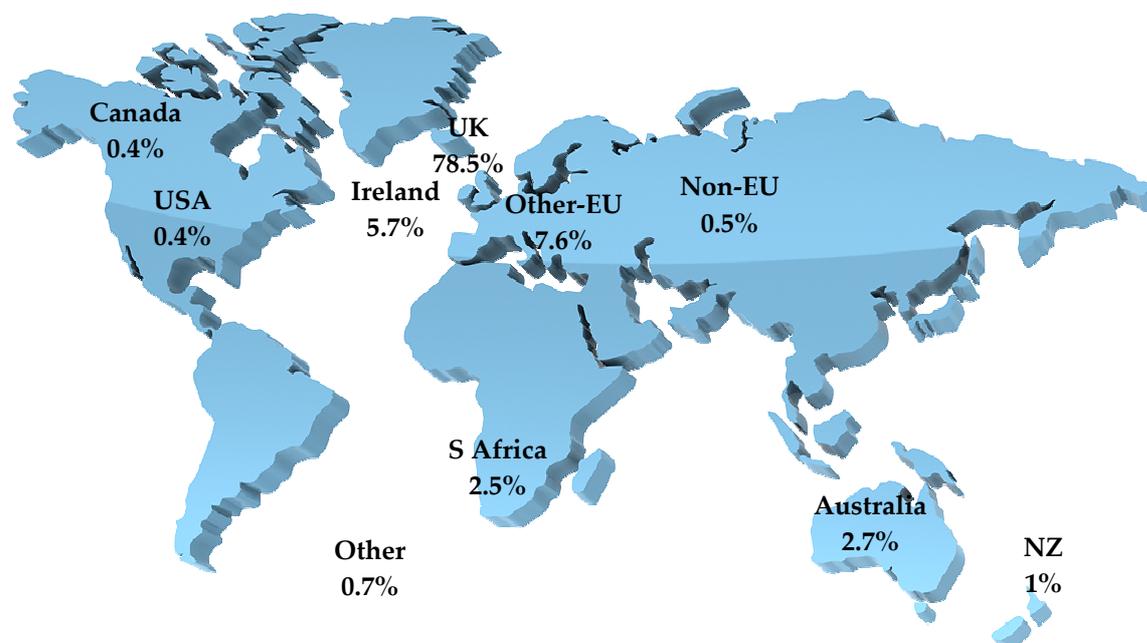
*Source: VN Survey, 2010*

## 2.12 COUNTRY OF QUALIFICATION

## VS SURVEY

As in the 2006 survey, 78.5 per cent of respondents qualified in the UK. Figure 2.4 shows where the remaining respondents qualified.

**Figure 2.4: VS country of qualification**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

## VN SURVEY

Qualified VNs were asked the country of their qualification. As found in the 2008 survey, almost all (98.7 per cent) qualified in the UK (in 2008 this was 98.5 per cent). Of the remainder, 0.3 per cent qualified elsewhere in the EU and one per cent qualified elsewhere in the world.

#### Key comparisons between VSs and VNs

- Whilst there is a fairly equal gender split amongst VS respondents, there is an unequal divide within the VN profession. There is ongoing evidence of the 'feminisation' of the VS profession, while VNs continue to be almost exclusively female.
- VNs are on average younger than VSs, with nearly a 15-year gap in the average age between the professions. However, across both professions, those who work outside the profession are, on average, older than those who work within. The average age of unemployed respondents and those in full-time work is much lower amongst VNs than VSs, demonstrating that the VN profession is generally much younger. This reflects the fact that the VN profession is nearly 50 years old, whilst the RCVS Royal Charter was awarded in 1844.
- There is only a very small representation of people from minority ethnic groups across both professions.

- A slightly higher proportion of VSs than VNs have dependent children living with them. However, the majority of these across both professions are aged between 30 and 49 years old. Whilst the same proportion of respondents across both professions provide care to a dependent adult, this is more prevalent in VNs under 50, while for VSs, carers are more likely to be over 50.
- The most common disabilities or limiting medical conditions across both professions are back, neck and joint problems. Amongst VSs arthritis is particularly prevalent.
- VNs are more likely than VSs to not hold any current membership (apart from RCVS) with professional veterinary bodies.
- The average year of qualification for VSs is 1991, 12 years earlier than that of VNs (2003). Whilst in the majority, a smaller proportion of VSs qualified in the UK compared to VNs. VSs are much more varied in the countries of qualification than VNs, indicating that the VS profession is more mobile across international borders.

### 3 WORK STATUS

This chapter presents the current employment status of all respondents to both the VS and VN surveys.

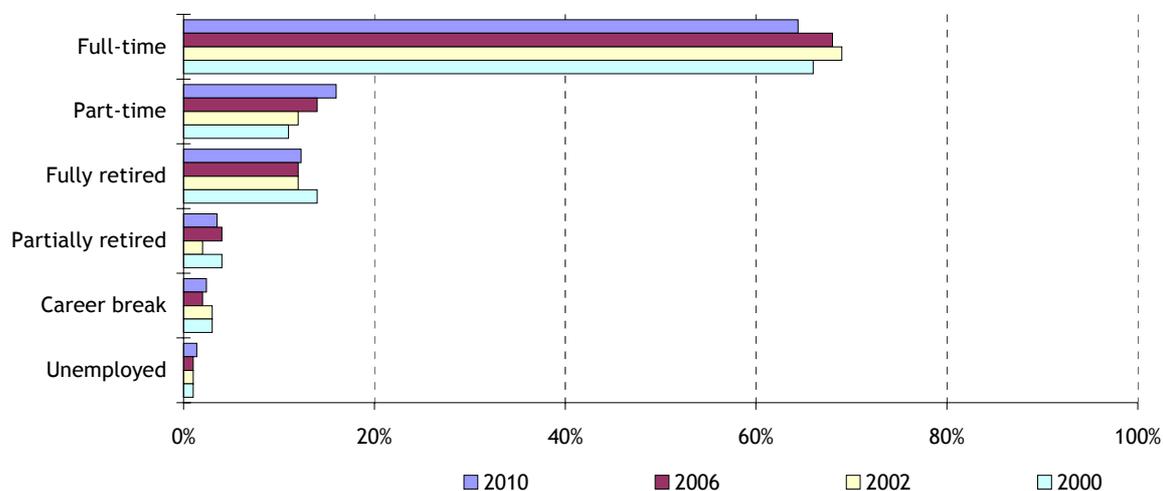
#### 3.1 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

| <b>VS Survey</b>  | <b>VN Survey</b>  |
|---|---|
| <p>Nearly two-thirds are employed on a full-time basis.</p>   | <p>The majority are employed on a full-time basis.</p>  |
| <p>Those employed in full-time work within the profession work on average three hours per week more than those employed outside the profession.</p> | <p>Those employed in a full- or part-time capacity within the profession work on average similar hours per week to those employed outside the profession.</p> |
| <p>One per cent are unemployed and two per cent are on a career break.</p>  | <p>One per cent are unemployed and three per cent are on a career break with the most prevalent reason being 'parental leave/looking after children'.</p>     |
| <p>Sixteen per cent are fully- or partially-retired and work an average of 17 hours per week.</p>   | <p>Less than half a per cent are fully retired.</p>   |
| <p>Over half of those who are not currently working were previously employed within clinical veterinary practice.</p>                               | <p>Over half of those who are not currently working were previously employed within clinical veterinary practice.</p>   |

### 3.2 EMPLOYMENT STATUS

#### VS SURVEY

**Figure 3.1: Employment status of all VS respondents excluding those who are volunteering**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

Figure 3.1 shows the current employment status of VS respondents, regardless of whether they are in veterinary or non-veterinary employment and excluding those who are volunteering. The table illustrates that although the majority of VS respondents are working full-time the number is decreasing with only 64 per cent working full-time in 2010 compared to 68 per cent in 2006, 69 per cent in 2002 and 66 per cent in 2000. Whilst this figure is decreasing, the number of VS respondents working part-time is rising with 16 per cent working part-time in 2010 compared to 14 per cent in 2006, 12 per cent in 2002 and 11 per cent in 2000. The percentage of respondents who are unemployed, on a career break, partially retired or fully retired has remained fairly constant through the years. Only 0.4 per cent of the respondents are undertaking voluntary work. This option was not available in previous surveys therefore it is not included in the comparison figure above.

**Table 3.1: Employment status by gender for all VS respondents excluding those who are volunteering, percentage**

|                   | 2010 |        | 2006 |        | 2002 |        | 2000 |        |
|-------------------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|
|                   | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| Full-time         | 66.5 | 62     | 70   | 64     |      |        |      |        |
| Part-time         | 5.5  | 26     | 5    | 25     |      |        |      |        |
| Partially retired | 6    | 1      | 5    | 1      | 3    | 1      |      |        |
| Total employed    | 78   | 88     | 80   | 90     | 80   | 89     | 79   | 88     |
| Unemployed        | 1    | 2      | 0.5  | 1      |      |        |      |        |
| Career break      | 0.5  | 5      | 0.5  | 5      | 2    | 4      | 1    | 6      |
| Fully retired     | 20.5 | 4      | 18   | 4      | 16   | 4      | 19   | 5      |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

Table 3.1 provides a gender breakdown of VS respondents and highlights considerable differences between the employment status of male and female VSs. Women are much more

likely to be working part-time or on a career break than men and this has been consistent over the years. Contrary to this, and related to the average age of male respondents (*ie* that men have a notably higher average age than women; 52.8 compared to 38.2 years of age), men are much more likely than women to be partially retired or fully retired and this too has been consistent over time. Although female VSs are more likely than their male colleagues to work part-time, the majority (62 per cent), as in previous years, are currently working full-time. Less than one per cent of females (0.3 per cent) and males (0.5 per cent) are undertaking voluntary work. Again, these figures were removed from the above analysis for consistency with previous data.

## VN SURVEY

**Table 3.2: Employment status of all VN respondents**

| <b>Employment status 2010</b>     | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Full-time work                    | 74.7              |
| Part-time work                    | 18                |
| Clinical work experience (paid)   | 0.6               |
| Clinical work experience (unpaid) | 2.6               |
| Unemployed                        | 1.1               |
| Taking a career break             | 2.9               |
| Fully retired                     | 0.1               |

*Source: VN Survey, 2010*

Table 3.2 shows the current employment status of VN respondents, regardless of whether they are in veterinary or non-veterinary employment. The table highlights the fact that the majority of VN respondents are working full-time. The percentage of VN respondents who are either working part-time, unemployed or taking a career break is similar to the VS respondents. There appear to be more VN respondents undertaking voluntary work (2.6 per cent) than VS respondents (0.4 per cent). However, more VS respondents are fully retired (12 per cent) when compared to VN respondents (0.1 per cent). Comparison with earlier surveys is difficult as the question was asked differently in previous years.

### 3.3 FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME WORKING

#### VS SURVEY

As shown in Figure 3.1, the majority of VS respondents are working full-time (65 per cent). Of these 96 per cent are working within the profession and four per cent are working outside. Those employed within the profession work an average of 45 hours per week excluding overtime compared with those employed outside, who work an average of 42 hours per week excluding overtime. There are no statistical differences in the hours worked for either gender or age of those working inside or outside the profession.

VSs employed in a part-time capacity work an average of 24 hours per week. Of these, 94 per cent work within the veterinary profession and six per cent work outside. The 94 per cent employed within the profession work an average of 23 hours per week compared to those working outside who work an average of 21 hours. Again, there are no statistical differences in the hours worked for either gender or age of those working inside or outside the profession.

## VN SURVEY

As shown in Table 3.2, the majority of VNs are working full-time (74.7 per cent). Of these, 93 per cent work within clinical practice, five per cent work outside clinical practice but are in work using their VN qualification, and two per cent work outside the profession completely. Those employed within the profession work an average of 39 hours per week excluding overtime and on-call hours. Those working outside the profession are also working an average of 39 hours excluding overtime and on-call hours.

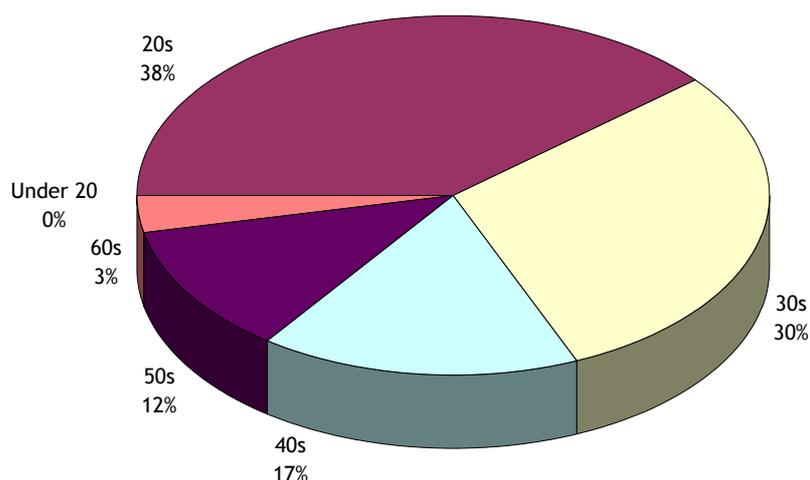
VNs employed in a part-time capacity work an average of 22 hours per week. Of these, 87 per cent work within clinical practice, seven per cent work outside clinical practice but are in work using their VN qualification, and six per cent work outside the profession. Those employed within the profession work an average of 22 hours per week excluding overtime and on-call hours compared to those employed outside the profession, who work an average of 20 hours per week excluding overtime and on-call hours.

## 3.4 UNEMPLOYMENT

### VS SURVEY

As shown in Figure 3.1, only one per cent of VSs are currently unemployed and this figure has remained constant throughout previous surveys. Unemployed VSs have been unemployed for between less than one month to 180 months, with a average (mean) of nine months. This is half the length of time when compared to the last survey (2006) in which the average length of unemployment was 18.3 months. Both the mode and the median are six months. Less than two per cent of respondents have been unemployed for over 34 months. Removal of these extreme outliers reduces the average (mean) to seven months, with a median and mode of six months. Of those who are unemployed, 75 per cent are female and 25 per cent are male. A caveat here is that the questionnaire was sent to RCVS members and therefore it is not possible to know how many VSs are unemployed and have left the RCVS register.

**Figure 3.2: Age categories by unemployment of VS respondents, percentage**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

Figure 3.2 shows that the higher percentages of unemployed are found in the 20s and 30s age groups; 38.8 per cent and 39.8 per cent respectively. Again, when interpreting the results it should be kept in mind that the questionnaire was distributed to RCVS members and

therefore it may not be possible to know how many VSs have left the RCVS Register due to an inability to find veterinary work.

Eighty six per cent of unemployed VSs are seeking work compared to only 33 per cent from the last survey (2006). Of these, 88 per cent are seeking work within the profession and a further seven per cent are not at the moment but may do in the future. Only five per cent of those who are unemployed are not intending to seek work within the profession. Twenty nine per cent of VSs who are seeking work are looking outside of the profession, which is a slight increase on the previous survey of 2006, when only 17 per cent were looking outside the profession. A further 33 per cent indicate that they may look for work outside the profession in the future and 38 per cent state that they do not intend to seek work outside the profession. This figure is slightly lower than the 2006 survey where 48 per cent of those who were unemployed and seeking work stated they would not look for employment outside the profession.

#### VN SURVEY

As shown in Table 3.2, only 1.1 per cent of respondents are currently unemployed. Table 3.3 shows that when these unemployed VNs are divided into age groups, a total of 71.7 per cent are 29 or under with the highest proportion of these (47.8 per cent) in their twenties.

**Table 3.3: Age categories by unemployment of VN respondents, percentage**

| Age band | Unemployed |
|----------|------------|
| Under 20 | 23.9       |
| 20s      | 47.8       |
| 30s      | 21.7       |
| 40s      | 2.2        |
| 50s      | 4.3        |

*Source: VN Survey, 2010*

Unemployed VNs have been unemployed for a period of between one and 30 months, with an average of eight months, a median of four months and a mode of one month. The 2010 mean and median averages are slightly greater than those found in the 2008 survey, which were 5.2 months and three months respectively where as the mode has remained constant (one month).

Fifty per cent of the unemployed VN respondents are seeking work (21 out of 42 individuals), which is lower than the 2008 survey where 84 per cent of the unemployed VN respondents were seeking work (14 out of 16 individuals). Of these individuals seeking work, 71 per cent (15 individuals) are seeking work within the VN profession and 24 per cent (five individuals) are not seeking working within the profession but may do in the future. These figures are similar to the 2008 survey where 14 people were seeking work within the profession and nine were not but may do in the future. Of those seeking work, 43 per cent are also looking outside the VN profession, and a further 28.5 per cent are not at the moment but may do in the future. The remaining 28.5 per cent are not also seeking work outside the profession and do not intend to in the future.

### 3.5 CAREER BREAKS

#### VS SURVEY

Figure 3.1 shows that two per cent of VS respondents are currently on a career break and Table 3.1 shows that this is more likely to apply to women than men, with five per cent of women and only 0.5 per cent of men indicating that they are on a career break. These figures are consistent with those of the 2006 survey.

**Table 3.4: Reason for career break, VS respondents**

|                                       | VS 2010 | VS 2006 | VN 2010 |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Parental leave/looking after children | 67      | 54      | 76.5    |
| Study                                 | 9.5     | 12      | 7       |
| Travel                                | 5       | 11      | 1.7     |
| Illness (self)                        | 4       | 8       | 8.7     |
| Sabbatical                            | 3       | 3       | 0.9     |
| Looking after adult dependant         | 1.5     | 1       | 0       |
| Other                                 | 10      | 12      | 5.2     |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

Table 3.4 illustrates the reasons given by VS respondents for being on a career break compared to those reasons given by the respondents in the 2006 survey. When asked how long they expected their career break to last, respondents gave very varied responses, ranging from one month to 400 months. The mean was 34 months while the mode and the median were both 12 months. The results are fairly similar when compared to the 2006 survey, when the mean was 26.1 months and the mode and the median were both 12 months.

#### VN SURVEY

Table 3.2 highlights the fact that 2.9 per cent of VN respondents are currently taking a career break compared to 2.8 per cent in the 2008 survey.

Table 3.4 shows the reasons given by the VN respondents for being on a career break compared to the VS respondents from both the 2010 and the 2006 survey. Previous surveys for the VN profession gave different criteria when asking about career breaks and so comparisons cannot be drawn from this data. The table shows that the most prevalent reason for VN respondents taking a career break is 'parental leave/looking after children' (76.5 per cent). The second most common reasons are 'illness (self)' followed by 'study' (8.7 per cent and 7 per cent respectively). Unfortunately no VN respondents answered the question asking how long they expected their career break to last and so no analysis could be carried out on this data.

### 3.6 FULL AND PARTIAL RETIREMENT

#### VS SURVEY

As shown in Figure 3.1, 16 per cent of VS respondents are either fully or partially retired and again there is a large discrepancy between men and women (shown in Table 3.1). Only five per cent of women are either fully or partially retired compared to 26 per cent of men. These figures are similar for women who responded to the 2006 survey (five per cent) but signify a slight increase in the number of men who are fully or partially retired since 2006 (23 per cent). Figure 3.1 illustrates that retrospectively it can be seen that the percentage of males

who are either fully or partially retired has increased since 2000, while the percentage of women has remained fairly constant. Of those respondents who are fully retired, 84 per cent are men and only 16 per cent are women. This figure is similar for those respondents who are partially retired with 84 per cent being men and 16 per cent being women and this has remained relatively stable since the last survey in 2006.

Partially retired VSs state that they work a varied number of hours in the week: the responses range from 0 hours to 72 hours with a mean of 17 hours and a median and mode of 15 and 20 hours respectively. The mean and median figures are similar to those of the previous survey in 2006 (17.8 hours and 15 hours respectively) but the mode is slightly greater (ten hours).

#### VN SURVEY

Only 0.1 per cent of VN respondents are fully retired, so no statistical analysis can be carried out on the data.

### 3.7 PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

#### VS SURVEY

**Table 3.5: Previous employment of VS respondents who are not currently working, percentage**

|  | All | Male | Female |
|--|-----|------|--------|
| Clinical veterinary practice           | 54  | 47.3 | 66.7   |
| Government veterinary work             | 19  | 24.2 | 8.5    |
| Other veterinary-related employment    | 7   | 7.5  | 5.7    |
| Veterinary-related teaching            | 6   | 6.6  | 5.2    |
| Veterinary-related industry            | 6   | 7.9  | 2.6    |
| Work outside the veterinary profession | 8   | 6.5  | 11.3   |

*Source: VS Survey, 2010*

VS respondents who are unemployed, on a career break, or fully retired were asked about their most recent employment. Table 3.5 illustrates that over half of the respondents worked within clinical veterinary practice (54 per cent) with a further 19 per cent conducting veterinary work within the government sector. Only eight per cent of the respondents had previously worked outside the veterinary profession

Interestingly, when those who are unemployed, on a career break, or fully retired are split according to gender and analysed alongside their previous employment, statistically significant differences are apparent. Table 3.5 illustrates that a higher proportion of men than women worked within the government veterinary or the veterinary related industry in their previous employment, whereas more women than men tended to work within clinical veterinary practice and outside the veterinary profession. The majority of these respondents used to work within the UK (86 per cent), with three per cent working in Ireland, two per cent in 'other EU' and three per cent in other countries.

#### VN SURVEY

VN respondents who are unemployed, on a career break, or fully retired were asked about their most recent employment. Although only 44 people answered this question, over half (55 per cent) were previously employed in clinical veterinary practice, followed by 39 per cent who worked outside the VN profession. The final seven per cent worked in other VN related employment. The overwhelming majority of VN respondents worked within the UK

(96 per cent) and a further two per cent worked within another EU country. The final two per cent worked elsewhere in the world. It is not possible to compare responses with earlier surveys as questions were asked differently.

### 3.8 VOLUNTARY WORK

#### VS SURVEY

Only 0.4 per cent of VS respondents are undertaking voluntary work, so no statistical analysis can be conducted on the data.

#### VN SURVEY

All VN respondents, regardless of work status were asked if they currently participated in any voluntary work. The majority of VN respondents are not currently doing any voluntary work (86.3 per cent). Of those who are, slightly more have chosen non-veterinary-related work (8.4 per cent) than veterinary-related (6.1 per cent). It should be noted that the percentages do not add up to 100 as respondents could tick more than one option.

#### **Key comparisons between VSs and VNs**

- Both VSs and VNs are predominantly in full-time employment, with a slightly higher percentage of VNs being full-time.
- VSs who are employed on a full-time and part-time basis work more hours on average than VNs who are employed in the same capacity. VSs working within the profession work on average more hours than those working outside. VNs working within the profession, however, work on average similar hours as those working outside their profession.
- Similar percentages of VSs and VNs are unemployed, but the majority are seeking work within the veterinary profession.
- Similar percentages of VSs and VNs are on career breaks and both groups tend to cite 'parental responsibilities/ looking after children' as the main reason for their break. A higher proportion of female VSs are on a career break than males.

#### **Evidence of trends**

- The proportion of VSs employed on a full-time basis has decreased, whilst part-time employment has increased.
- The average length of unemployment for VSs has decreased to nine months from 18 months in 2006.
- The average length of VN unemployment has risen from 5.2 months in 2008 to eight months in 2010.

## 4 CURRENT WORK (VETERINARY OR NON-VETERINARY)

This chapter gives details of the location of the 84 per cent of VSs and 96 per cent of VNs who are in current work (*ie* omitting those who are fully retired, taking a career break or unemployed).

### 4.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

#### **VS Survey**

Most (89 per cent) work in the UK.

The most common reasons for overseas VSs coming to the UK are 'to work abroad', 'to gain experience' and 'better pay and conditions'. Their average year of arrival in the UK was 2002.

Nearly all (95 per cent) respondents who are currently working say that their main employment is within the profession. Of these, 84 per cent work in clinical veterinary practice.

#### **VN Survey**

Nearly all (99 per cent) of those in current employment, or training at a practice/placement, work in the UK.

The most common reasons for overseas VNs coming to the UK are 'to work abroad' and 'marriage/partner'. Their average year of arrival in the UK was 2000.

Nearly all (92 per cent) respondents who are currently working say that their main employment is within clinical veterinary practice. Sixteen per cent of VNs in current work have a second job.

## 4.2 COUNTRY OF EMPLOYMENT

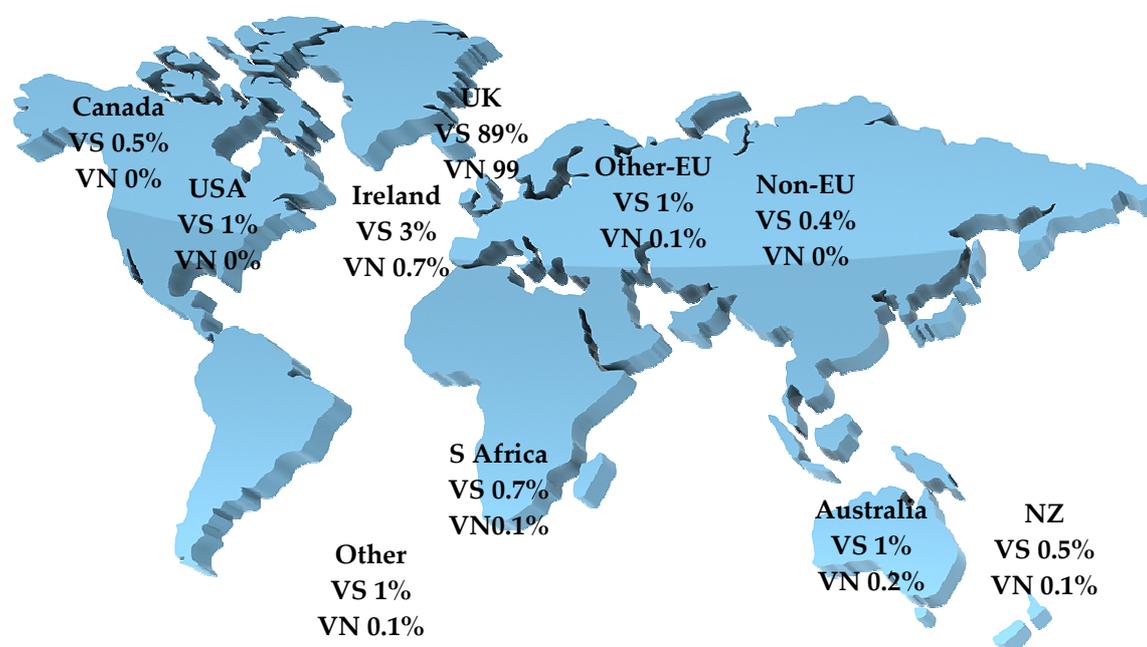
### VS SURVEY

As shown in Figure 4.1, most respondents (89.3 per cent) work in the UK, showing little difference from the 88 per cent recorded in the 2008 survey. The remaining 10.7 per cent includes: Ireland 3.4 per cent, Other EU 1.3 per cent, Australia 1.3 per cent and USA 1.4 per cent.

### VN SURVEY

As shown in Figure 4.1, nearly all of those in current employment or undertaking clinical work experience in a training practice/placement as a student, work in the UK (98.8 per cent), as was found in the 2008 survey (99 per cent). The remaining 1.2 per cent includes: Ireland 0.7 per cent, Australia 0.2 per cent and Other 0.1 per cent each. 'Other' locations included Caribbean, Hong Kong and the Middle East.

**Figure 4.1: VN Country of employment**

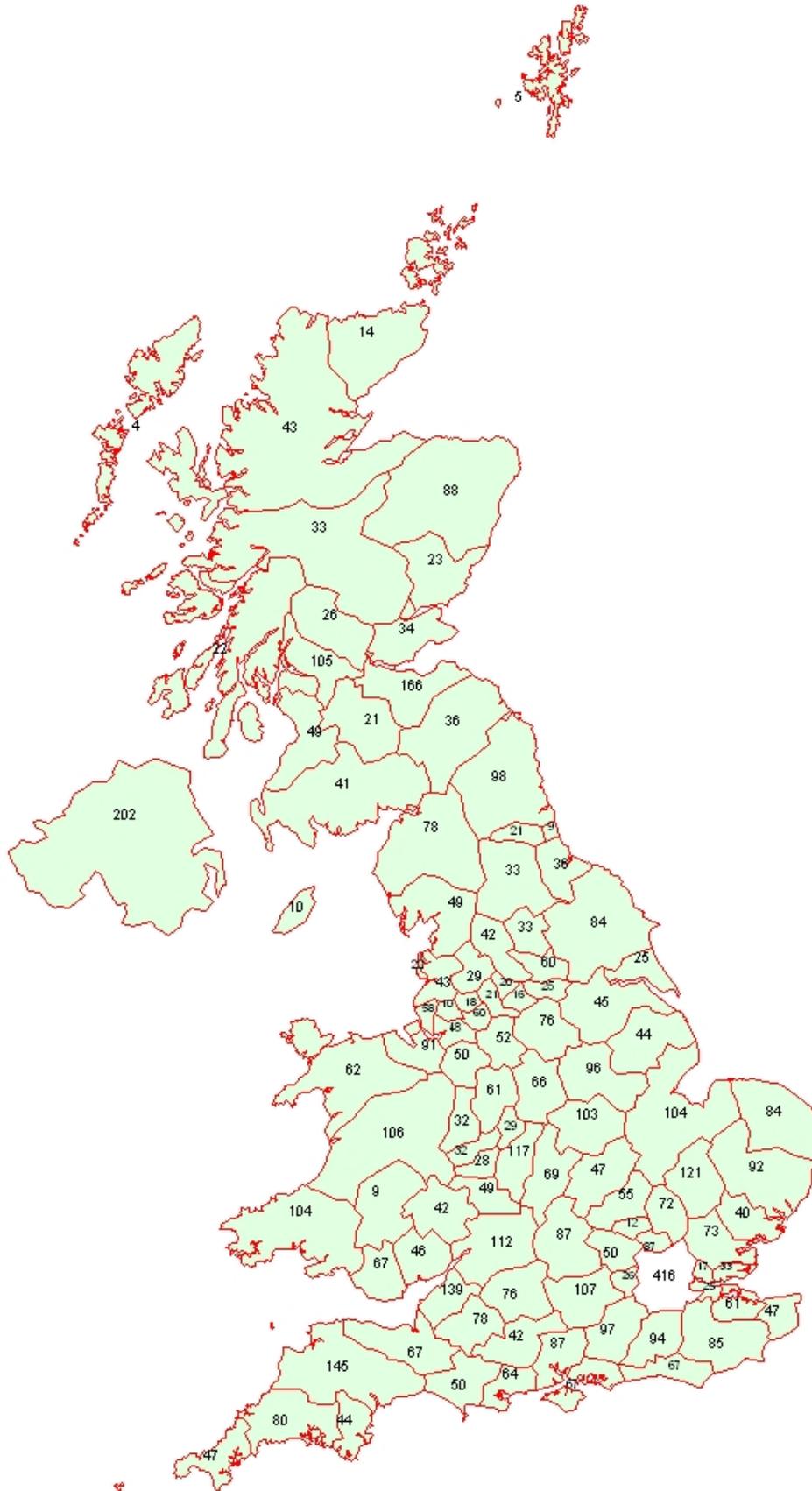


Source: VS and VN Surveys, 2010

## 4.3 LOCATION OF MAIN WORKPLACE

Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3 show the spread of VSs and VNs across the UK. The data shown are taken from the first part of the postcode of respondents' main workplace.

Figure 4.2: Postcode of main workplace, VS respondents



Source: VS Survey, 2010

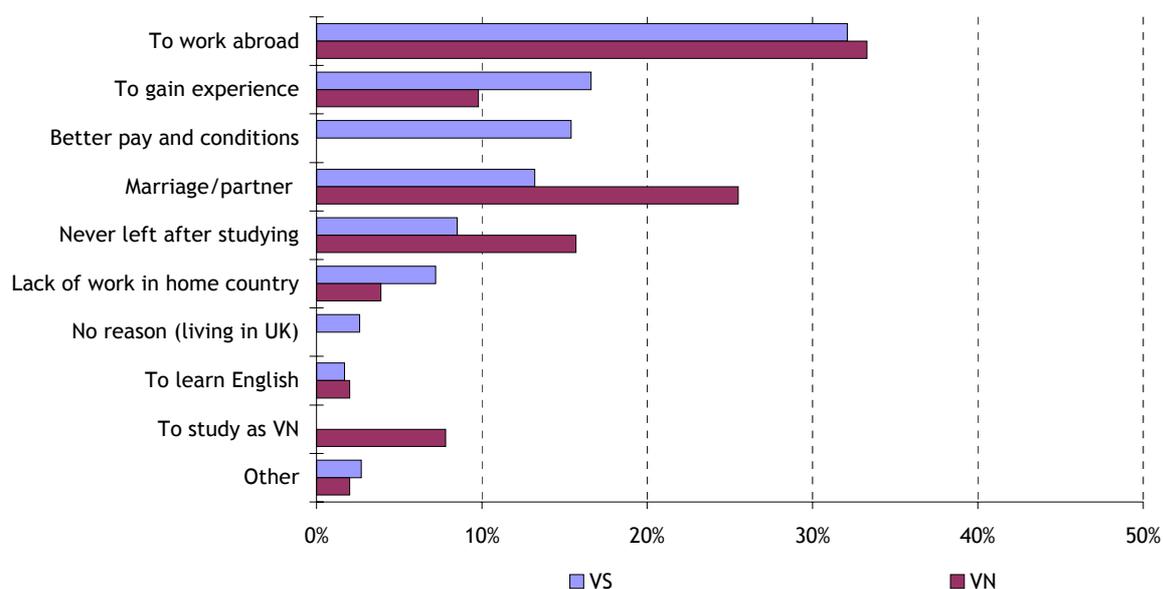


## 4.4 MOVING TO THE UK

## VS SURVEY

Thirteen per cent of female VS respondents are not British Nationals but work in the UK, whilst 7.5 per cent of the male VS respondents are not British Nationals but work in the UK. Respondents who are not British nationals but work in the UK were asked why they decided to come to the UK this time. Of the 775 people who responded to this question, the most common reason given is to work abroad (32.1 per cent), followed by to gain experience (16.6 per cent) and better pay and conditions (15.4 per cent). Other reasons include marriage/partner (13.2 per cent) and having never left after studying (8.5 per cent) (see Figure 4.4).

**Figure 4.4: Reason for coming to the UK this time, VS and VN respondents**



Source: VS and VN Surveys, 2010

Respondents were asked in what year they came to the UK this time. A total of 895 (11.3 per cent) veterinary surgeons responded to the question, of which 63.1 per cent are female and 36.9 per cent are male. The year of arrival in the UK given by respondents ranges from 1966 to 2010. The average (mean) year of arrival is 2002. Table 4.1 shows a detailed breakdown.

**Table 4.1: VS and VN year of arrival in the UK this time, percentage**

|              | VS   | VN   |
|--------------|------|------|
| Before 1990  | 7.8  | 7.4  |
| 1990 to 1999 | 20.2 | 27.8 |
| 2000 to 2004 | 24.3 | 35.2 |
| 2005 to 2010 | 47.7 | 29.6 |

Source: VS and VN Surveys, 2010

The intended length of stay in the UK ranges from less than one year to 98 years, with an average (mean) of 40 years. Forty-five per cent of respondents intend to stay for less than ten years, 13 per cent intend to stay for ten to 19 years, whilst just over a quarter (27 per cent) plan to stay indefinitely.

Vs who are employed full-time in the UK and within the profession, earn on average £47,332 (median £40,000) per year, substantially less than those employed full-time within the profession outside the UK, who earn on average £62,057 (median £53,000).

Similarly, the average salary of those respondents who work full-time in the UK and outside of the profession is £44,931 (median £35,000), substantially lower than the salary of those who work outside of the UK and outside of the profession who earn on average £67,559 (median £55,000).

Therefore, it appears that irrespective of whether they work full-time within or outside the profession, Vs working overseas earn higher salaries, on average, than those working within the UK.

The vast majority of Vs who work within the UK also qualified in the UK (81.7 per cent). Over one-third (35.9 per cent) of Vs who work outside of the UK, qualified within the UK. Just over forty per cent (42.9 per cent) of females, who now work outside the UK, qualified within the UK, compared to 31.9 per cent of men who now work outside the UK but qualified within the UK.

#### VN SURVEY

The most common reason for coming to the UK, for the 51 VNs who are not British nationals but work in the UK, is to work abroad (33.3 per cent), followed by marriage/partner (25.5 per cent) and having never left after studying (15.7 per cent). Other reasons include to gain experience (9.8 per cent) and to study as a VN (7.8 per cent) – see Figure 4.4.

The year of arrival in the UK given by the respondents ranges from 1979 to 2009, with an average (mean) of 2000. A detailed breakdown is shown in Table 4.1. The intended length of stay in the UK ranges from one year to 98 years, with an average (mean) of 36 years. Fifty-nine per cent of respondents intend to stay for less than ten years, whilst just over a quarter (28 per cent) plan to stay indefinitely.

VNs who are employed full-time in the UK and within clinical practice, earn on average £16,324 (median £16,750) per year. This is lower than those employed full-time within clinical practice outside the UK, who earn on average £20,805 (median £20,000).

The average (mean) salary of VNs who work full-time in the UK and outside clinical practice is £25,301 (median £25,000) is substantially lower than the salary of those who work outside of the UK and outside clinical practice, who earn on average £35,000 (median £35,000).

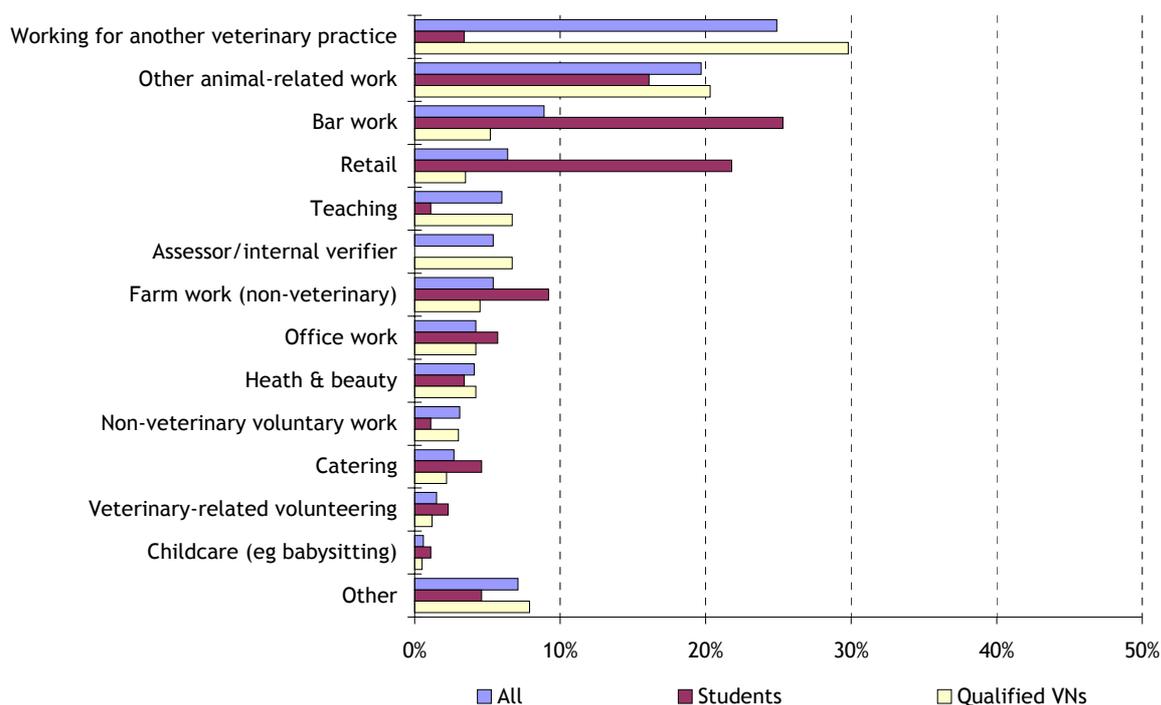
Therefore, it appears that irrespective of whether they work full-time within or outside clinical practice, VNs working overseas earn higher salaries, on average, than those working within the UK.

### 4.5 SECOND JOBS

#### VN SURVEY

Sixteen per cent of VNs in current work also have a second job. Of these, just under 60 per cent work in an animal-related field, with the remainder working in a non-animal-related job. Working in an animal-related field is more common amongst qualified VNs than students, whilst students are more likely to undertake non-animal-related work, especially bar and retail work. A breakdown of second jobs is shown in Figure 4.5. Of those who ticked 'other', jobs include: fire fighter/security (11 per cent), cleaner (37 per cent), first aider (four per cent) and other veterinary-related work (seven per cent).

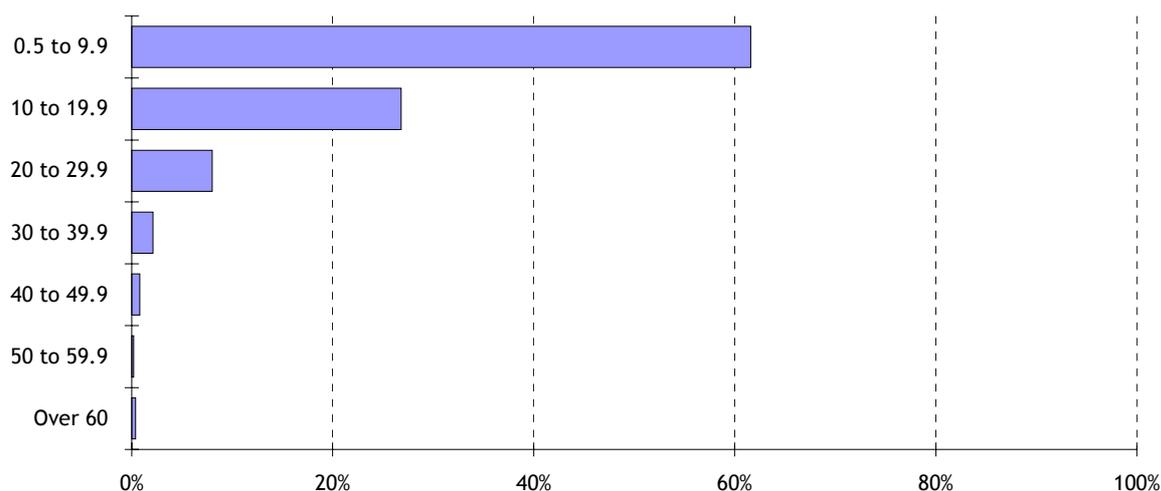
**Figure 4.5: Nature of second job, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010

They work an average (mean) of 9.8 hours per week (mode ten hours, median eight hours) in their second job, however, the number of hours ranges from one through to an unlikely 120 hours. Only three people work over 49 hours in their second job, per week. Removal of these extreme outliers reduces the mean to 9.4 hours per week. The hours worked are shown in Figure 4.6.

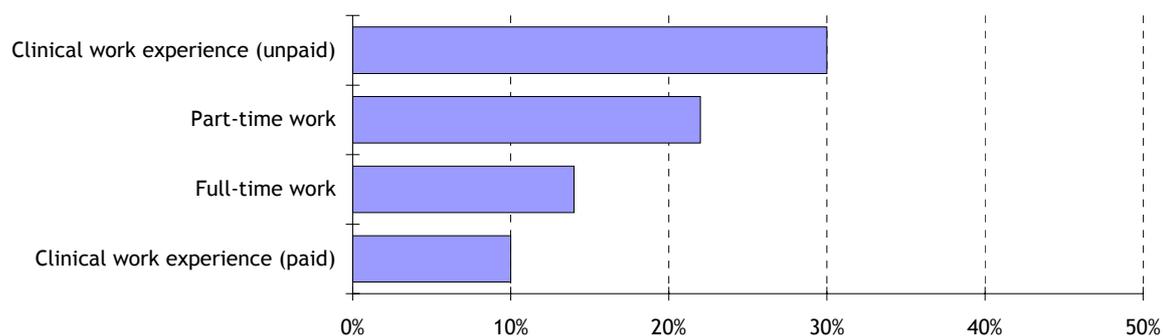
**Figure 4.6: Hours worked in second job in a week, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010

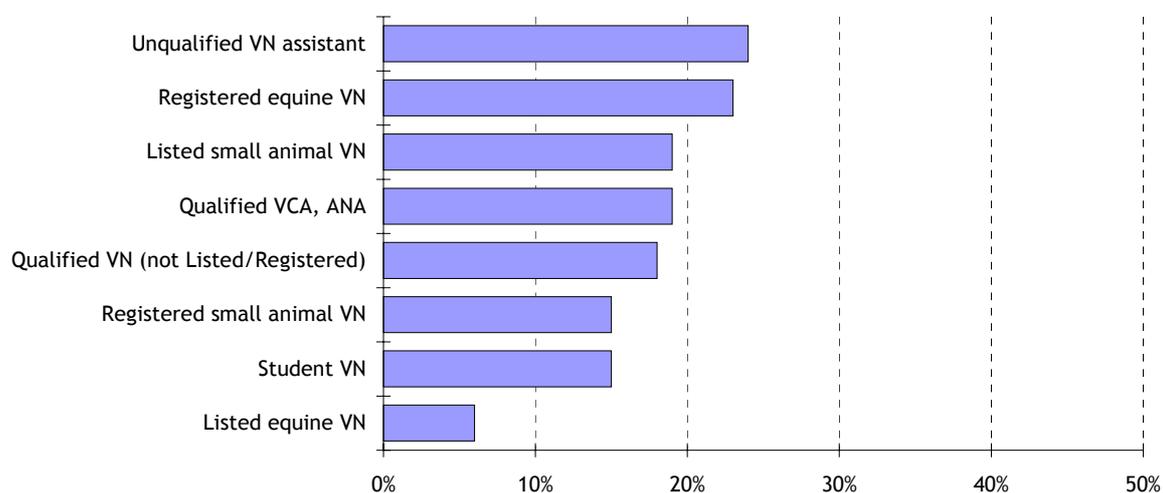
Fourteen per cent of those who work full-time and 22 per cent of those who work part-time in their current main employment also have a second job. Nearly one-third of those undertaking unpaid clinical work experience also have a second job (Figure 4.7).

**Figure 4.7: Main current employment status by second job, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010

**Figure 4.8: Current status by second job, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey 2010

#### 4.6 WORKING WITHIN OR OUTSIDE THE PROFESSION AND CLINICAL PRACTICE

##### VS SURVEY

Of the respondents who are currently working (*ie* are not unemployed, taking a career break or fully retired), 95 per cent say that their main employment is within the profession (in the 2006 survey this was 96 per cent). Five per cent work outside the profession. Of the 95 per cent who are currently working within the profession, 54 per cent of these are female and 84 per cent are working in clinical veterinary practice (57 per cent of these are female).

##### VN SURVEY

Of the respondents who are currently working (*ie* are not unemployed, taking a career break or fully retired), 92 per cent say that their main employment is within clinical veterinary practice (in the 2008 survey this was 90 per cent). The remaining eight per cent say they are either working outside clinical practice but in work using their VN qualification (five per cent) or working outside the VN profession entirely (three per cent).

**Key comparisons between VSs and VNs**

- The majority of VSs and VNs who are in current employment work in the UK, with VNs showing a higher proportion than VSs. Across both professions, Ireland is the second most common place to work.
- There is little difference in the reasons given by overseas VSs for coming to the UK across both professions. The most common reason given by for both groups is 'to work abroad'. However, a slightly higher proportion of VNs come to the UK for marital or partner-related reasons than VSs.
- Irrespective of whether VSs work full-time within or outside their profession clinical practice, or VNs work full-time within or outside clinical practice, VSs and VNs working overseas earn higher salaries, on average, than those working within the UK.
- A slightly higher proportion of VNs compared to VSs work in clinical veterinary practice.

## 5 WORKING OUTSIDE THE PROFESSION (VS SURVEY)

This chapter provides information about the 3.4 per cent (298 people) of respondents who are VSs working outside the profession. The definition of 'working outside the profession' is working in employment in which membership of the RCVS, or an equivalent overseas professional body, is not mandatory or desirable, and which does not require a veterinary qualification or the use of veterinary skills.

### 5.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

#### **VS Survey**

Less than five per cent of VSs work outside the profession and nearly half of these work in an animal-related organisation.

Over two-thirds have managerial or supervisory responsibility within their current role.

The mean average salary of those working outside the profession is just under £51,000.

On average, respondents have worked in their current organisation for 8.2 years, and outside the profession for 9.7 years.

The vast majority have, at some time, worked in clinical practice, on average for 12.6 years.

Less than fifteen per cent are considering a return to veterinary practice, suggesting that the majority are lost to the profession.

### 5.2 EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Nearly two-thirds (65 per cent) of VSs working outside the profession are employed, with 27 per cent being self-employed and eight per cent working on a voluntary basis. This compares with 69 per cent employed, 27 per cent self-employed and four per cent working on a voluntary basis in 2006. Of those working outside the profession, 54 per cent are male and 46 per cent female. Under half (44 per cent) of those working outside the profession work in an animal-related organisation.

### 5.3 LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY AND SALARY

Two-thirds (68 per cent) of those working outside the profession have supervisory or managerial responsibility. Salaries range from £0 to £205,000, with a mean average of

£50,907. The most frequently given salaries, accounting for 33 per cent of VSs working outside the profession, were between £25,000 and £44,999, although a further 12 per cent were high earners (above £100,000).

#### 5.4 HOURS

The split between full-time and part-time is 59 per cent full-time, 41 per cent part-time. The range of basic weekly hours given by respondents is from 0 to 90, with a mean average of 33.7. The majority (54 per cent) of those working outside the profession have basic weekly hours of between 30 and 49.9. Weekly overtime hours quoted by respondents range from 0 to 100 with a mean average of 19.6. This average has been influenced by a small number of people giving very high overtime hours, however, in that the majority (62 per cent) of respondents quote overtime hours of between 0 and 19.9. Being paid for overtime worked is very unusual, in that 86 per cent never get overtime pay. Nine per cent are always paid for working overtime, while the remaining five per cent sometimes receive overtime pay.

#### 5.5 LENGTH OF TIME OUTSIDE THE PROFESSION

Those working outside the veterinary profession have been in their current organisation for between 0 and 50 years, with a mean average of 8.2 years (very similar to the 2006 result of 8.5 years). Three-quarters (74 per cent) give lengths of service of under ten years. The lengths of time given by respondents for being outside the profession are similar – 0 to 56 years, with a mean average of 9.7 years – suggesting that their employment history since leaving the profession has been fairly stable. A substantial minority (41 per cent) have worked outside the profession for over ten years.

#### 5.6 LOST TO THE PROFESSION?

Almost all (94 per cent) of those working outside the profession have worked in clinical practice. The years worked in clinical practice range from 0 to 46, with a mean average of 12.6. Forty-one per cent worked in clinical practice for over ten years, indicating that they have considerable experience. However, half of those working outside the profession (51 per cent) do not intend to seek employment in the veterinary profession in the future, with a further 33 per cent being unsure. Nine per cent say they intend to seek employment in the profession within the next year, while the remaining seven per cent are considering a return longer term. These results are similar to those found in 2006, when 55 per cent said 'no', 31 per cent were unsure, and 14 per cent were considering a return. The numbers suggest that the large majority of those working outside the profession are unlikely to return to it.

##### **Evidence of trends**

- Nearly two-thirds (65 per cent) of VSs working outside the profession are employed, with 27 per cent being self-employed and eight per cent working on a voluntary basis. This compares with 69 per cent employed, 27 per cent self-employed and four per cent working on a voluntary basis in 2006.
- Those working outside the veterinary profession have been in their current organisation for an average time of 8.2 years - very similar to the 2006 result of 8.5 years.
- Sixteen per cent of those working outside the profession say they intend to seek employment in the profession in the future. Similarly, in 2006, 14 per cent were considering a return

## 6 WORKING WITHIN THE PROFESSION (VS SURVEY)

This chapter focuses on the 95 per cent of VSs in current work (*ie* omitting those who are fully retired, taking a career break or unemployed) who are working within the profession.

### 6.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

#### **VS Survey**

Ninety per cent of those working within the profession work in practice, whilst a quarter work in non-practice areas. Just over 80 per cent say that their main employment is in a practice area, with the largest proportion of these working in small animal practices.

Those working in equine practice, veterinary schools, mixed, small animal/exotic or farm/production practice work the longest hours, on average (over 40 hours a week).

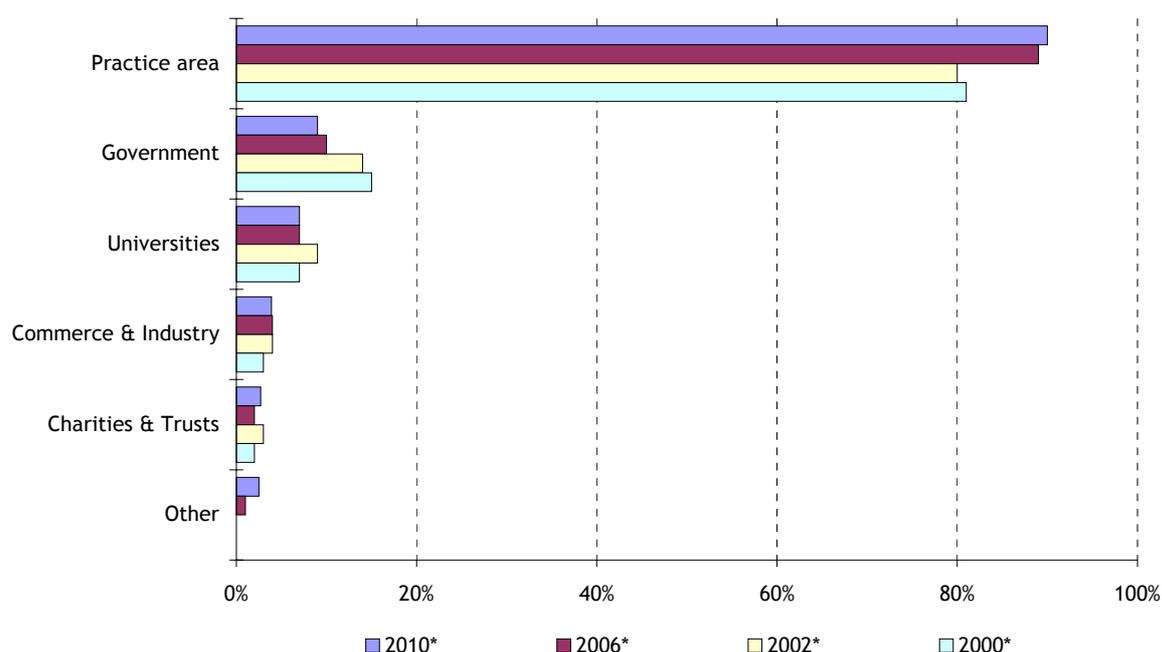
The highest on-call but not on-premises commitment is found in practice, where the average commitment is often over 25 hours per week.

Eighty-three per cent plan to stay in the profession for the foreseeable future.

Nearly three-quarters of those currently working within the profession who are planning to leave for reasons other than retirement intend to leave due to dissatisfaction with veterinary work (eg hours, stress).

### 6.2 TYPE OF PRACTICE EMPLOYED IN

Figure 6.1 shows that the majority of respondents (90 per cent of those working in the profession) work in practice, while 25 per cent work in non-practice areas (see Appendix Table 3.5). The percentages add up to more than 100, however, as some respondents work in more than one area; for example, they may work as a Local Veterinary Inspector (LVI) as well as being in practice. The percentage working in government has decreased by six per cent since 2000, whilst a nine per cent rise is evident in those working in clinical practice. A total of 80.5 per cent say that their main employment is in a practice area, with the largest proportion of these being small animal/exotic practices.

**Figure 6.1: Type of practice employed in, VS respondents**

Note: \*Percentages total more than 100, as some VSs work in more than one area.

Source: VS Survey, 2010

### 6.3 HOURS OF WORK AND ON-CALL ARRANGEMENTS

The average (mean) basic working week (excluding on-call and overtime) of full-time veterinary surgeons working within the veterinary profession is 45 hours, ranging from 0 hours to 168 hours. Over half of respondents work between 40 and 49.9 hours during a basic working week. Only 1.8 per cent work in excess of 70 hours a week and 0.4 per cent work less than 30 hours. Removal of these extreme outliers brings the average down only marginally to 44 hours, with a range of 20 to 70 hours (see Table 6.1).

**Table 6.1: Basic working week for those in full-time work, VS respondents**

| Hours            | Percentage |
|------------------|------------|
| 0 to 9.9 hours   | .2         |
| 10 to 19.9 hours | .2         |
| 20 to 29.9 hours | .8         |
| 30 to 39.9 hours | 19.5       |
| 40 to 49.9 hours | 52.8       |
| 50 to 59.9 hours | 19.0       |
| 60 to 69.9 hours | 5.7        |
| Over 70 hours    | 1.8        |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

Fifty-six per cent of veterinary surgeons working within the veterinary profession are on an on-call rota. Of these, 29 per cent are paid for being on-call. Regardless of whether

respondents are paid for being on-call, 22.5 per cent receive an additional payment if they are called out.

Respondents were also asked to give their working hours (including overtime but excluding on-call) and on-call hours (split between on-call when required to be available but not on the premises, and on-call when required to be available and present on premises) in a typical week by type of practice. As found in the 2006 survey, 2010 respondents working full-time in equine practice, veterinary schools, mixed practices, small animal/exotic practices and farm/production practice work the longest hours on average (over 40 hours a week) (see Table 6.2). There is a notable increase in average hours worked in 2010 compared to 2006, by those working in practice.

The highest on-call, but not on premises, commitment is found in practice, most notably equine, mixed, farm/production and referral/consultancy where the average (mean) commitment is over 25 hours. The highest on-call and on premises commitment is found in 'other' first opinion practice, followed by overseas government. Detailed comparisons of hours on-call with previous surveys are difficult, as the questions were asked differently.

**Table 6.2: Average hours worked and on-call in a typical week by full-time VS respondents, mean**

| Type of practice employed in   | Hours worked<br>2010 | Hours worked<br>2006 | On-call hours<br>(not on premises)<br>2010 | On-call hours<br>(on premises)<br>2010 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Mixed practice                 | 45.3                 | 44.4                 | 29.3                                       | 2.2                                    |
| Small animal/exotic practice   | 43.9                 | 43.2                 | 12.7                                       | 2.3                                    |
| Equine practice                | 46.1                 | 41.3                 | 36.1                                       | 3.0                                    |
| Farm/production practice       | 41.0                 | 35.8                 | 25.4                                       | 1.7                                    |
| Other first opinion practice   | 33.8                 | 33.9                 | 9.0  | 9.8                                    |
| Referral practice/ consultancy | 36.5                 | 30.6                 | 22.0                                       | 2.8                                    |
| Defra                          | 30.7                 |                      | 12.9                                       | 0.2                                    |
| Animal Health                  | 35.2                 |                      | 15.1                                       | 2.5                                    |
| Other UK government            | 39.6                 |                      | 7.5  | 0.3                                    |
| Total UK Government            | 35.1                 | 39.0                 |  |  |
| Overseas government            | 37.3                 | 37.1                 | 9.5  | 3.8                                    |
| Veterinary school              | 45.8                 | 45.7                 | 10.6                                       | 2.2                                    |
| Other university               | 32.4                 | 36.5                 | 15.4                                       | 0.1                                    |
| Commerce & Industry            | 40.0                 | 39.0                 | 8.6  | 0.4                                    |
| Charities and Trusts           | 27.6                 | 31.9                 | 6.3  | 1.5                                    |
| Research Council               | 28.8                 | 33.8                 | 18.1                                       | 0.0                                    |

*Source: VS Survey, 2010 and 2006*

Of those full-time workers who indicated that they are required to be on-call and present on premises, the majority (94.5 per cent) say they are normally asleep when not working. The remaining 5.5 per cent are normally awake all night.

#### 6.4 OVERTIME

Respondents were asked how many hours overtime they worked in the last month (including on-call). The responses show that of those full-time workers who had worked overtime, the

hours worked range from 0 to 300 with a mean of 23 hours, with sixteen per cent working in excess of 40 hours overtime. The mean for part-time workers is lower than that for full-time, at 13 hours, ranging from 0 to 165 hours, with eight per cent working over 40 hours overtime (see Appendix Table 3.6).

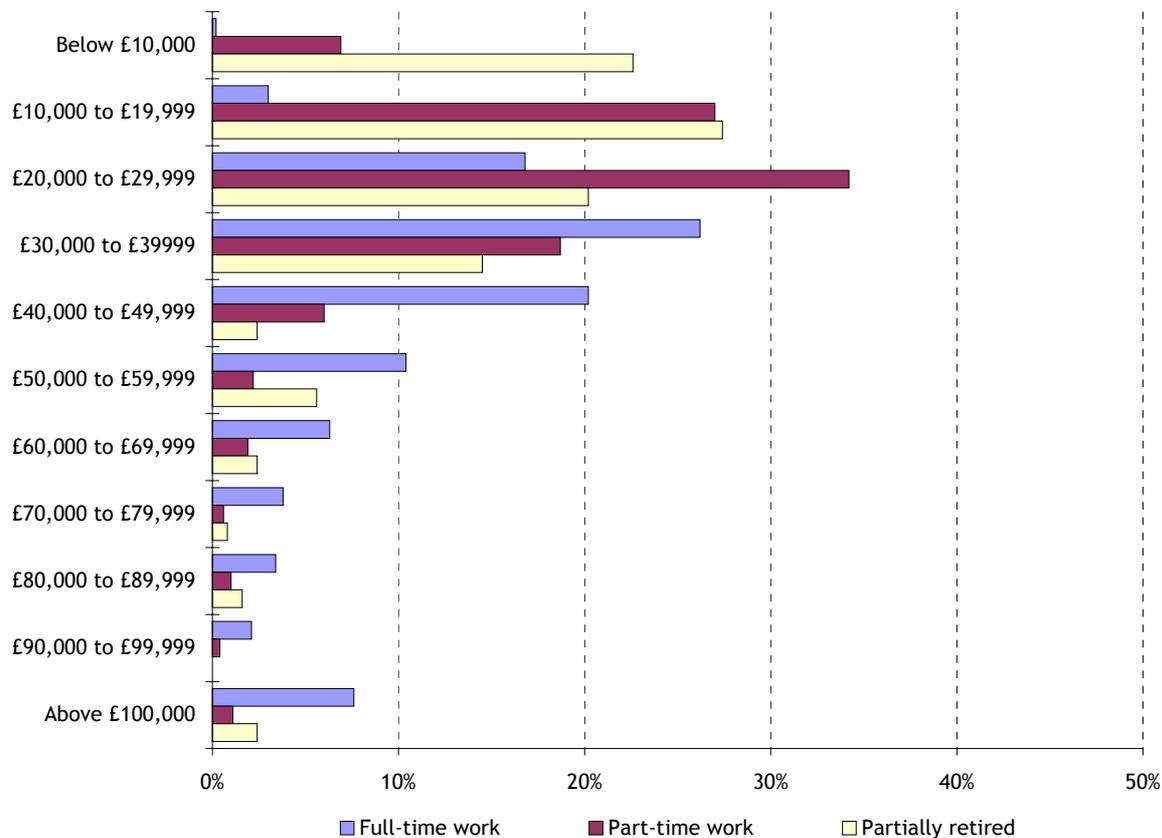
Of those who are currently working within the veterinary profession, 10.6 per cent always get paid extra for overtime, 9.1 per cent sometimes get paid extra whilst the remaining 80.3 per cent never receive extra payment. Twenty-eight per cent of those who work within the veterinary profession have the option of taking 'time off in lieu' for overtime.

## 6.5 SALARY

The average (mean) basic salary of those who work full-time within the profession (excluding unsocial hours, benefits and overtime) is £48,951.16 (median £40,000). For part-time workers this is £27,316.16 (median £24,000) and partially retired respondents £24,073.31 (median £19,500).

Figure 6.2 shows the proportion of people in each employment status group in each salary band. It is clear that a higher proportion of those who are partially retired earn less than £10,000 than those in full-time or part-time work. Sixty-one per cent of part-time workers earn between £10,000 and £29,999. Nearly half of full-time workers earn between £30,000 and £49,999, compared to a quarter of those working part-time and seventeen per cent of respondents who are partially retired. Eight per cent of full-time workers earn in excess of £100,000.

**Figure 6.2: Basic annual salary of VS respondents by employment status**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

Table 6.3 shows mean salary by year of qualification. As may be expected the earlier the qualification year, the higher the average salary, with the exception of respondents who qualified before 1964.

**Table 6.3: Average basic annual salary by qualification year for full-time VSs**

| Qualification year bands | Mean salary | Median salary |
|--------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Before 1964              | £55,895     | £50,000       |
| 1965 to 1974             | £69,392     | £60,000       |
| 1975 to 1984             | £66,077     | £60,000       |
| 1985 to 1994             | £63,613     | £53,000       |
| 1995 to 2004             | £43,125     | £40,000       |
| 2005 to 2010             | £29,622     | £28,000       |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

## 6.6 PRACTICE PROVISIONS

### VS SURVEY

When asked whether their practice provides them with certain provisions and benefits, 71 per cent receive training/CPD support (in terms of time and/or financial support), around half receive professional indemnity insurance (54 per cent) and/or no/reduced vet fees (49.5 per cent), 42 per cent receive a uniform/work clothing, 39 per cent have their RCVS retention fees paid for (whole or part), nearly one-third have professional subscriptions (eg BVA) paid for (32 per cent), nearly a quarter receive a car (23 per cent) and around 15 per cent receive health insurance (15.9 per cent) and/or accommodation (14 per cent).

### CAREER PLANS

**Table 6.4: Career plans of those currently working within the VS profession, percentage**

|  | 2010 | 2006 |
|--|------|------|
| Stay in the profession for foreseeable future            | 84   | 82   |
| Stay in the profession for at least a year*              | -    | 5    |
| Fully retire within next year                            | 1.4  | -    |
| Fully retire within next five years                      | 6.6  | 10   |
| Leave the profession asap (non-retirement)               | 1.1  | 2    |
| Leave profession within next year (non-retirement)       | 1.2  | 1    |
| Leave profession within next five years (non-retirement) | 5.6  | -    |

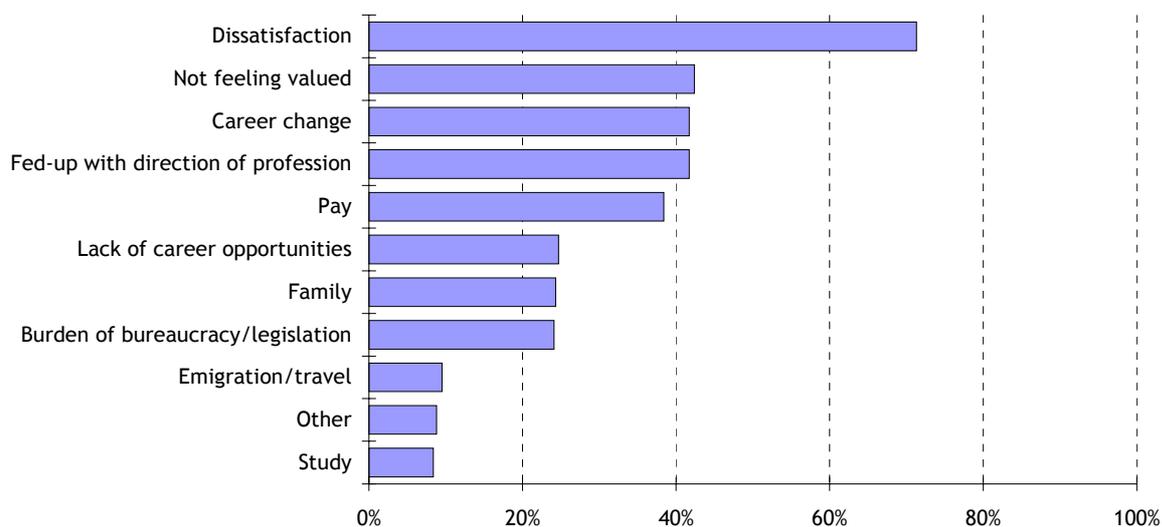
Note: \*Only presented in 2006 survey

Source: VS Survey, 2010 and 2006

In the 2006 survey, the majority of respondents (82 per cent) who were working within the profession planned to stay in the profession, five per cent planned to stay for at least a year, with the remaining 13 per cent planning to leave the profession (see Table 6.4). In 2010, there is an increase, on the 2006 findings, in the proportion who plan to stay in the profession for the foreseeable future (84 per cent), with nine per cent fully retiring and eight per cent planning to leave the profession for reasons other than retirement.

The eight per cent who plan to leave for reasons other than retirement were asked to specify why, and the answers are shown in Figure 6.3. Nearly three-quarters of those who are planning to leave for reasons other than retirement, are doing so due to dissatisfaction with veterinary work (eg hours, stress). In 2006 the question was asked in a different way whereby respondents were asked to specify their reasons for leaving rather than select from a multiple choice list as in 2010, and therefore these percentages cannot be directly compared with 2006.

**Figure 6.3: Reason for leaving, VS respondents**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

Females account for 59 per cent of those who are leaving on the grounds of pay. Sixty-six per cent are leaving because they do not feel valued, 68 per cent are leaving due to dissatisfaction with veterinary work, and 92 per cent are leaving for family reasons. Twenty- to 29-year-olds account for the highest proportion of those leaving for study reasons (53 per cent), while 30- to 39-year-olds account for highest proportion leaving for family reasons and lack of career opportunities (55 per cent and 50 per cent respectively) (see Appendix Table 3.7). The 8.8 per cent who ticked 'other' were asked to specify their reasons for leaving: these included elimination of assessor role (RCVS) (40 per cent), health issues (33.3 per cent) and staff/management behaviour/attitude (6.7 per cent). Other comments included bias against women, unfair competition and poor working conditions, each accounting for 3.3 per cent.

#### Evidence of trends

- The percentage of respondents working in government has decreased by six per cent since 2000, whilst a nine per cent rise is evident in those working in practice.
- There is a notable increase in the average hours worked within practices in 2010, with those working full-time generally working on average longer hours than in 2006.
- Eighty-three per cent of those currently working in the profession plan to stay in the profession for the foreseeable future, a one per cent increase on the 2006 survey findings.

## 7 WORKING OUTSIDE CLINICAL VETERINARY PRACTICE (VN SURVEY)

This chapter provides further information on the 314 VNs (eight per cent) who are in current work (*ie* omitting those who are fully retired, taking a career break or unemployed) and who say their main employment is outside clinical veterinary practice, whether this be in work which uses their VN qualification or working outside the VN profession entirely.

### 7.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

#### **VN Survey**

Just under 90 per cent of respondents working outside clinical veterinary practice are employed.

Nearly three-quarters work in an organisation which is animal-related.

The average amount of time spent in an organisation is five years.

Just under two-thirds have managerial or supervisory responsibilities.

The average basic annual salary for full-time workers is £23,260.

The average take-home pay for the last month before completion of the survey was £1,458.

The average basic working week is 32 hours overall; for full-time workers this rises to 38 hours.

Respondents worked an average of 18 hours overtime in the month prior to survey completion.

The average time spent outside clinical veterinary practice is six years.

### 7.2 EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Just under 90 per cent of respondents working outside clinical veterinary practice are employed (89.7 per cent). This is a just under a three per cent rise of the 2008 findings (87 per cent). A total of 9.9 per cent of respondents are self-employed (12 per cent in 2008) and 0.3 per cent are working on a voluntary basis (one per cent in 2008).

#### TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Nearly three-quarters (72 per cent) of respondents working outside clinical veterinary practice work in an organisation which is animal-related. Twenty-seven per cent work in a non-animal-related organisation.

## TIME IN ORGANISATION

The average (mean) amount of time spent in an organisation is five years with a range from 0 to 30 years. Sixty-nine per cent of respondents working outside clinical veterinary practice have worked in their organisation for five years or less, 21 per cent six to ten years, with the remainder working over ten years.

## MANAGERIAL AND SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY

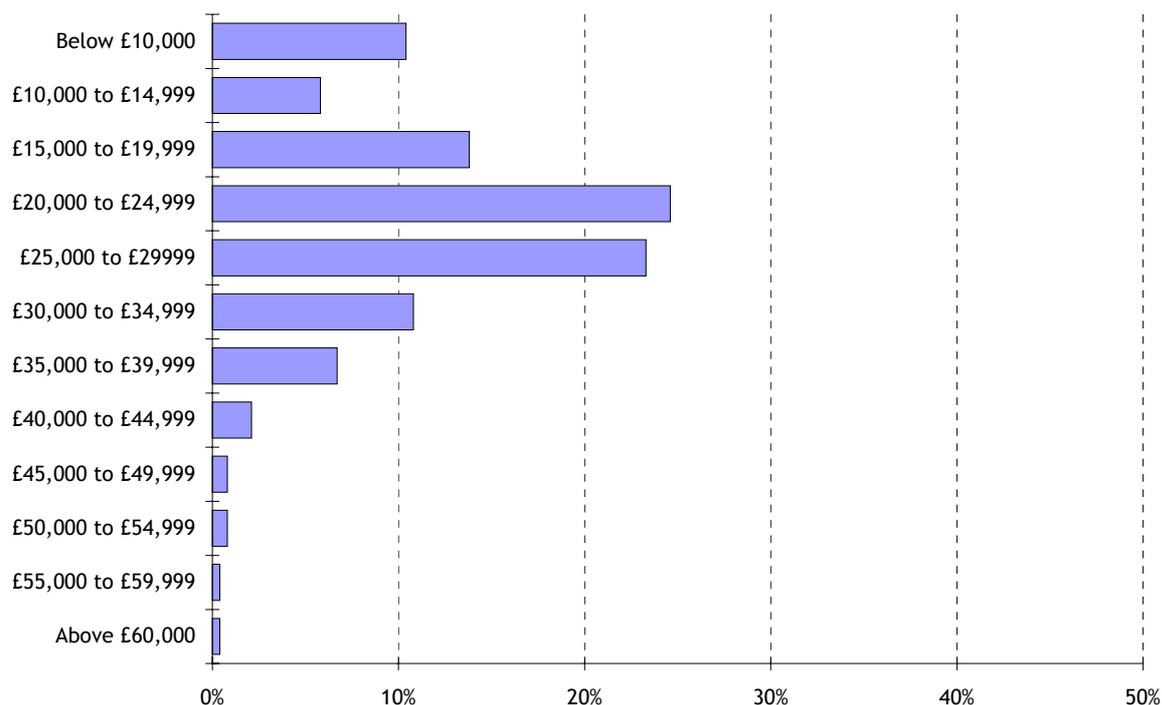
Just under two-thirds (63 per cent) of respondents working outside clinical veterinary practice have managerial or supervisory responsibilities in their job. Thirty-seven per cent have no such responsibilities.

## SALARY

The average (mean) basic annual salary (excluding unsocial hours, benefits and overtime) of those working full-time outside clinical veterinary practice is £23,345, with a maximum basic salary of £66,240. The proportion of respondents in each salary band is shown in Figure 7.1. As can be seen, over half of those working outside clinical veterinary practice earn a basic annual salary of less than £25,000.

Table 7.1 shows that those who qualified before 1990 earn a marginally higher average salary than those who qualified post-1990.

**Figure 7.1: Salary bands of VNs working full-time outside clinical veterinary practice**



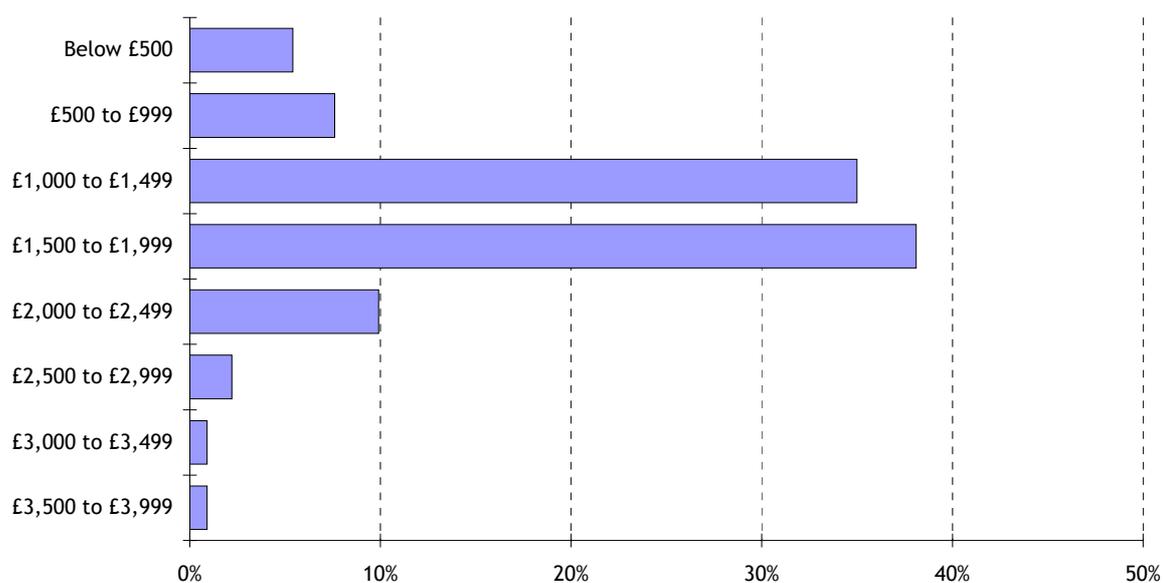
Source: VN Survey, 2010

**Table 7.1: Salary of VNs working full-time outside clinical veterinary practice by qualification year, mean**

|              | Salary  |
|--------------|---------|
| 1970 to 1979 | £25,282 |
| 1980 to 1989 | £27,998 |
| 1990 to 1994 | £24,168 |
| 1995 to 1999 | £23,203 |
| 2000 to 2002 | £24,398 |
| 2003 to 2008 | £21,545 |
| 2009 to 2013 | £24,000 |
| Unknown      | £15,081 |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

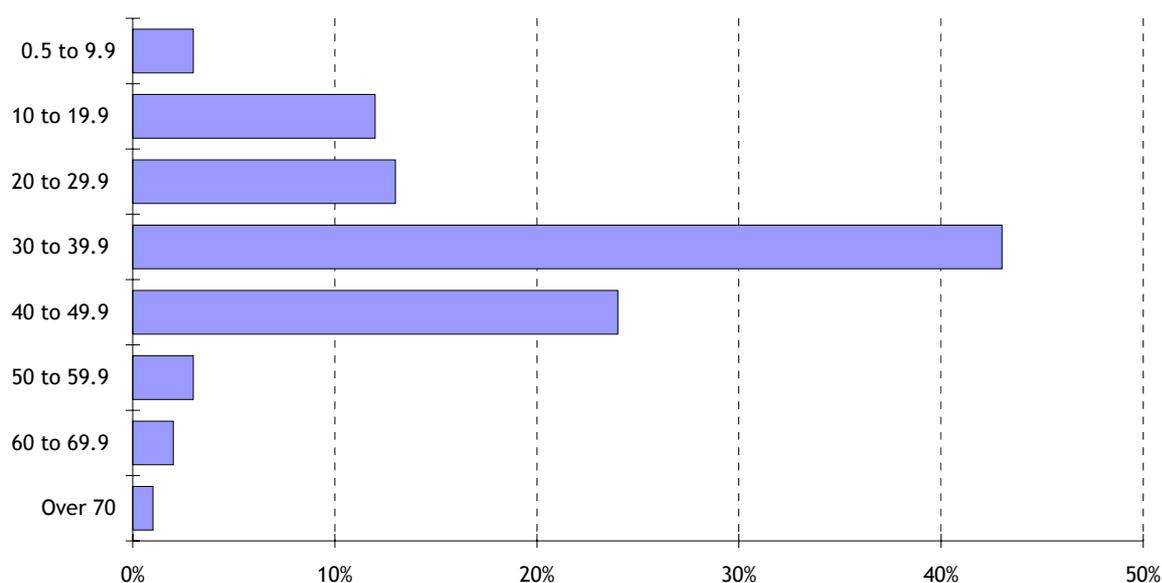
The average (mean) take-home pay (after tax and deductions) for the last month before completion of the survey of those who are those working full-time outside clinical veterinary practice was £1,458, ranging from £0 to £3,900. The proportion of respondents in each pay band is shown in Figure 7.2. Nearly three-quarters of respondents took home between £1,000 and £1,999 'last' month, and less than five per cent took home over £2,500.

**Figure 7.2: Monthly take home pay for full-time VNs**

Source: VN Survey, 2010

#### BASIC WORKING WEEK AND OVERTIME HOURS

The average basic working week (excluding overtime) for those who are currently working outside clinical veterinary practice is 32 hours, ranging from three to 70 hours. Over two-thirds of respondents work between 30 and 49.9 hours during a basic working week. Just over five per cent work over 50 hours (see Figure 7.3).

**Figure 7.3: VNs basic working week, hours**

Source: VN Survey, 2010

Breaking this down by full- and part-time workers (excluding second job hours and extreme outliers), shows that full-time workers work an average of 38 hours a week, whilst part-time workers work an average of 18 hours (ranging from three to 38 hours). Just under 16 per cent of part-timers work over 25 hours.

Respondents were asked how many hours' overtime they worked in the last month. The responses show that of those who had worked overtime the hours worked range from one to 120 hours with a mean of 18 hours, with over one-quarter working in excess of 20 hours overtime. The mean for full-time workers is lower than that for part-time, 17 hours and 23 hours respectively.

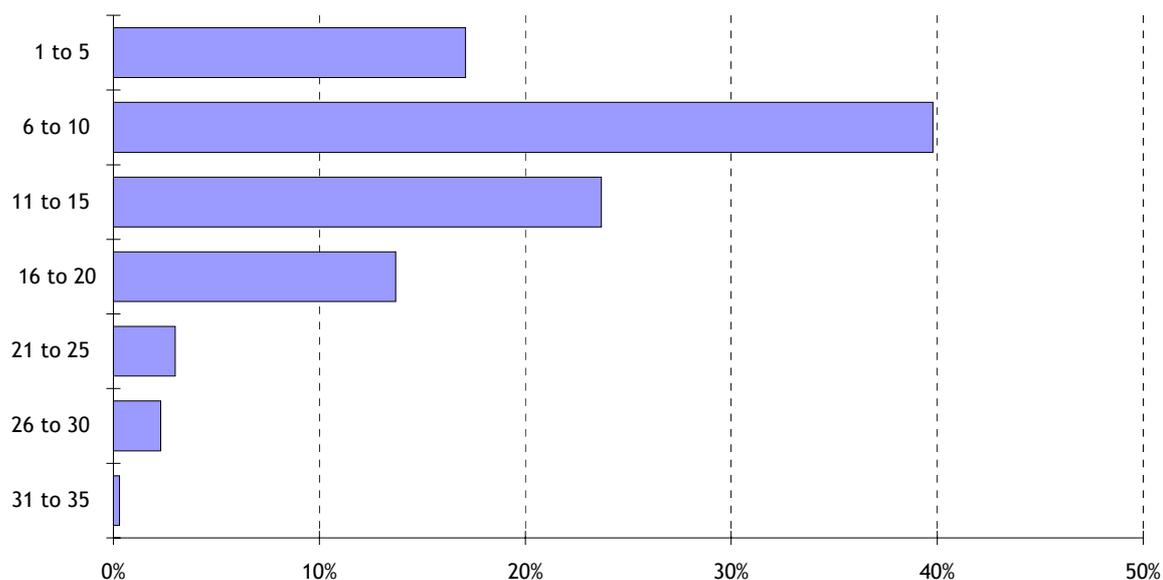
Of those who are currently working outside clinical veterinary practice, 26 per cent always get paid extra for overtime, ten per cent sometimes get paid extra, whilst the remaining 64 per cent never receive extra payment. Regardless of whether extra payment is received in compensation for overtime hours worked, 66 per cent of those who work outside clinical veterinary practice have the option of taking 'time off in lieu' for overtime.

### 7.3 TIME SPENT OUT OF CLINICAL VETERINARY PRACTICE

The time respondents have spent outside clinical veterinary practice ranges from 0 to 34 years. The average (mean) is six years (in 2008 this was 5.8 years).

### 7.4 HISTORY OF CLINICAL VETERINARY PRACTICE

Just two per cent of those working outside clinical veterinary practice have never worked in practice. As in 2008, the vast majority of respondents (98 per cent) have worked in clinical veterinary practice in the past. Of these, the time they spent in practice ranged from 1 to 31 years, with a mean of 11 years and a mode of ten years. Over half worked in practice for ten years or less (see Figure 7.4).

**Figure 7.4: Years in clinical veterinary practice, VN respondents**

Source: VN Survey, 2010

Of those who have never worked in clinical veterinary practice, 67 per cent attributed this to difficulties finding work and seeking work experience.

#### LOST TO CLINICAL VETERINARY PRACTICE?

It would seem that the majority of respondents currently working outside clinical veterinary practice are unlikely to seek employment back in the profession in the future. Whilst nearly one third (30 per cent, compared to 33 per cent in 2008) say they have no intention of seeking employment, just under 20 per cent are intending to return within the next year (seven per cent) or in the longer term (12 per cent). This has decreased since 2008, when 26 per cent intended to seek employment in clinical veterinary practice. Over half remain unsure of their intention (51 per cent). This latter figure shows a rise of nine per cent since 2008 in the proportion of respondents who are unsure (42 per cent in 2008).

#### Evidence of trends

- A small rise in the proportion of respondents working outside clinical veterinary practice who are employed, with, in turn, a slight decline in the proportions who are self-employed and working on a voluntary basis, compared to 2008.
- Time spent outside clinical veterinary practice remains, on average, the same as that found in 2008, as does the proportion of respondents who have worked in clinical veterinary practice in the past.
- There is evidence of a six per cent decline in the proportion of respondents who are intending to seek employment in clinical veterinary practice since 2008 and a nine per cent rise in the proportion who are unsure of their intentions.

## 8 WORKING WITHIN CLINICAL VETERINARY PRACTICE

This chapter gives details of the 84 per cent of VSs and 92 per cent of VNs who are in current work (*ie* omitting those who are fully retired, taking a career break or unemployed) and who are working within clinical veterinary practice.

### 8.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

#### VS Survey

Forty-three per cent are working as a full-time assistant or employee of a limited company.

Forty-one per cent of VSs practices have partnership ownership, whilst a quarter are owned by a sole principal.

Eighty-six per cent of VSs say that VNs care for hospitalised animals every day.

Over one-third of VSs' working time is spent on dogs.

Sixty per cent say that their practice generally covers its out-of-hours work itself and two-thirds personally undertake out-of-hours work.

Half of respondents do not have a minimum 11-hour rest period every 24 hours that is specified by the Working Time Regulations.

Over two-thirds think that the current economic climate is having an impact on the practice(s) where they work. The majority report an increase in bad debts and a substantial minority report an increase in euthanasia numbers.

#### VN Survey

Over 70 per cent work in small animal/exotic practice and work on average 36.69 hours in a basic working week.

Just under a quarter never receive extra payment for overtime worked; however, just over two-thirds are entitled to 'time off in lieu'.

Over three-quarters plan to stay in clinical practice for the foreseeable future. Nearly a quarter are planning to leave within the next five years for reasons other than retirement. The largest proportion of these intends to leave on the grounds of pay.

The average basic annual salary (excluding unsocial hours, benefits and overtime) of full-time workers is £16,378.92.

The highest proportion of VNs' working time, on average, is spent with small animals

Twenty-eight per cent personally carry out visits to clients.

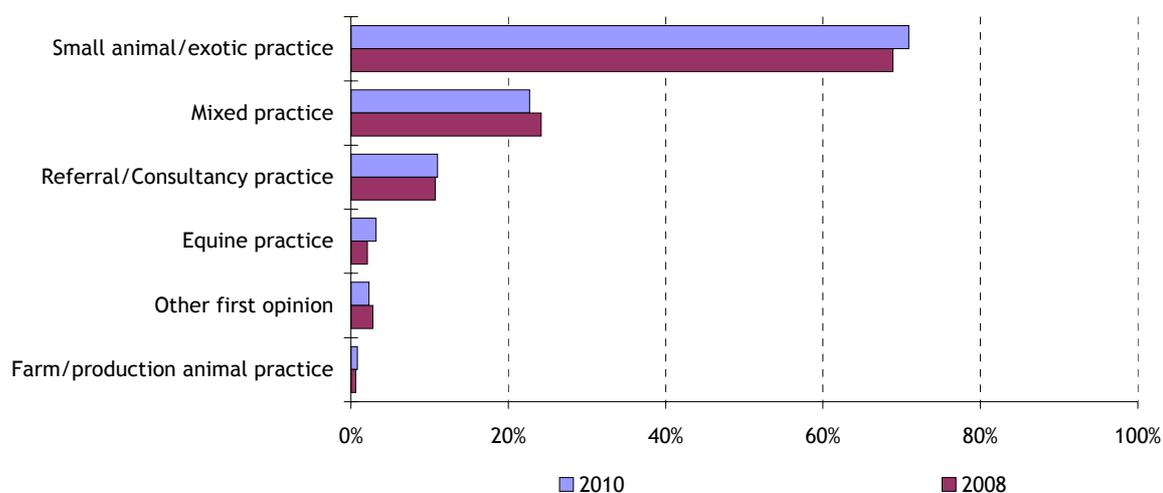
Seventeen per cent do not receive an 11-hour rest period every 24 hours.

## 8.2 TYPE OF PRACTICE EMPLOYED IN

### VN SURVEY

Figure 8.1 shows that the largest proportion of respondents (70.9 per cent of those working in clinical veterinary practice) work in small animal/exotic practice. The percentages add up to more than 100, however, as some respondents work in more than one area. The percentage working in mixed practice has decreased slightly, and the percentage working in small animal practice has increased slightly, since 2008 – although this may be an indication of practices reclassifying themselves. There is also evidence of an increase in VNs working in equine practices. The main employment of respondents is shown in Appendix Table 3.8.

**Figure 8.1: Type of practice VNs are employed in**



Source: VN Survey, 2010 and 2008

## 8.3 HOURS WORKED

### VN SURVEY

The average basic working week (excluding on-call and overtime) of full-time veterinary nurses working in clinical practice work is 39 hours, ranging from two hours to 120 hours. The vast majority of respondents work between 30 and 49.9 hours during a basic working week. Only 0.5 per cent work in excess of 70 hours a week. Removal of these extreme outliers brings the average down only marginally to 38.9, with a range of two to 65 hours.

Respondents were also asked to give their working hours in a typical week (including overtime but excluding on-call) and on-call hours (if applicable) in a typical week. On-call hours are split between available but not on the premises, and available and present on the premises. The responses of full-time respondents are shown by type of practice in Table 8.1. Unfortunately, accurate comparisons of hours with previous surveys are difficult as the questions were asked in different ways. However comparisons do indicate a general decline in the average number of hours worked in a typical week across all types of practice since 2008.

**Table 8.1: Average hours worked and hours on-call by main type of practice, mean, VN respondents**

|                                 | Hours worked<br>2010 | Hours on-call<br>(not on premises)<br>2010 | Hours on-call<br>(present on premises)<br>2010 |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Mixed practice                  | 39                   | 20   | 13   |
| Small animal/exotic practice    | 40                   | 18   | 14   |
| Equine practice                 | 35                   | 25   | 17   |
| Farm/production animal practice | 23                   | 12   |  |
| Other first opinion             | 37                   | 13   | 27   |
| Referral/Consultancy practice   | 39                   | 16   | 17   |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

Of those respondents who indicated that they were required to be on-call and present on premises, 85 per cent say they are normally asleep when not working, whilst the remaining 15 per cent say they are awake all night.

#### 8.4 OVERTIME

##### VN SURVEY

Respondents were asked how many hours' overtime they worked in the last month (including on-call). The responses show that of those full-time workers who had worked overtime, the hours worked range from 0 to 288 with a mean of 22 hours, with 15 per cent working in excess of 40 hours overtime. The mean for part-time workers is lower than that for full-time, at 15.5 hours, ranging from 0 to 220 hours, with ten per cent working over 40 hours.

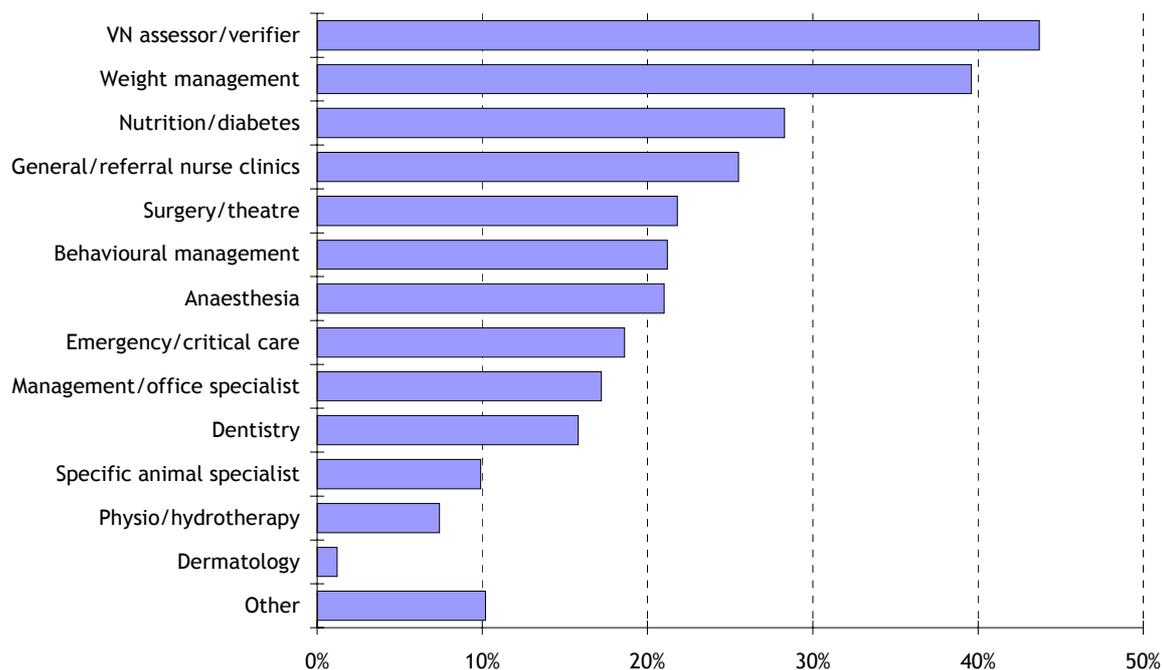
Of those who are currently working within clinical veterinary practice, 56.9 per cent always get paid extra for overtime, 19.5 per cent sometimes get paid extra whilst the remaining 23.6 per cent never receive extra payment. Regardless of whether extra payment is received in compensation for overtime hours worked, 67 per cent of those who work within clinical veterinary practice have the option of taking 'time off in lieu' for overtime. If respondents are on-call, regardless of whether they are paid for being on-call, 60 per cent receive an additional payment if they are called out.

#### 8.5 AREAS OF EXPERTISE

##### VN SURVEY

Fifty-three per cent of respondents consider themselves to have a particular area of expertise. Of these, areas of expertise are as follows in Figure 8.2. Percentages exceed 100 per cent as respondents may have expertise in more than one area.

**Figure 8.2: Areas of expertise, VN respondents**



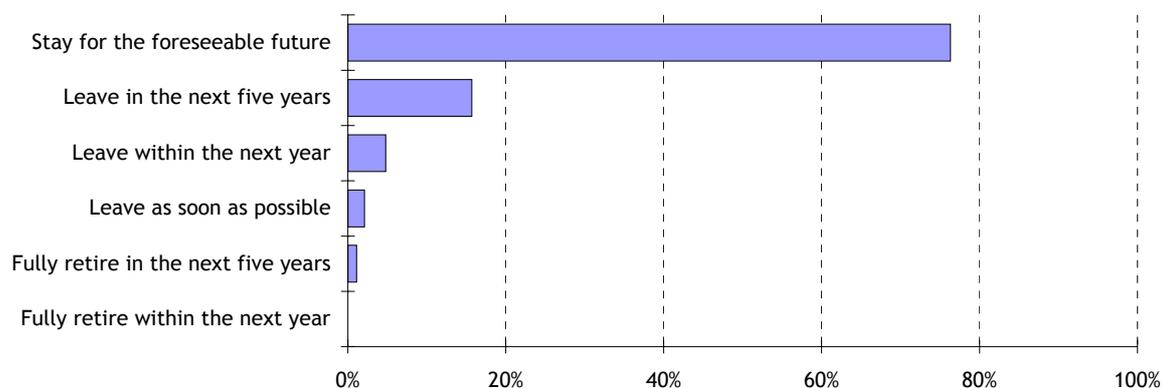
Source: VN Survey, 2010

## 8.6 CAREER PLANS

### VN SURVEY

When asked about their future career plans, over three-quarters of respondents working in clinical veterinary practice say that they plan to stay in clinical practice for the foreseeable future (76 per cent; in 2008 this was 73 per cent), only one per cent plan to retire within the next five years and nearly a quarter (22.6 per cent) are planning to leave within the next five years for reasons other than retirement (see Figure 8.3).

**Figure 8.3: Career plans, VN respondents**



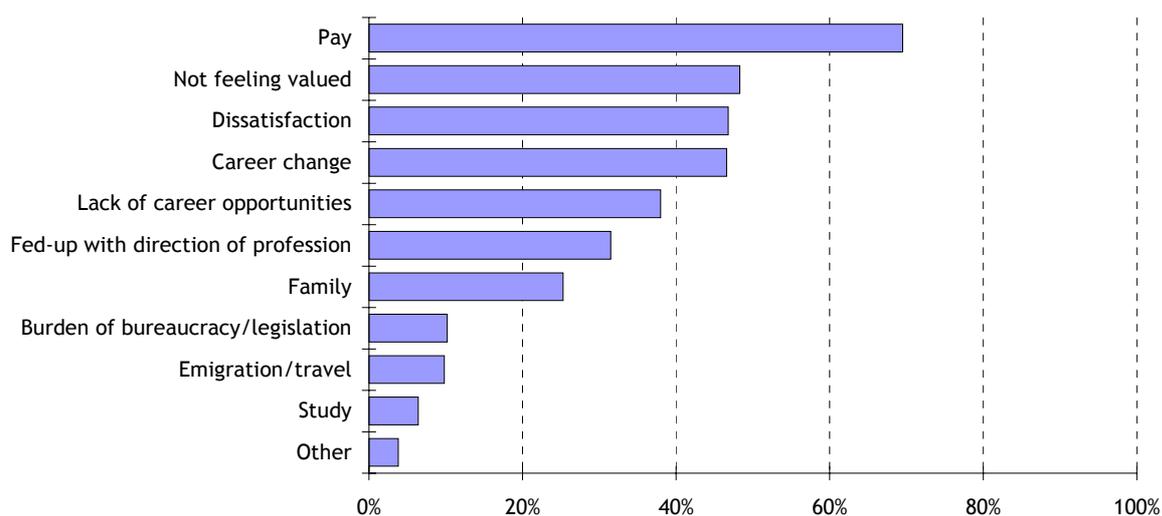
Source: VN Survey, 2010

Unfortunately, comparisons with previous surveys are difficult, with the exception of the option to stay for the foreseeable future, as the questions were asked in different ways.

Nevertheless, there seems to be a slight increase in the proportion of respondents who tend to stay in practice for the foreseeable future.

The 22.6 per cent who intend to leave for non-retirement reasons were asked to specify their reasons, giving more than one reason if applicable. The largest proportion of these intend to leave on the grounds of pay (69.5 per cent), although nearly half cite not feeling valued or dissatisfaction, and nearly half say they intend to leave to seek a career change (see Figure 8.4).

**Figure 8.4: Reason for career plan, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010

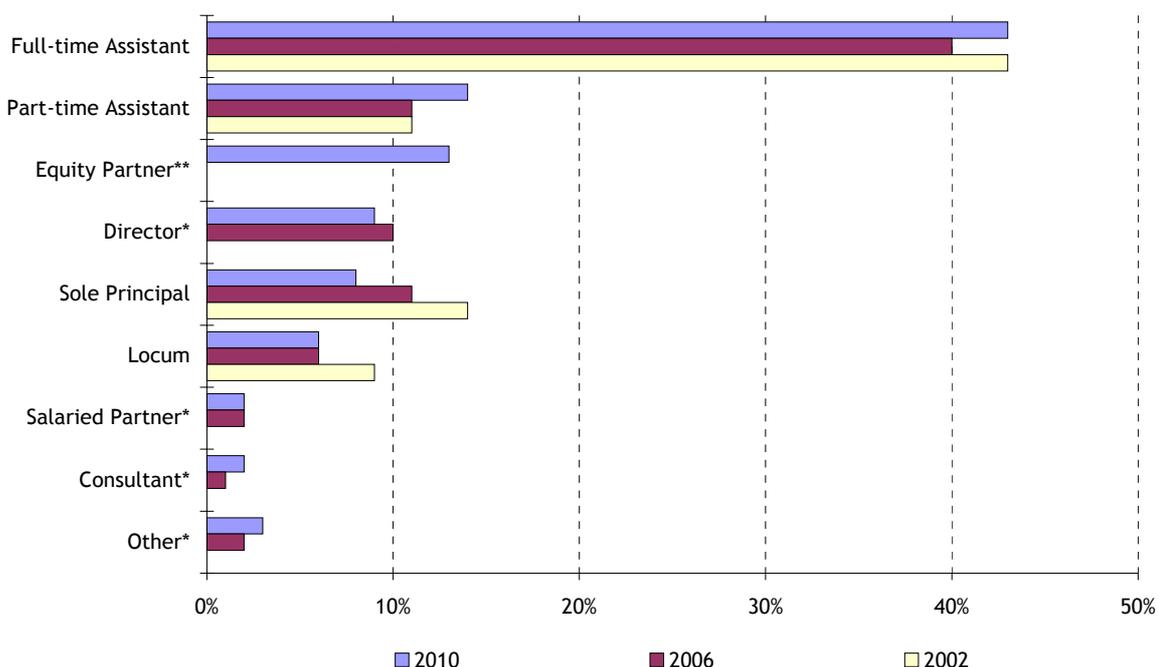
Of the 30 people who ticked 'other', 20 people specified their reasons, which included: staff/management behaviour/attitude (40 per cent), health issues (35 per cent), and elimination of assessor role (RCVS) (10 per cent).

## 8.7 POSITION IN PRACTICE

### VS SURVEY

Forty-three per cent of those currently working within clinical veterinary practice are working as a full-time assistant or employee of a limited company. Six per cent are working as locums and two per cent are consultants. The proportion of VVs who are sole principals in the practice in which they work has nearly halved since 2002 (see Figure 8.5).

**Figure 8.5: Position in the practice, VS respondents**

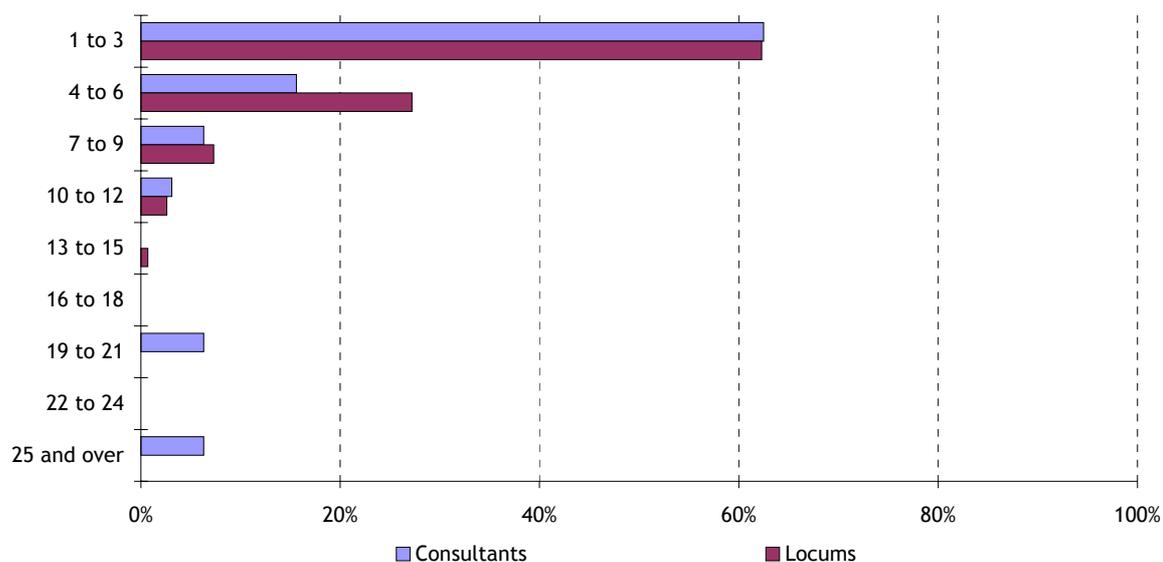


Note: \*No data for 2002; \*\*No data for 2006 and 2002

Source: VS Survey, 2010, 2006 and 2002

Of those who say they are consultants just over one-third say they work in more than one practice (34 per cent). Out of these, 62.5 per cent of consultants work in between one and three practices and nearly ten per cent work in over ten practices. The average (mean) number of practices is six, ranging from one to 30 (see Figure 8.6). For locums, 55 per cent say they work in more than one practice. Of these 62 per cent work across two to three practices, with just over three per cent working in more than ten. The mean number of practices worked in is four, ranging from two to 15.

**Figure 8.6: Number of practices working in, VS respondents**

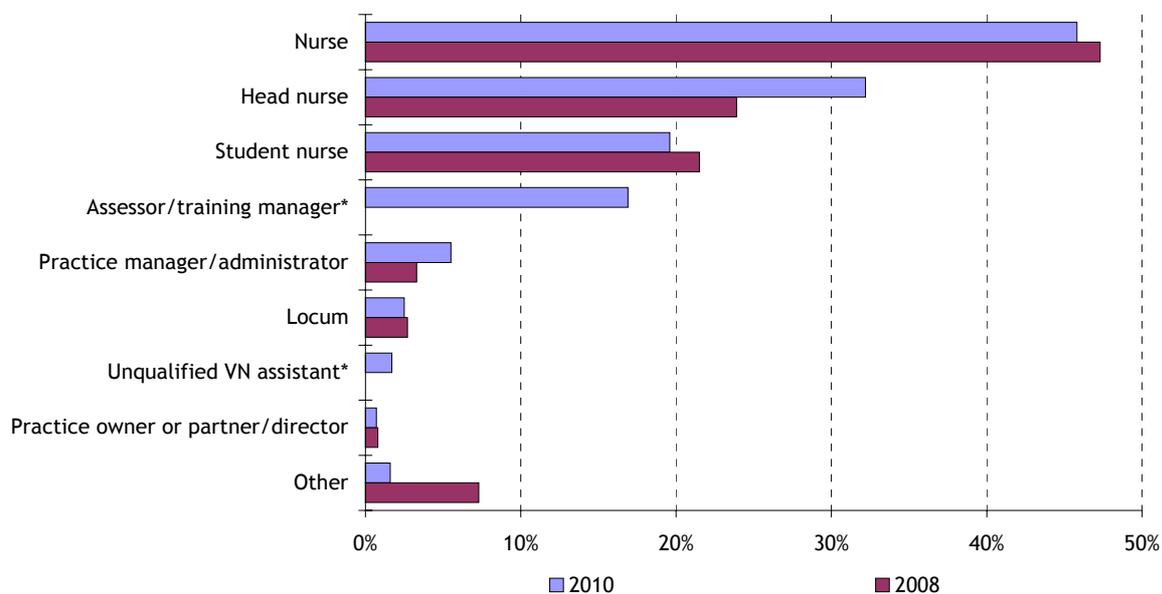


Source: VS Survey, 2010

## VN SURVEY

VNs were also asked their position in their practice. Nearly half say they are nurses (45.8 per cent), which is a slight drop on the proportion in the 2008 survey. Almost one-third say they are a head nurse (32 per cent) which is an eight per cent increase on the proportion in 2008.

**Figure 8.7: Position in the practice, VN respondents**



Note: 'Other' responses given include specialist nurse (behaviourist/theatre) (36 per cent), receptionist (30 per cent), qualified VN assistant (15 per cent), laboratory (13 per cent) and cleaner (4 per cent); \*No data for 2008

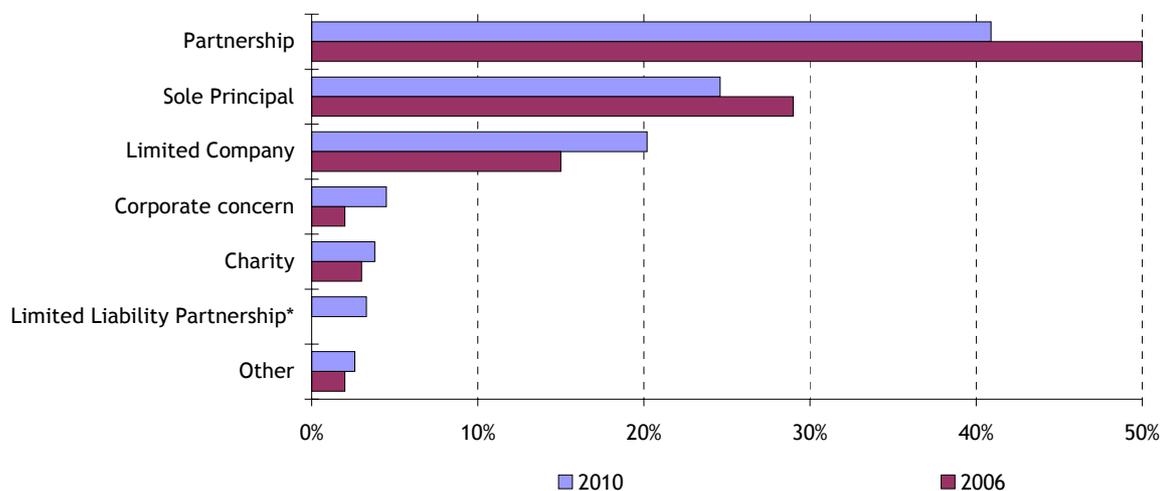
Source: VN Survey, 2010 and 2008

There is also a slight drop in the proportion of student nurses and those ticking 'other' this year, with a corresponding increase in the proportion of practice managers/administrators (see Figure 8.7).

Fifty-four per cent of those working as a locum work across more than one practice, with the number of practices ranging from two to six, with an average (mean) of three. Seventy-nine per cent work in two or three practices.

## 8.8 PRACTICE OWNERSHIP

## VS SURVEY

**Figure 8.8: Practice ownership, VS respondents**

Note: \*No data for 2006

Source: VS Survey, 2010 and 2006

The ownership of practices in which respondents work, including only those who say they are employed within the profession and working within clinical veterinary practice, is shown in Figure 8.8. Forty-one per cent have partnership ownership, whilst a quarter are owned by a sole principal - both showing a decline on the 2006 findings. However, there is a small rise in the proportion of ownership by a corporate concern, and limited company. The slight difference in proportions on the 2006 findings could have been attributed in part to the additional option of Limited Liability Partnership offered in the 2010 survey. However on further analysis, excluding this option from the 2010 analysis still produces proportions that indicate a reduction on Sole Principal and Partnership ownership since 2006 (see Table 8.2).

**Table 8.2: Practice ownership, VS respondents, percentage**

|                                | Per cent<br>2010 | Per cent 2010<br>(excluding limited<br>liability partnership) | Per cent<br>2006 |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---|------------------|
| Sole Principal                 | 24.6             | 25.4  | 29               |
| Partnership                    | 40.9             | 42.3  | 50               |
| Limited Liability Partnership* | 3.3              |   |                  |
| Limited Company                | 20.2             | 20.9  | 15               |
| Corporate concern              | 4.5              | 4.7   | 2                |
| Charity                        | 3.8              | 3.9   | 3                |
| Other                          | 2.6              | 2.7   | 2                |

Note: \*Option not available in 2006 survey

Source: VS Survey, 2010 and 2006

## 8.9 NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE PRACTICE

## VS SURVEY

Respondents were asked about the number of different categories of people in their practices. Table 8.3 gives the range and average numbers of people in each position in the practice, drawing from the 2010 and, where possible, the 2006 surveys. The range of full-time assistants has risen significantly since 2006, as has the range of qualified (listed) VNs and other staff.

**Table 8.3: Number of practices working in, VS respondents**

|   | 2010     |              |                                   | 2006    |              |                                   |
|---|----------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
|   | Range    | Mean average | Modal ('typical') values          | Range   | Mean average | Modal ('typical') values          |
| Partners/Directors/Owners                         | 0 to 50  | 2.05         | 72% said 1,2 or 3                 |         |              |                                   |
| Full-time Assistants/Employees                    | 0 to 280 | 4.19         | 58% said 1,2,3 or 4               | 0 to 64 | 3            | 25% said 1,2, or 3                |
| Part-time Assistants/Employees                    | 0 to 95  | 1.2          | 40% said 1 or 2 45% said none     |         |              |                                   |
| Locums  | 0 to 14  | 0.26         | 82% said none 14% said 1          | 0 to 6  | 0.2          | 88% said none 10% said 1          |
| Partners/Directors/Owners (no vet qualifications) | 0 to 50  | 0.13         | 91% said none 8% said 1           |         |              |                                   |
| Practice Manager                                  | 0 to 40  | 0.57         | 49% said none 46% said 1          | 0 to 20 | 0.5          | 55% said none 40% said 1          |
| Qualified (listed) VNs                            | 0 to 140 | 1.81         | 57% said none 11% said 1          | 0 to 75 | 2.7          | 31% said none 50% said 1          |
| Qualified (registered) VNs                        | 0 to 120 | 2.15         | 54% said none 30% said 1,2,3 or 4 |         |              |                                   |
| Qualified (unlisted) VNs                          | 0 to 25  | 0.24         | 91% said none 6% said 1 or 2      | 0 to 40 | 0.5          | 81% said none 9% said 1           |
| Student VNs                                       | 0 to 30  | 1.42         | 47% said none 32% said 1 or 2     | 0 to 73 | 1.4          | 50% said none 38% said 1,2, or 3  |
| Qualified VCA, ANA                                | 0 to 10  | 0.21         | 89% said none 6% said 1           |         |              |                                   |
| Other qualified clinical staff                    | 0 to 130 | 0.17         | 94% said none                     |         |              |                                   |
| Unqualified VN Assistant                          | 0 to 100 | 1.11         | 57% said none 16% said 1          |         |              |                                   |
| Other non-qualified clinical staff                | 0 to 30  | 0.47         | 85% said none 5% said 1           |         |              |                                   |
| Clerical/Reception staff                          | 0 to 50  | 4.06         | 19% said none 47% said 1,2,3 or 4 |         |              |                                   |
| Domestic cleaning staff                           | 0 to 20  | 0.63         | 62% said none 33% said 1 or 2     |         |              |                                   |
| Other staff                                       | 0 to 800 | 0.71         | 82% said none 9% said 1           | 0 to 53 | 3.7          | 27% said none 44% said 1,2,3 or 4 |

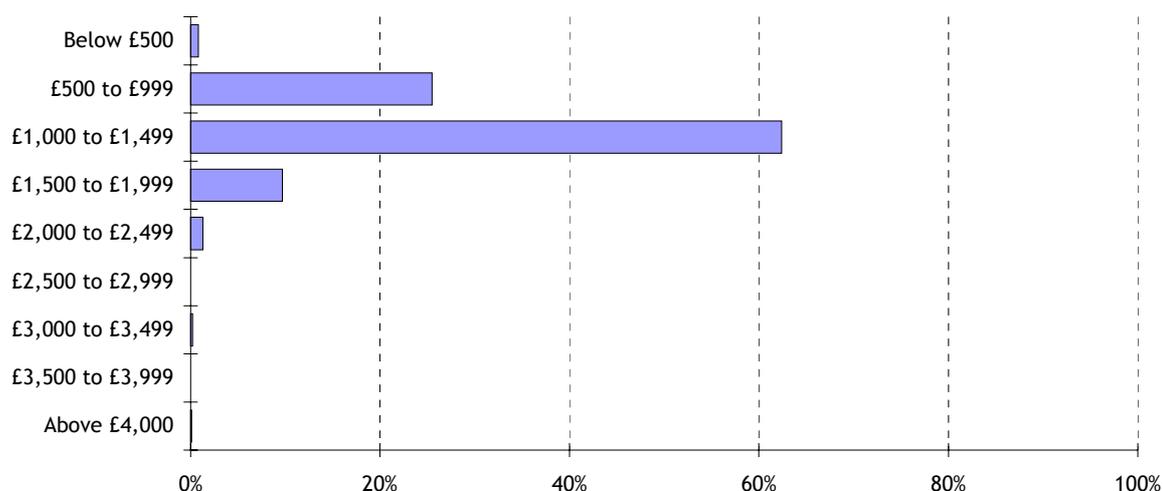
Source: VS Survey, 2010 and 2006

## 8.10 SALARY

### VN SURVEY

The average (mean) take-home pay (after tax and deductions), in the month prior to survey completion, for respondents working full-time within clinical veterinary practice is £1,171.44, ranging from £0 to £13,000; 98 per cent took home less than £2,000. The high end of the range indicates some misunderstanding of the question. Just 0.1 took home in excess of £4,000. By removing these extreme upper outliers, the average take-home pay reduces to £1,162.48, ranging from 0 to £3,800 (see Figure 8.9).

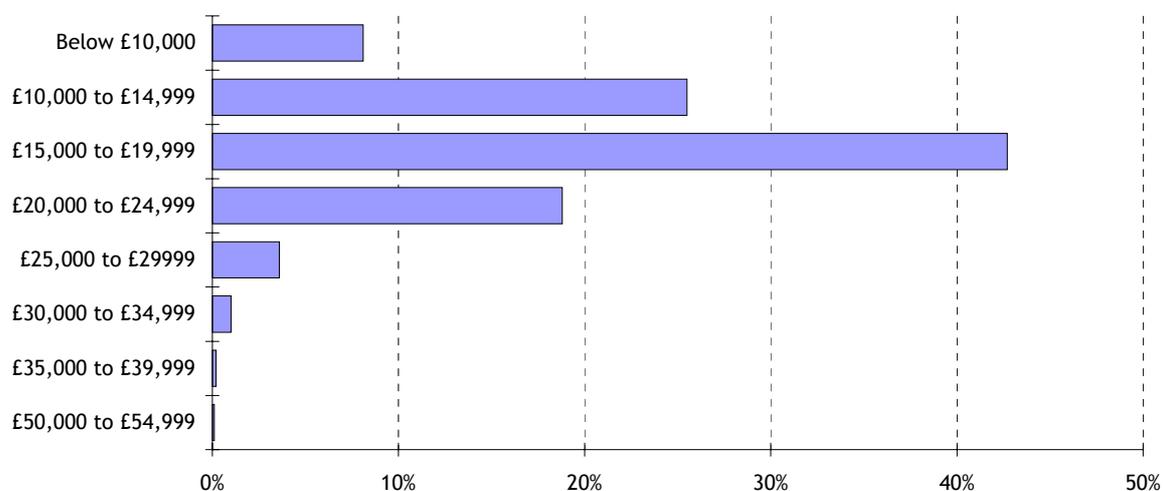
**Figure 8.9: Monthly take home pay last month, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010

The average (mean) basic annual salary (excluding unsocial hours, benefits and overtime) of respondents working full-time within clinical veterinary practice is £16,378.92, ranging from £600 to £50,000, with the majority (87 per cent) earning between £10,000 and £24,999. Eight per cent of respondents earn less than £10,000 (Figure 8.10).

**Figure 8.10: Basic annual salary, VN respondents**



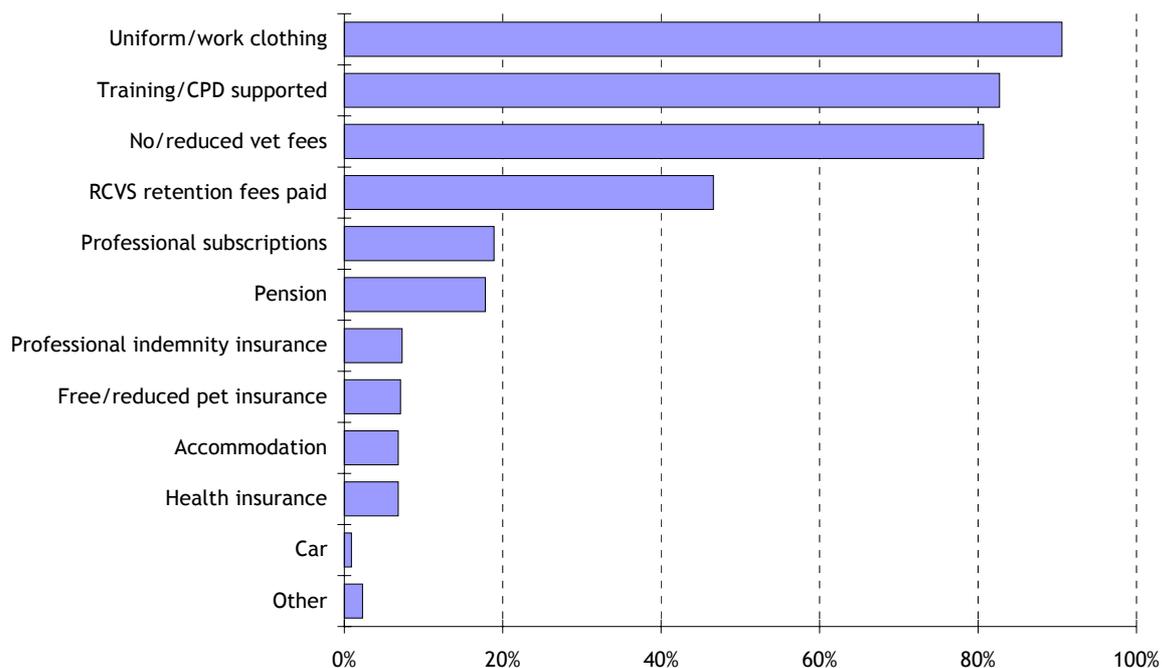
Source: VN Survey, 2010

## 8.11 PRACTICE PROVISIONS

## VN SURVEY

When asked whether their practice provides them with certain provisions and benefits, the vast majority receive a uniform or work clothing (91 per cent), over three-quarters receive no/reduced vet fees or training/CPD support (81 and 83 per cent respectively) and nearly half (47 per cent) have RCVS retention fees paid for (see Figure 8.11).

**Figure 8.11: Practice provisions, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010

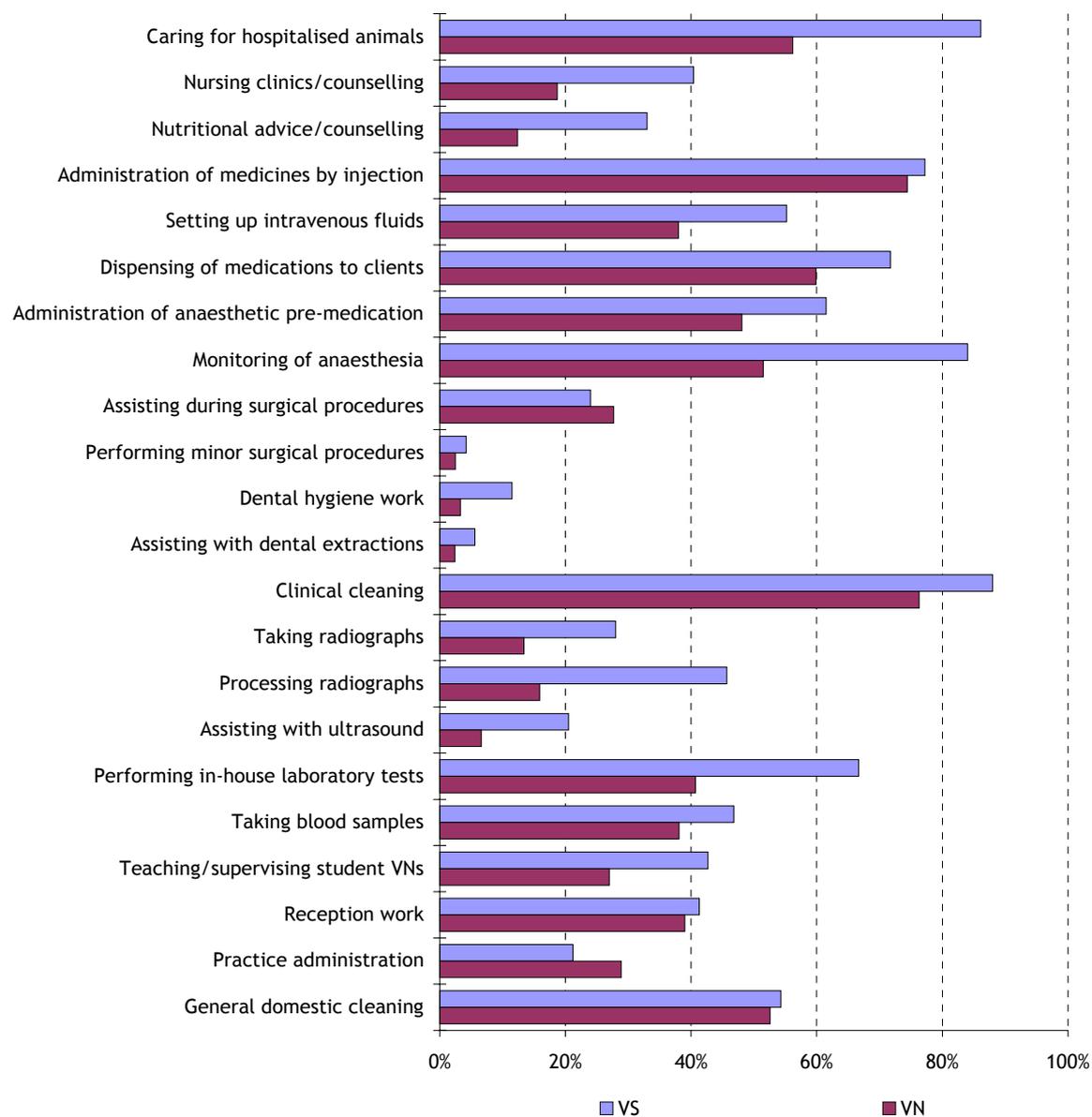
## 8.12 THE WORK OF VNS

## VS SURVEY

For the first time this year, VSs were asked to indicate the clinical and non-clinical work VNs undertake in their practice and how often. If there were no VNs in their practice they were asked to omit the question. The responses from those who do have VNs in their practice are shown in Figure 8.12. Eighty-six per cent of VSs who are currently working within clinical practice say that VNs care for hospitalised animals every day and nearly three-quarters believe that VNs rarely/never assist with dental extractions or perform minor surgical procedures (see Appendix Table 3.9).

## VN SURVEY

Over half of veterinary nurses say they care for hospitalised animals, dispense medications to clients and monitor anaesthesia every day. Around three-quarters say they administer medicines by injection and undertake clinical cleaning every day. Over forty per cent say they never perform minor surgical procedures or assist with dental extractions (see Figure 8.12).

**Figure 8.12: VS and VN views on the work of VNs in practice, percentage who state that VNs undertake the activity everyday**

Source: VS and VN Surveys, 2010

When compared with the findings from the VS survey it is evident that veterinary surgeons tend to overestimate how often VNs spend on many of the tasks such as caring for hospitalised animals, monitoring of anaesthesia, processing and taking radiographs and performing in-house laboratory tests.

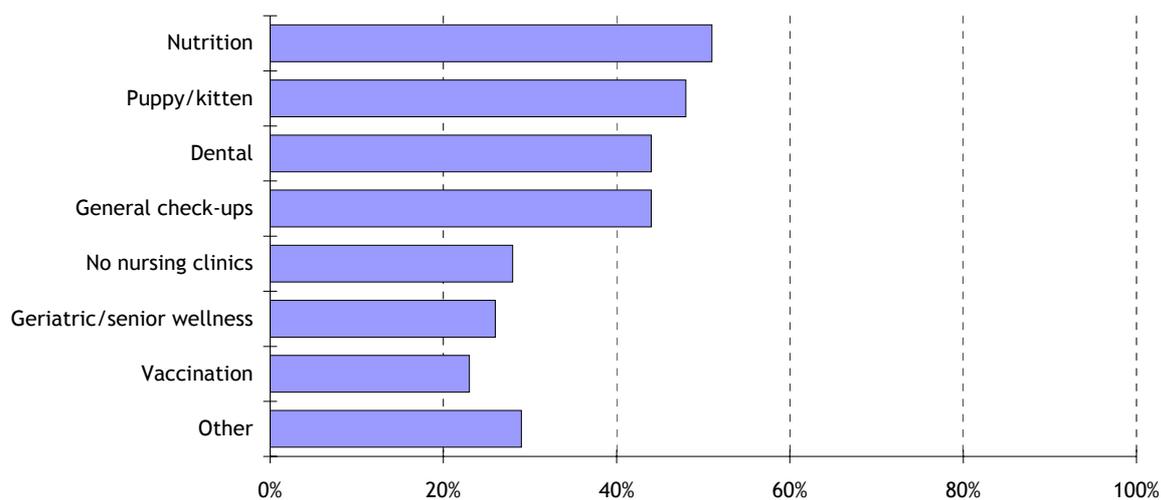
Between half and three-quarters of unqualified VNs say they care for hospitalised animals, carry out reception work, undertake clinical cleaning and perform general domestic cleaning everyday. Around three-quarters say they never perform minor surgical procedures or teach and supervise student VNs (see Appendix Table 3.10).

## 8.13 NURSING CLINICS

## VN SURVEY

Fifty-one per cent of those current working in clinical practice are involved in nutrition nursing clinics, over 40 per cent are involved in puppy/kitten, dental or general check-up clinics (see Figure 8.13).

**Figure 8.13: Involvement in nursing clinics, VN respondents**



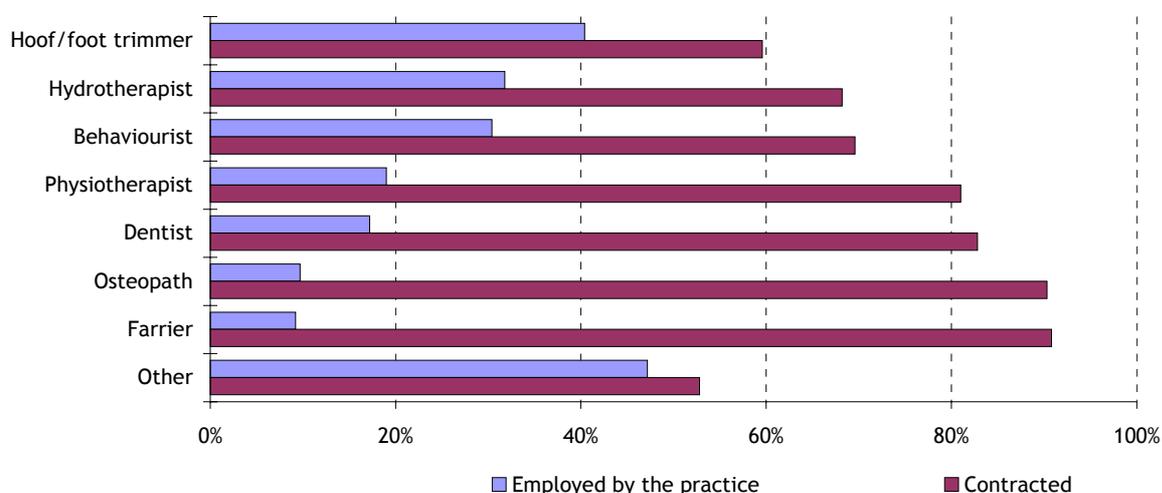
Source: VN Survey, 2010

## 8.14 TECHNICIANS, THERAPISTS, SPECIALISTS AND CONSULTANTS

## VS SURVEY

Twenty-one per cent of VSs working in clinical practice say that they use the services of technicians/therapists in their practice. Of those who do, Figure 8.14 shows whether they are employed or contracted by the practice, by the specific service offered.

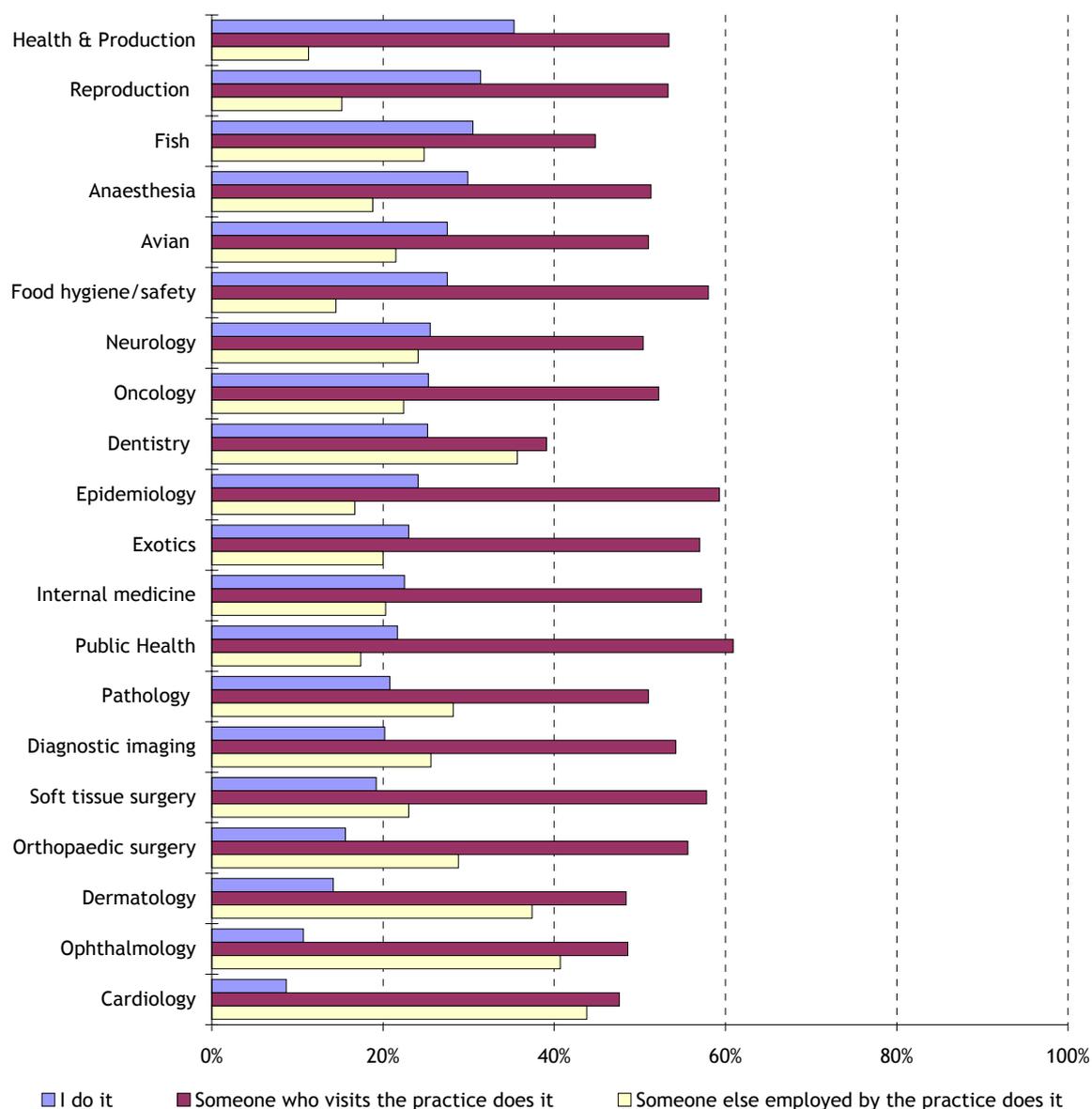
**Figure 8.14: Use of technicians/therapists, VS respondents**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

Thirty-seven per cent of VSs working in clinical practice say that they have clinical specialists/consultants working in their practice. Often these services are offered by someone who visits the practice, for instance sixty-one per cent of those practices offering the services of public health, offer the service through someone who visits the practice. Figure 8.15 provides more detail of the breakdowns by specialism.

**Figure 8.15: Use of clinical specialists/consultants, VS respondents**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

## 8.15 ALLOCATION OF WORK HOURS

### VS SURVEY

Table 8.4 gives a breakdown of the time spent on different animals and other practice activities, compared across previous surveys. The table shows a slight increase in the proportion of working time spent on dogs between 2006 and 2010. Overall, the time spent on small animals continues to increase, while farm animal work is decreasing.

**Table 8.4: Breakdown of VS working time now, mean percentage**

| Species/Discipline/Activity | 2010 | 2006 | 2002 | 2000 | 1998 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Dogs**                      | 35.7 | 33.5 |      |      |      |
| Cats**                      | 29.1 | 29.1 |      |      |      |
| Rabbits**                   | 4.7  | 4.8  |      |      |      |
| Birds**                     | 1.0  | 1.1  |      |      |      |
| Other small animals**       | 1.8  | 1.6  |      |      |      |
| Total small animals         | 72.3 | 70.1 | 73.5 | 68   | 66   |
| Horses                      | 10.0 | 9.2  | 8.4  | 9    | 11   |
| Beef cattle**               | 2.7  | 3    |      |      |      |
| Dairy cattle**              | 4.6  | 5.2  |      |      |      |
| Total cattle                | 7.2  | 8.2  | 7.5  | 9    | 14   |
| Sheep                       | 1.1  | 1.3  | 1.3  | 2    | 4    |
| Pigs                        | 0.5  | 0.5  | 0.4  | 1    | 2    |
| Poultry                     | 0.3  | 0.4  | 0.2  | 0    | 0.3  |
| Exotics*                    | 0.7  | 0.6  | 1    | 1    |      |
| Meat Hygiene                | 0.2  | 1.1  | 1.1  | 1    | 1    |
| Fish for food*              | 0.1  | 0.1  | 0.1  | 0    |      |
| Local Veterinary Inspector* | 2.3  | 2.7  | 2.7  | 2    |      |
| Practice mgmt/admin         | 5.3  | 5    | 3    | 6    |      |
| Other                       | 0.7  | 0.8  | 0.4  | 1    | 1    |

Note: \*No data for 1998; \*\*No data 1998 to 2002

Source: VS Survey, 2010

**Table 8.5: VS working time now compared to on-call time, mean percentage**

| Activity                   | Working time 2010 | Working time 2006 | On-call 2010 | On-call 2006 |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Small animals              | 72.3              | 70.1              | 64           | 64.2         |
| Horses                     | 10                | 9.2               | 14.5         | 13.9         |
| Cattle                     | 7.2               | 8.2               | 12.4         | 14           |
| Sheep                      | 1.1               | 1.3               | 1.8          | 2.1          |
| Pigs                       | 0.5               | 0.5               | .35          | 0.2          |
| Poultry                    | 0.3               | 0.4               | .22          | 0.3          |
| Exotics                    | 0.8               | 0.6               | .44          | 0.3          |
| Meat Hygiene               | 0.2               | 1.1               | .02          | 0.1          |
| Fish for food              | 0.1               | 0.1               | .08          | 0.1          |
| Local Veterinary Inspector | 2.3               | 2.7               | .14          | 0.2          |
| Practice management        | 5.3               | 5                 | 1.61         | 2.4          |
| Other                      | 0.7               | 0.8               | .84          | 1.4          |

Source: VS Survey, 2010 and 2006

As shown in Table 8.5, there is a slight increase of two per cent in the proportion of working time spent on small animals since 2006. There is also a very slight decline in the proportion of working and on-call time spent with cattle.

Table 8.6 shows past, present and future predictions of working time breakdowns. Text in red shows where there are discrepancies, however minor, between the 2006 predictions and the current proportions of time spent on various species. Whilst it was predicted that by 2011 the amount of time spent with small animals would decrease, in particular that spent with dogs, in 2010 the table shows that the actual trend is for an increase in the proportion of time spent with dogs, and a corresponding decrease in the proportion of time spent with rabbits and birds.

**Table 8.6: Past, present and future predictions of VS working time breakdowns, percentages**

|                               | 2001<br>(actual) | 2006<br>(actual) | 2010<br>(actual) | 2011 (2006<br>prediction) | 2015 (2010<br>prediction) | 2006<br>predicted<br>trend | Actual<br>trend |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Dogs                          | 33.8             | 33.5             | 35.7             | 31.7                      | 33.1                      | ↓                          | ↑               |
| Cats                          | 27.6             | 29.1             | 29.1             | 29.8                      | 28.9                      | ↑                          | Same            |
| Rabbits                       | 3.4              | 4.8              | 4.7              | 5.3                       | 4.9                       | ↑                          | ↓               |
| Birds                         | 1                | 1.1              | 1.0              | 1.1                       | 1.0                       | Same                       | ↓               |
| Other small<br>animals        | 1.2              | 1.6              | 1.8              | 1.5                       | 1.6                       | ↓                          | ↑               |
| Total small<br>animals        | 67               | 70.1             | 72.3             | 69.4                      | 69.5                      | ↓                          | ↑               |
| Horses                        | 9.2              | 9.2              | 10.0             | 9.8                       | 11.0                      | ↑                          | ↑               |
| Beef cattle                   | 3.8              | 3                | 2.7              | 2.5                       | 2.6                       | ↓                          | ↓               |
| Dairy cattle                  | 6.8              | 5.2              | 4.6              | 4.7                       | 4.8                       | ↓                          | ↓               |
| Total cattle                  | 10.6             | 8.2              | 7.2              | 7.2                       | 7.3                       | ↓                          | ↓               |
| Sheep                         | 1.6              | 1.3              | 1.1              | 1                         | 1.1                       | ↓                          | ↓               |
| Pigs                          | 0.8              | 0.5              | 0.5              | 0.5                       | 0.4                       | Same                       | Same            |
| Poultry                       | 0.5              | 0.4              | 0.3              | 0.4                       | 0.3                       | Same                       | ↓               |
| Exotics                       | 0.6              | 0.6              | 0.7              | 1                         | 0.9                       | ↑                          | ↑               |
| Meat Hygiene                  | 1.3              | 1.1              | 0.2              | 0.8                       | 0.1                       | ↓                          | ↓               |
| Fish for food                 | 0.1              | 0.1              | 0.1              | 0.1                       | 0.1                       | Same                       | Same            |
| Local Veterinary<br>Inspector | 3.2              | 2.7              | 2.3              | 1.8                       | 1.5                       | ↓                          | ↓               |
| Practice<br>mgmt/admin        | 3.7              | 5                | 5.3              | 6.1                       | 6.4                       | ↑                          | ↑               |
| Other                         | 1.4              | 0.8              | 0.7              | 1.5                       | 1.1                       | ↑                          | ↓               |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

## VN SURVEY

Table 8.7 shows the average working time spent with various species or on various activities. The table shows that the highest proportion of time, on average, is spent with small animals, however, the proportion of time spent has decreased by 11 per cent since 2008. However, this year we added the option of 'cleaning', which may have previously been included in work with small animals in previous years.

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**Table 8.7: Breakdown of average VN working time, mean percentage**

| <b>Species/Discipline/Activity</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2008</b> |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Dogs                               | 28.4        | 33.9        |
| Cats                               | 24.2        | 29.2        |
| Rabbits                            | 5.9         | 6.7         |
| Birds                              | 1.4         | 1.4         |
| Others (eg tortoises, gerbils)     | 2.1         | 1.7         |
| Small animals                      | 61.9        | 72.9        |
| Exotics                            | 0.96        | 1           |
| Horses                             | 1.7         | 1.7         |
| Farm animals                       | 0.5         | 0.5         |
| Practice mgmt/admin                | 9.9         | 11.5        |
| Reception                          | 10.8        | 10.9        |
| Cleaning*                          | 17.3        | 0           |
| Other                              | 1.6         | 2.1         |

Note: \*No data for 2008

Source: VN Survey, 2010 and 2008

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The proportion of on-call time spent with various species or activities is shown in Table 8.8.

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**Table 8.8: Breakdown of average VN on-call time**

| <b>Species/Discipline/Activity</b> | <b>Mean percentage</b> |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Dogs                               | 2.9                    |
| Cats                               | 2.6                    |
| Rabbits                            | 1.5                    |
| Birds                              | 1.2                    |
| Others (eg tortoises, gerbils)     | 1.2                    |
| Total small animals                | 93.4                   |
| Exotics*                           | 1.1                    |
| Horses                             | 1.2                    |
| Farm animals                       | 1.1                    |
| Practice management/administration | 1.1                    |
| Reception                          | 1.3                    |
| Cleaning                           | 1.7                    |
| Other                              | 1                      |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

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## 8.16 ROUTINE VISITS

### VS SURVEY

Sixty-eight per cent of those who are currently working in clinical veterinary practice personally carry out routine (*ie* not out-of-hours) visits to their clients. When asked about the average and maximum one-way distances travelled, respondents say:

- They travel between one and 315 miles to an average routine call, with a mean of 8.3 miles and median of five miles; 93.5 per cent travel less than 20 miles. This shows little difference to that found in the 2006 survey: mean 8.2 miles, median five miles and 97 per cent travelled 20 miles or less.
- They travel a maximum distance to a routine call of between one and 1,000 miles, with a mean of 25.7 miles and a median of 20 miles; 91 per cent travelled less than 50 miles. Again, this shows little change on the 2006 findings: mean 24.2 miles, median 19 miles and 95 per cent travelled 50 miles or less.

The very long one-way distances cited by a small number of respondents (2.1 per cent cited 100 miles or more as the maximum distance travelled and 0.5 per cent cited 100 miles or more as the average distance travelled) suggest that there may have been some misinterpretation of these questions.

### VN SURVEY

Twenty-eight per cent of respondents currently working within clinical veterinary practice personally carry out visits to clients

## 8.17 24/7 EMERGENCY COVER

### VS SURVEY

For the first time this year, respondents working in clinical veterinary practice were asked about their practice's approach to providing 24/7 emergency cover. Of those working in practice, sixty per cent say that their practice generally covers its out-of-hours work itself (60.5 per cent), whilst a quarter (25.6 per cent) use a dedicated out-of-hours services provider. Less than one per cent do not take steps to provide for 24/7 cover (see Appendix Table 3.11). Of the 3.9 per cent who responded 'other', responses included: mixed (53 per cent), and practice is a dedicated out-of-hours practice (43 per cent).

Sixty-one per cent of those who are employed in the UK say their practice covers out-of-hours work compared with 65 per cent from Ireland, 49 per cent of those working in Australia, 40 per cent of those in Canada and 38 per cent working in the USA. Less than one per cent (0.5 per cent) of those employed in the UK say their practice does not provide 24/7 cover compared to 1.9 per cent in Ireland, 4.1 per cent in Australia, eight per cent in Canada, 5.5 per cent on USA and 0 per cent in New Zealand (see Appendix Table 3.12).

In 2008, research was undertaken by Noesis Market Intelligence (formally Cognition) on behalf of the RCVS to collect majority views and opinions of those in the profession who are most likely to be adversely affected by the 24/7 Working Time Regulations. The research involved 440 telephone interviews with veterinary surgeons who have clinical responsibilities. When asked whether the practice generally covers its out-of-hours work itself, around three-quarters of respondents said yes, compared with sixty per cent in the current survey.

## 8.18 OUT-OF-HOURS WORK

### VS SURVEY

Two-thirds of those who work in clinical veterinary practice personally undertake out-of-hours work (66 per cent). The average (mean) number of vets for whom respondents say they are on-call averages seven and ranges from 0 to 200; however, only 1.6 per cent are on-call for more than 30 vets. The majority of vets (86 per cent) are on-call for ten vets or less.

Over half (59 per cent) of VSs currently working in clinical veterinary practice undertake domiciliary visits out-of-hours to provide emergency veterinary care. Those who do were asked how long it takes, in minutes, to the furthest client from the furthest practice in their out-of-hours rota. This ranged from 0 to 999 minutes with a mean average time of 43 minutes. One quarter of these respondents (25 per cent) travel between 30 and 34.9 minutes to their furthest client. Forty-three per cent travel less than 35 minutes.

Respondents to the telephone surveys undertaken by Noesis in 2008 were also asked how far in time it is to the furthest client from the furthest practice in their out-of-hours rota. On average the furthest client was 49 minutes away from the practice on-call. The mean desired time was 42 minutes. This survey found a mean average time of 43 minutes.

Respondents were also asked the maximum distance, in miles, to their furthest client. This ranged from 0 to 700 miles with a mean distance of 28.5 miles. It should be noted that whilst the range seems high here, only 1.2 per cent of respondents travel 100 miles or more. Seventy-four per cent travel less than 35 miles. The mean average distance travelled, in miles, to the furthest client from the furthest practice in their out-of-hours rota is 9.5 miles, ranging from 0 to 150 miles.

## 8.19 24/7 WORKING

### VS SURVEY

Half of respondents have the minimum 11-hour rest period every 24 hours that is specified by the Working Time Regulations. Of the fifty per cent who do not, 11.6 per cent have signed up to a workforce agreement that provides other compensatory rest, 68.6 per cent have not and the remaining 19.9 per cent do not know.

Of those who do not have a minimum 11-hours rest period and have not signed up to a workforce agreement, only 12.7 per cent have discussed a workforce agreement for compensatory rest with their employer.

Eighty-eight per cent of those working in clinical veterinary practice receive at least two rest days in every 14 day period and 86 per cent receive at least 20 days paid holiday per year (plus bank holidays, and pro-rata for part-time workers).

### VN SURVEY

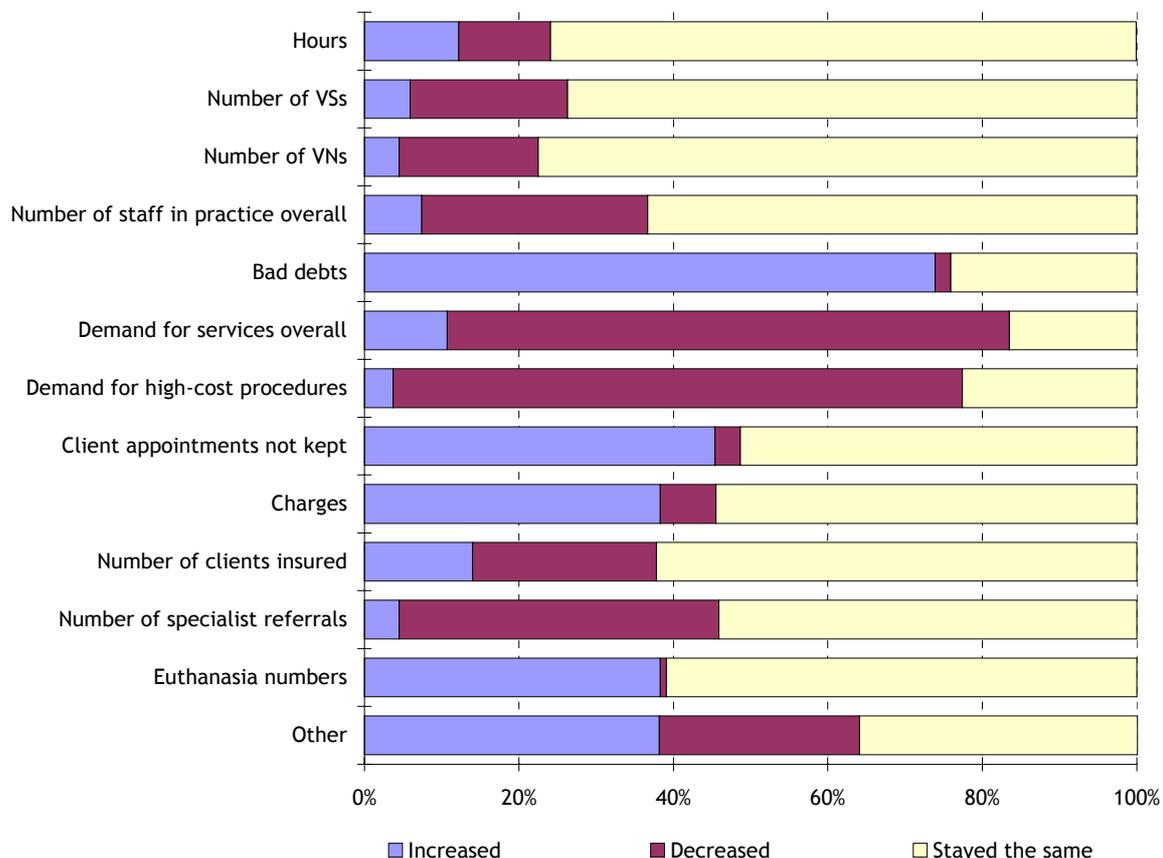
Eighty-three per cent of respondents receive an 11-hour rest period every 24 hours. Of the 17 per cent who do not, 10.5 per cent have signed up to a workforce agreement that provides other compensatory rest, 61.8 per cent have not and 27.8 per cent do not know. Twenty-one per cent of those who have not signed up to such an agreement have discussed it with their employer.

Ninety-five per cent of respondents have at least two days' rest every 14 days and a similar proportion (93 per cent) have at least 20 days' paid holiday per year (plus bank holidays), pro-rata for part-time.

8.20 IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC CLIMATE

VS SURVEY

Figure 8.16: Impact of the economic climate, VS respondents



Source: VS Survey, 2010

This year, for the first time, respondents were asked whether they think that the current economic climate is having an impact on the practice(s) where they work. Over two-thirds say it has/is (69 per cent), ten per cent do not know. Those who feel the current economic climate is having an impact on the practice(s) where they work were asked about the kind of impact it has had and whether various elements had increased, decreased or stayed the same as a result. Figure 8.16 shows the results, and Appendix Table 3.13 highlights (in red) where there have been big increases or decreases. It is apparent that the numbers of staff in some practices have decreased in line with the demand for services, especially high cost procedures. The majority report an increase in bad debts and a substantial minority report an increase in euthanasia numbers. Of the 317 people who said the other elements have increased, decreased or stayed the same, these included: a reduction in locum work, on-call/out-of-hours reductions, increases in the use of cheaper options (ie advice over the telephone/euthanasia/animals signed over), an increase in insurance claims and RSPCA work, a reduction in budgets and an increase in complaints about charges.

**Key comparisons between VSs and VNs**

- Eighty-six per cent of VSs who are currently working within clinical practice say that VNs care for hospitalised animals every day, compared to just over half of VNs.

- Nearly three-quarters of VSs believe that VNs rarely/never assist with dental extractions or perform minor surgical procedures, whilst just over forty per cent of VNs say they never perform minor surgical procedures or assist with dental extractions.
- VSs tend to overestimate how often VNs spend on many of the tasks such as caring for hospitalised animals, monitoring of anaesthesia, processing and taking radiographs and performing in-house laboratory tests, when compared to VN responses.
- VSs are more likely to not have a minimum 11-hour rest period in 24 hours than VNs. Half of VSs do not have a minimum 11-hour rest period, and of these 11.6 per cent have signed up to a workforce agreement that provides other compensatory rest. Meanwhile 17 per cent of VNs do not have an 11-hour rest period, of which 10.5 per cent have signed up to a workforce agreement. However, similar proportions of VSs and VNs receive at least two days' rest every 14 days, with only a slightly higher (seven per cent) proportion of VNs receiving this.

#### **Evidence of trends**

- There is indication of a general decline in the average number of hours worked by VNs working within clinical veterinary practice in a typical week across all types of practice since 2008.
- There seems to be a slight increase on the 2008 survey findings in the proportion of VNs working within clinical veterinary practice who intend to stay in clinical practice for the foreseeable future.
- The proportion of VSs who are sole principals in the practice in which they work has nearly halved since 2002.
- Nearly half of VNs say they are nurses in their practice, which is a slight drop on the proportion in the 2008 survey. Almost one-third say they are a head nurse which is an eight per cent increase on the proportion in 2008. There is also a slight drop in the proportion of student nurses and those ticking 'other' this year, with a corresponding increase in the proportion of practice managers/administrators.
- Forty-one per cent of VS respondents working within clinical veterinary practice say that their practice is under partnership ownership, whilst a quarter are owned by a sole principal, with a further 20 per cent owned by a limited company – all showing a slight decline on the 2006 survey findings. However, there is a small rise in the proportion of ownership by a corporate concern.
- The mean number of full-time assistants/employees in VNs' practices is four. This is a one per cent rise of the average of three found in 2006.
- There is a two per cent increase in the proportion of VSs' working time spent on dogs between 2006 and 2010. There is also a very slight decline in the proportion of working and on-call time spent with cattle. Overall, the time spent on small animals continues to increase, while farm animal work is decreasing. Whilst it was predicted that by 2011 the amount of time spent with small animals would decrease, in particular that spent with dogs, in 2010 the actual trend shows an increase in the proportion of time spent with dogs, with a corresponding decrease in the proportion of time spent with rabbits and birds.
- The highest proportion of VN working time, on average, is spent with small animals; however, the proportion of time spent has decreased by 11 per cent since 2008. This year we added the option of 'cleaning' which may have previously been included in work with small animals in previous years.

## 9 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FURTHER EDUCATION

Information presented in this chapter refers to the 84 per cent of VVs and 96 per cent of VNs in current work who are working within clinical veterinary practice. Those respondents not in current work are defined as follows: fully retired, taking a career break or unemployed.

### 9.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

#### **VS Survey**

Most CPD received is funded by employers/practices or respondents themselves.

Being on leave/holidays is the most common reason for days away from work.

Very few days away from work are due to illness.

RCVS certificates are particularly popular as qualifications that VVs are currently studying/planning to study towards.

Books/journals/articles are the most used CPD method.

#### **VN Survey**

Most CPD received is funded by employers/practices or is free.

Being on leave/holidays is the most common reason for days away from work.

Very few days away from work are due to illness.

RCVS diplomas are particularly popular as qualifications that VNs are currently studying/planning to study towards.

Books/journals/articles are the most used CPD method.

## 9.2 DAYS AWAY FROM THE WORKPLACE

Respondents were asked how many days they had spent away from the workplace in the last 12 months due to CPD (giving and receiving), holidays, veterinary politics, illness, maternity leave, compassionate leave and other reasons. Mean responses are presented in Table 9.1.

**Table 9.1: VS and VN average (mean) days away from work by reason**

| Reason for absence         | VN   |      | VS   |      |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|
|                            | 2010 | 2008 | 2010 | 2006 |
| Giving CPD                 | 0.3  | 0.5  | 1.1  | 1.1  |
| Receiving CPD              | 3.0  | 3.1  | 4.9  | 5.6  |
| Holidays                   | 19.4 | 19.5 | 21.1 | 21.6 |
| Veterinary politics        | 0.3  | 0.3  | 0.8  | 1.0  |
| Illness                    | 3.8  | 3.4  | 2.4  | 2.0  |
| Maternity/Paternity leave* | 6.8  |      | 4.8  |      |
| Compassionate leave        | 0.5  | 0.4  | 0.3  |      |
| Caring for dependents*     | 0.4  |      | 0.3  |      |
| Other                      | 1.7  | 0.8  | 1.1  | 2.4  |

Note: \*No data available for previous years

Source: VS Survey, 2010, 2006 and VN Survey, 2010, 2008

### VS SURVEY

The majority of respondents (82 per cent) have not given any CPD over the past year. This was the same as the result found for 2006. In contrast, however, only 17 per cent have not received any CPD compared with 12 per cent in 2006. The modal number of CPD days received is five per cent with a median of four. 'Typical' (modal) time spent away on holiday is 20 days. Holiday time has stayed the same since 2006.

The amount of time spent on veterinary politics decreases slightly from one in 2006 to 0.8 in 2010. In terms of illness, only 2.4 days on average were lost per respondent. 62 per cent of respondents had not had any time away from the workplace due to illness over the past year. Other reasons for being away include compassionate leave (eight per cent), maternity/paternity leave (five per cent), caring for dependents (five per cent) and other (five per cent).

In terms of respondents with dependent children, there were some differences between this group and the wider sample (see Table 9.2). The mean number of days spent on CPD (giving and receiving) were not very different (1.1 and 5 days respectively). There was also only a slight difference in average time spent on veterinary politics (1.1 compared to 0.8 days for VSs overall) and compassionate leave (0.2 compared to 0.3 days for VSs overall). This group of respondents did, however, spend slightly less days on holidays (20.8 compared to 21.1 days for VSs overall), less time off due to illness (1.9 compared to 2.4 days) and very slightly more caring for dependents (0.5 compared to 0.3 days).

Figures for respondents with dependent adults were also computed (see Table 9.2). Mean number of days spent giving (1.4 compared to 1.1 days for VSs overall) and receiving (5.5 compared to 4.9 days) CPD were somewhat higher than the overall sample. It was also higher for time spent away from work due to illness (3.3 compared to 2.4 days), caring for dependents (1.1 compared to 0.3 days) and other reasons (3.1 compared to 1.1 days). There was little difference in terms of time spent away from work on holidays (20.9 compared to

21.1 days), veterinary politics (1.1 compared to 0.8 days) and compassionate leave (0.1 compared to 0.3 days). On average less time was spent away on maternity/paternity leave (1.4 compared to 4.8 days).

**Table 9.2: Average (mean) days away from work by reason and dependents, VS respondents**

|                           | all VS | with dependent children | with dependent adults |
|---------------------------|--------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Giving CPD                | 1.1    | 1.1                     | 1.4                   |
| Receiving CPD             | 4.9    | 5.0                     | 5.5                   |
| Holidays                  | 21.1   | 20.8                    | 20.9                  |
| Veterinary politics       | 0.8    | 1.1                     | 1.1                   |
| Illness                   | 2.4    | 1.9                     | 3.3                   |
| Maternity/Paternity leave | 4.8    | 12.5                    | 1.4                   |
| Compassionate leave       | 0.3    | 0.2                     | 0.1                   |
| Caring for dependents     | 0.3    | 0.5                     | 1.1                   |
| Other                     | 1.1    | 0.6                     | 3.1                   |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

## VN SURVEY

Similar to VSs, the most common reason for VNs being away from work is holidays. On average, respondents had 19.4 days' holiday. The same figure for 2008 was 19.5 so there has been little change between the years. VNs appear to be very healthy overall as the average number of days spent away from work due to illness is very low, although the figure has increased marginally from 2008. The mean number of days away due to illness for nurses is slightly higher than the mean value for VSs. VSs are least likely to be away from work for the reasons: giving CPD, veterinary politics, caring for dependants and compassionate leave.

## 9.3 FURTHER WORK-RELATED QUALIFICATIONS

### VS SURVEY

**Table 9.3: VS qualifications: other than primary veterinary qualification, percentage**

|   | Held | Studying for | Plan to study for<br>in next 5 yrs |
|---|------|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Bachelors degree (non-veterinary)               | 13.6 | 0.3          | 0.4                                |
| Business-related qualification                  | 2.1  | 0.4          | 1.2                                |
| Certificate (RCVS)                              | 11.2 | 5.5          | 9.3                                |
| Diploma (RCVS European or American College)     | 5.2  | 1.4          | 2.0                                |
| Fellowship (RCVS)                               | 0.9  | 0.1          | 0.3                                |
| Masters degree – veterinary                     | 4.4  | 0.7          | 1.1                                |
| Masters degree – other                          | 4.5  | 0.5          | 0.5                                |
| Overseas qualification                          | 3.6  | 0.5          | 0.5                                |
| PGCE or equivalent teaching qualification       | 1.1  | 0.3          | 0.2                                |
| PhD   | 6.2  | 0.8          | 1.0                                |
| Specialist (RCVS, European or American College) | 4.4  | 1.0          | 1.2                                |
| Other   | 7.1  | 1.7          | 1.2                                |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

Table 9.3 demonstrates that the veterinary profession is a well-qualified professional group. Many respondents hold additional qualifications to their primary veterinary qualification. RCVS certificates are particularly popular as qualifications that VNs are currently studying or planning to study for. Thirty-eight per cent of respondents who held veterinary masters qualifications were overseas-qualified (Appendix Table 3.14). Twenty-four per cent of respondents who held other masters qualifications were overseas qualified (Appendix Table 3.15).

## VN SURVEY

**Table 9.4: VN qualifications: other than primary veterinary nursing qualification, percentage**

|  | Held | Studying for | Plan to study for<br>in next 5 yrs |
|--|------|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Bachelors degree (non-veterinary)              | 7.1  | 1.0          | 1.2                                |
| Masters degree – veterinary                    | 0.2  | 0.1          | 1.3                                |
| Masters degree – other                         | 0.5  | 0.3          | 1.0                                |
| PGCE or equivalent teaching qualification      | 3.1  | 0.8          | 2.1                                |
| PhD  | 0.1  | 0.1          | 0.6                                |
| RCVS DipAVN                                    | 3.0  | 1.3          | 8.7                                |
| Veterinary nursing degree (pre-qualification)  | 3.4  | 2.2          | 0.5                                |
| Veterinary nursing degree (post-qualification) | 2.3  | 0.8          | 3.7                                |
| Other  | 11.9 | 3.6          | 4.4                                |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

The findings presented in Table 9.4 show that overall the percentage of VNs that hold additional qualifications is not as high as that for VNs - Bachelors degrees are the most common additional qualifications held after 'Other' qualifications. Diplomas are particularly popular as qualifications that nurses are planning to study for.

## 9.4 CPD METHODS

### VS SURVEY

Table 9.5 shows the percentage of respondents who have used different CPD methods over the past 12 months, together with the average (mean) hours spent using these methods. The majority of respondents have used books/journals/articles. This was also the most used method in 2006. Weekday and evening courses were also common. Respondents spend the most hours on learning through books/journals/articles. Almost half have used external weekend and in-house courses. Videos/DVDs are relatively infrequently used.

**Table 9.5: CPD methods used (percentage) and average (mean) hours spent in past 12 months, VS respondents**

| CPD method       | Used percentage | Hours |
|------------------|-----------------|-------|
| External weekend | 4               | 6     |
| External weekday | 72              | 16    |
| External evening | 59              | 5     |
| In-house courses | 45              | 3     |
| Videos/DVDs      | 19              | 1     |

| CPD method                                 | Used percentage | Hours |
|--|-----------------|-------|
| Distance learning-online or correspondence | 26              | 6     |
| Books/journals/articles                    | 82              | 30    |
| Seminars                                   | 33              | 3     |
| Other                                      | 6               | 2     |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

Respondents were asked about their preferred CPD methods. The most popular first preferences were weekday courses (57 per cent), weekend courses (14 per cent), evening courses (nine per cent) and distance learning, online or correspondence courses (seven per cent). For the second preference, respondents chose evening courses (23 per cent), books, journals or articles (18 per cent) and weekday courses (14 per cent).

## VN SURVEY

**Table 9.6: CPD methods used (percentage) and average (mean) hours spent in past 12 months, VN respondents**

| CPD method                                 | Used percentage | Hours |
|--|-----------------|-------|
| External weekend                           | 19              | 3     |
| External weekday                           | 37              | 6     |
| External evening                           | 35              | 2     |
| In-house courses                           | 51              | 4     |
| Videos/DVDs                                | 5               | 0     |
| Distance learning-online or correspondence | 24              | 5     |
| Books/journals/articles                    | 53              | 8     |
| Seminars                                   | 13              | 1     |
| Other                                      | 2               | 0     |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

The percentage of respondents who have used different CPD methods over the past 12 months, together with the average (mean) hours spent using these methods, is given in Table 9.6. Similar to VNs and not dissimilar to 2008 findings, the majority of respondents have used books/journals/articles. Weekday, weekend and in-house courses were also popular. Unlike for VNs, weekend courses are not especially common. Respondents spend the most hours on learning through books/journals/articles. Videos/DVDs are relatively infrequently used. Overall, nurses spend a lower number of mean hours on each method than surgeons.

In terms of preferred CPD methods, the most popular first preferences were weekday courses (40 per cent), distance online or correspondence courses (15 per cent), in-house courses (14 per cent), weekend courses (11 per cent) and evening courses (11 per cent). For the second preference, respondents mainly chose in-house courses (23 per cent) and distance online or correspondence courses (17 per cent) and evening courses (16 per cent).

## 9.5 CPD FUNDING

### VS SURVEY

Respondents were asked what percentage of their CPD in the past year had been funded by particular sources. In terms of mean percentages, the highest had been funded by employers/practices (56) and the respondents themselves (21). The mean percentages for the other sources of funding are as follows: free (17), commercial sponsorship (five), grants (one) and other (one).

### VN SURVEY

Respondents were asked what percentage of their CPD in the past year had been funded by particular sources. Mean percentages were calculated for each source. Similar to the results for VSs, the highest had been funded by employers/practices (57). In 2008, 84 per cent of nurses received CPD that was funded by employers, therefore the figure has reduced from previous years. The mean percentages for the other sources of funding in 2010 were as follows: free (29), respondents themselves (ten), commercial sponsorship (five), grants (one) and other (one).

#### **Key comparisons between VSs and VNs**

- VSs are expected to undertake a minimum of 105 hours' CPD every three years whilst VNs are required to spend a minimum of 45 hours every three years on CPD activity. Accordingly, the survey results indicate that VSs spend on average, slightly more days away from work receiving CPD than VNs and give more hours to different CPD methods.
- VNs spend more days away from work for maternity/paternity leave than VSs. Across both professions, very few days away from work are due to illness. This may reflect the general decline in sickness absence in the UK. According to the CBI, the average UK worker took 6.4 days off due to sickness in 2009, this was the lowest level since 1987 and a significant reduction since 2007, when absence stood at 6.7 days per average UK worker (Brockett, 2010)<sup>8</sup>.
- The percentage of VNs who hold additional qualifications is not as high as VSs.
- Weekend courses are a more popular CPD method for VSs than VNs in terms of preferred CPD methods.

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<sup>8</sup> Brockett J (2010), Sickness absence 'at lowest level for 20 years', PM Online, Address: [www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/pm/articles/2010/06/sickness-absence-at-lowest-level-for-20-years.htm](http://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/pm/articles/2010/06/sickness-absence-at-lowest-level-for-20-years.htm). Last accessed: 28.07.2010

## 10 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND THE USE OF THE INTERNET

All respondents to both the veterinary surgeon and veterinary nurse surveys were asked questions about their use of electronic communications and the internet, including email and social networking sites. This chapter presents the responses given to these questions.

### 10.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

#### VS Survey

Over two-thirds have access to the internet at home and work but they mainly access it at home.

The RCVS website is used by three-quarters of respondents but infrequently.

The majority of respondents (94 per cent) access their email regularly.

Over half do not visit networking sites (60.4 per cent) and those who do tend to use general rather than specific veterinary networking sites.

Over two-thirds are prepared to pay RCVS fees online (68 per cent).

Over three-quarters find the best source of information about RCVS comes from *RCVS News* (59.3 per cent) and the RCVS website (17.1 per cent).

#### VN Survey

Just under three-quarters have access to the internet at home and work but mainly access it at home.

The RCVS website is used by the majority of respondents (86.5 per cent) but infrequently.

The majority of respondents (89.3 per cent) access their email regularly.

Over two-thirds use networking sites but usually general networking sites (70.3 per cent) compared to specific vet networking sites (26.6 per cent).

Nearly two-thirds are prepared to pay RCVS fees online (65 per cent).

The respondents find a range of sources useful to obtain information about the RCVS, including the veterinary nursing press (25.8 per cent), the RCVS website (25.3 per cent) and *RCVS News* (23.9 per cent)

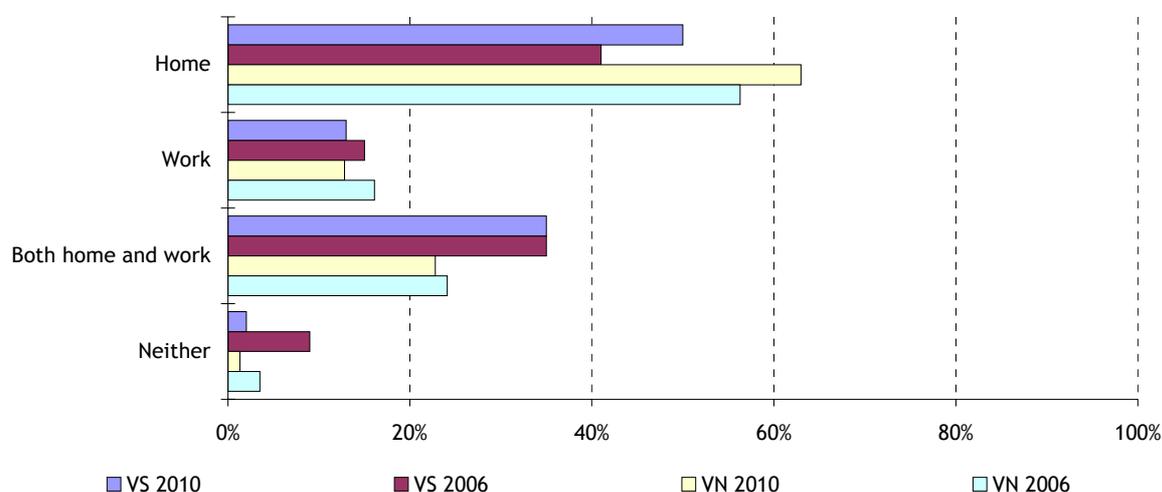
## 10.2 USE OF THE INTERNET

## VS SURVEY

A total of 23.7 per cent of the VS respondents state that they have access to the internet at home, 4.3 per cent at work, 69.5 per cent both at home and work and only 2.5 per cent neither.

Figure 10.1 illustrates where the VS respondents mainly access the internet. Fifty per cent state at home, 13 per cent at work, 35 per cent at both home and work and two per cent neither. This represents a slight increase from the previous survey of 2006 where the percentage of people mainly accessing the internet at home was 41 per cent. There is also a decrease in the amount of people who do not access the internet at either their home or at work, from nine percent in 2006 to two per cent in 2010.

**Figure 10.1: Main access to the internet, VS and VN respondents**



Source: VS Survey, 2010, 2006 and VN Survey 2010, 2008

The majority (88.5 per cent) of VS respondents who have access to the internet at home indicate that they used it very frequently (several times a week) and this was also the case for those people who have access to the internet at work (70 per cent). Eighteen per cent of respondents occasionally (a few times a month) use the internet at work. Only 1.3 per cent of those VS respondents who have access to the internet at home never use it and slightly more (seven per cent) who have access to it at work never use it.

## VN SURVEY

The vast majority of VN respondents have access to the internet at both home and work (71.2 per cent), 21.4 per cent solely have access to the internet at home and 6.6 per cent solely at work. The remaining 0.8 per cent does not have access to the internet. Figure 10.1 illustrates that the most preferred place by VN respondents to mainly access the internet is at home (63 per cent), and this figure has slightly increased since the 2008 survey (56.3 per cent). The percentage of VN respondents who either mainly access the internet solely at work or both at work and home or neither at home or work has remained fairly constant since the survey in 2008.

The majority of VN respondents (88.2 per cent) who have access to the internet at home indicate that they use it very frequently (several times a week) with 8.7 per cent using it occasionally (few times a month) and 0.6 per cent use it rarely (few times a year). Two and a

half per cent of the VN respondents who have access to the internet at home, work or both, never use it at home.

For those VN respondents who have access to the internet at home, work or both, the majority access the internet at work frequently (47.2 per cent). 32.2 per cent of the respondents access the internet occasionally at work, 9.7 per cent rarely and 10.9 per cent never.

### 10.3 USE OF THE RCVS WEBSITE

#### VS SURVEY

The RCVS website is used by the majority of the VS respondents (74.8 per cent), however, this is fairly infrequently. Only 2.5 per cent of the respondents visit the website ‘frequently’ with 20.8 per cent ‘occasionally’, 51.5 per cent ‘rarely’ and 25.2 per cent ‘never.’ However, when compared to the previous survey of 2006, these numbers have risen. Before, only one per cent of the respondents ‘frequently’ visited the RCVS website, 17 per cent ‘occasionally’ visited it and 43 per cent ‘rarely’ visited it. The amount of people who ‘never’ visited the website has decreased from 39 per cent in 2006 to 25.2 per cent in 2010.

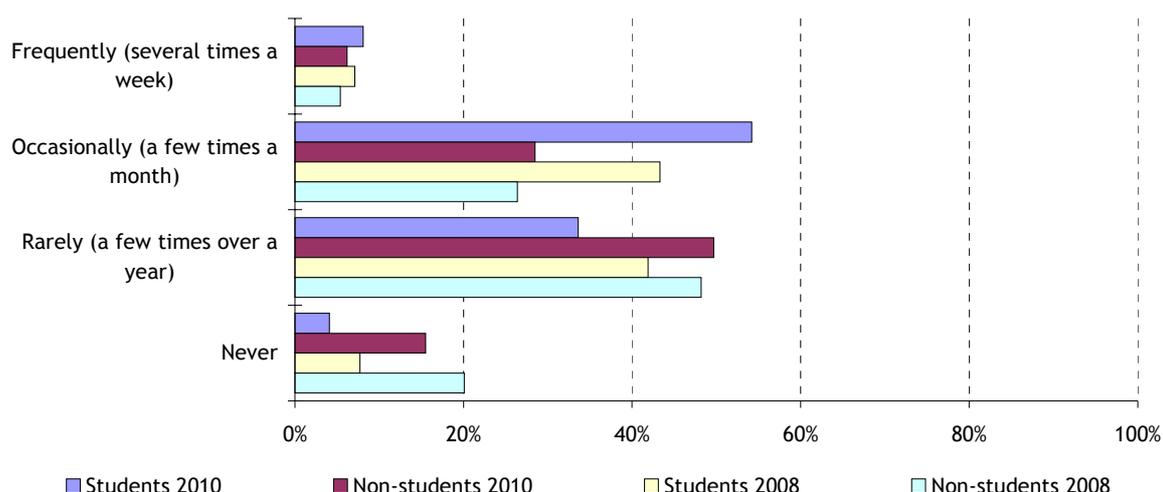
#### VN SURVEY

The RCVS website is used by the majority of the VN respondents (86.5 per cent) although again this is fairly infrequently. Only 6.5 per cent of VN respondents visit the website ‘frequently,’ with 33.1 per cent ‘occasionally,’ 46.9 per cent ‘rarely’ and 13.5 per cent ‘never.’

#### STUDENTS VS NON-STUDENTS

The frequency with which respondents visited the RCVS website over the past 12 months is shown in Figure 10.2. Figures are broken down for VN students and non students.

**Figure 10.2: Frequency of visits to RCVS website, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010 and 2008

The figure shows that students are more likely to use the RCVS website on a regular basis and this has increased since the last survey of 2008, from 7.1 per cent who visited it ‘frequently’ to 8.1 per cent and 43.3 per cent who visited it ‘occasionally’ to 54.2 per cent. Non-students

are likely to visit the RCVS website less often and these figures have remained fairly stable since the last survey of 2008.

#### 10.4 EMAIL AND NETWORKING

##### VS SURVEY

Of those VS respondents who have access to the internet, 94 per cent use email regularly compared to 82 per cent of the respondents in the 2006 survey. Only seven per cent of those who use their email regularly solely have a work email address compared to 44 per cent who only have a home email address and 49 per cent who have both. Of those people who have access to the internet, 34.5 per cent use it for general networking sites such as 'Facebook' and 'Twitter', 13.7 per cent use it for VN networking sites and 60.4 per cent do not use networking sites (the percentages do not add up to 100 per cent as the question had multiple responses and were not mutually exclusive). Despite these figures, 42.6 per cent of VS respondents wish to receive RCVS communications via post which is lower than the 2006 survey (57 per cent) although it is still the most preferred method. 33.6 per cent of the VS respondents wish to receive communications via home email, 23.4 per cent via work email and only 0.4 per cent through networking sites. 68 per cent of the VS respondents who have access to the internet are prepared to pay their RCVS fees online through a secure connection if possible. This is an increase from the 2006 survey where 48 per cent were prepared to do this. Only 40 per cent of VS respondents with access to the internet receive the RCVS e-News.

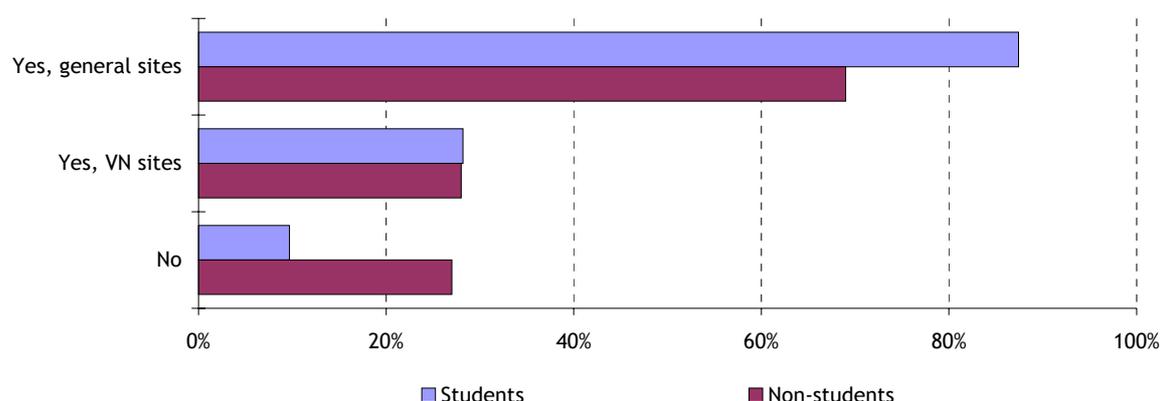
##### VN SURVEY

Of those VN respondents who have access to the internet, 89.3 per cent use email regularly compared to 83 per cent of the respondents in the 2008 survey. Only 4.7 per cent of VNs who use email regularly, solely have a work email address whereas 58.1 per cent only have a home email address and 37.1 per cent have both. Of those VNs who have access to the internet, 70.3 per cent use general social networking sites such as 'Facebook' and 'Twitter,' 26.6 per cent use VN networking sites, whilst 26 per cent do not use networking sites (the percentages do not add up to 100 per cent as the question had multiple responses and were not mutually exclusive).

Over half of VNs (52 per cent) prefer to receive communication from the RCVS via post, 33.2 per cent prefer via home email address, 14 per cent via work email address and the final 0.8 per cent through networking sites. Sixty-five per cent of the VN respondents who have access to the internet are prepared to pay their RCVS fees online through a secure connection if possible. This is a slight increase from 2008 where 60 per cent indicated that they would prefer to pay for their fees online. Only 26 per cent of VN respondents with access to the internet receive the RCVS e-News.

##### STUDENTS VS NON-STUDENTS

There are no significant differences between students and non-students with regard to use of email. Figure 10.3 shows a breakdown of students versus non-students who frequently use (several times a week) a networking site such as 'Facebook' or 'Twitter'. The percentages do not add up to 100 as the respondents could choose multiple responses.

**Figure 10.3: Students versus non-students use of networking sites, VN respondents**

Source: VN Survey, 2010

Figure 10.3 suggests that students are far more likely to use networking sites than not, but are more likely to use general sites rather than specific vet nursing sites (87.4 per cent compared to 28.2 per cent). Non-students are less likely than students to use networking sites but those who do are equally as likely as students to use them to visit vet nursing sites (28 per cent) but less likely than students to use them to visit general sites.

Non-students show more of a preference than students to receive communications from the RCVS via work email (15.6 per cent compared to 7.4 per cent). In comparison, students have a slight preference over non-students to receive communications via home email address (37.4 per cent compared to 32.4 per cent) and post (54.2 per cent compared to 51.3 per cent). Neither group express much desire to receive communications through a networking site (students: 1.0 per cent and non-students: 0.7 per cent).

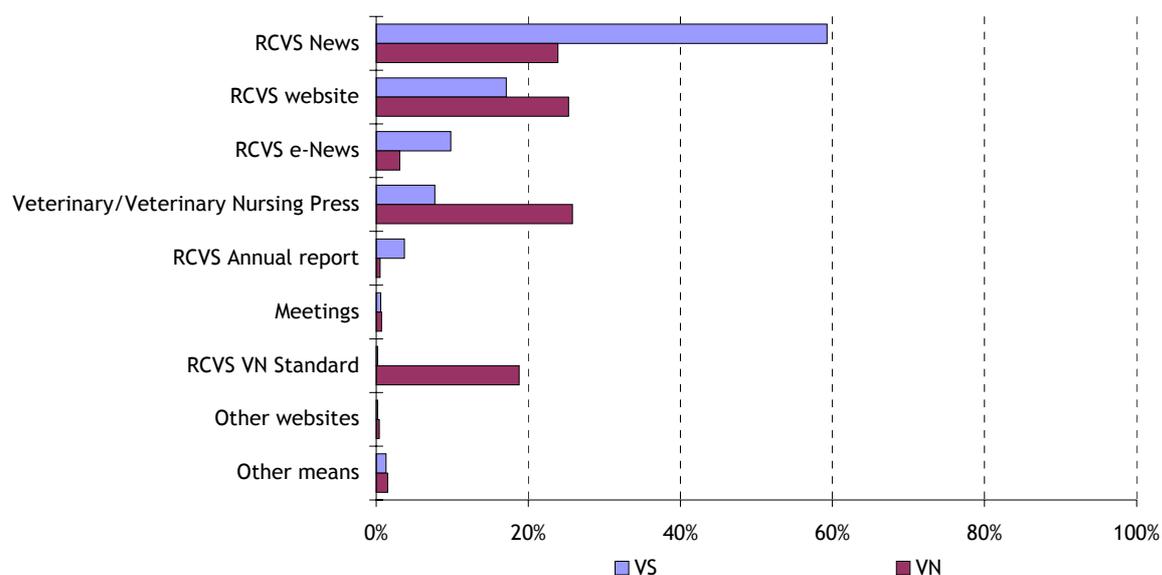
## 10.5 RCVS SOURCES OF INFORMATION

### VS SURVEY

As shown in Figure 10.4, the majority of VS respondents feel that the best source of information about the RCVS is the *RCVS News* (59.3 per cent), this is followed by the RCVS website (17.1 per cent) and the RCVS e-News (9.8 per cent). VS respondents felt the least helpful sources of information were meetings (0.6 per cent), *RCVS VN Standard* (0.2 per cent) and other websites (0.2 per cent). The majority of VS respondents prefer to register for RCVS events 'online' (57.5 per cent), with 26 per cent preferring 'post' and the final 16.5 per cent via email.

### VN SURVEY

VN respondents' views on the best source of information about the RCVS vary with no prevalent choice emerging. VN respondents show a preference towards the veterinary nursing press (25.8 per cent), the RCVS website (25.3 per cent), the *RCVS News* (23.9 per cent) and the *RCVS VN Standard* (18.8 per cent). Their least preferred form of media is other websites (0.4 per cent) followed by the *RCVS Annual Report* (0.5 per cent) and meetings (0.7 per cent). The majority of VN respondents prefer to register for RCVS events 'online' (58.8 per cent) followed by 'post' (30.9 per cent) and then 'email' (10.3 per cent).

**Figure 10.4: VS and VN views on the best source of information about the RCVS**

Source: VS and VN Survey, 2010

#### Key comparisons between VSs and VNs

- The majority of both VSs and VNs have access to the internet at home and work. Only a small percentage of both groups do not have access to the internet at all. Of those who do have access to the internet, the majority of VSs and nurses mainly access it at home, and these figures have increased since the previous surveys.
- The RCVS website is used by both VSs and VNs, but rarely in both cases. Student VNs are likely to visit the RCVS website on a more regular basis than non-student VNs and this figure has increased since the last survey of 2008.
- Both VSs and VNs use email regularly. More VNs tend to use networking sites compared to VSs, although these are usually for general sites rather than specific veterinary sites. Student VNs are more likely than non-student VNs to use networking sites, again though for general networking sites rather than any specific veterinary sites.
- Both VSs and VNs still prefer to receive RCVS communications via the post.
- The majority of VSs state that their best sources of information are obtained by the *RCVS News* or website. However there is no strong preference for VNs who state that the *RCVS website*, *RCVS News*, the *veterinary nursing press* and *RCVS VN Standard* are all similarly good sources of information for them.

## 11 STUDENTS AND RECENT QUALIFIERS

This chapter focuses on the training of the 18 per cent of respondents to the VN survey who say they are currently student VNs, the eight per cent of respondents to the VN survey who qualified after 31 December 2008 and the ten per cent of respondents to the VS survey who qualified in 2007 onwards.

### 11.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

#### **VS Survey**

Four per cent of recent qualifiers have yet to find their first post.

Just over twenty per cent have found it difficult or very difficult to find their first post.

Upon graduation, 63 per cent of post-2006 qualifiers went straight into practice.

Of those who went straight into practice, two-thirds received training during their first year at work and nearly half commenced their Professional Development Phase within the first month of starting work.

Over half received appraisals or performance reviews during their first year in practice.

#### **VN Survey**

Sixty-one per cent intend to remain employed in their training practices post-qualification.

The vast majority of respondents who qualified after 31 December 2008 entered the Register between 2009 and 2010

Over three-quarters of 2009/2010 qualifiers have remained employed at their training practice.

Eighty-eight per cent are still in their first post-qualification position. The average number of months spent in their first post-qualification post of those who have moved on is 5.7 months.

Over seventy per cent are satisfied with the support given by their approved centre (VNAC), the quality of their training practice experience and the quality of their college/university experience.

## 11.2 STUDENTS' INTENTIONS UPON QUALIFICATION

### VN SURVEY

Student VNs were asked what they intend to do when they qualify. Of those who answered, 61 per cent intend to remain employed in their training practices, 23 per cent intend to move to another practice, eight per cent are seeking to take-up their first post-graduate position whilst the remaining eight per cent ticked 'other'. Of those who ticked 'other', intentions included moving abroad (19 per cent), leaving the profession (16.5 per cent) and travel (15 per cent) (see Table 11.1).

**Table 11.1: Other post graduation intention, VN respondents**

| Other post graduation intention      | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Leave the profession                 | 15        | 16.5       |
| Work in other animal related job     | 13        | 14.3       |
| Travel                               | 14        | 15.4       |
| Move abroad                          | 17        | 18.7       |
| Maternity/career break/children etc. | 6         | 6.6        |
| Undecided/Don't know                 | 10        | 11         |
| Continue study /research             | 11        | 12.1       |
| Other                                | 5         | 5.5        |

*Source: VN Survey, 2010*

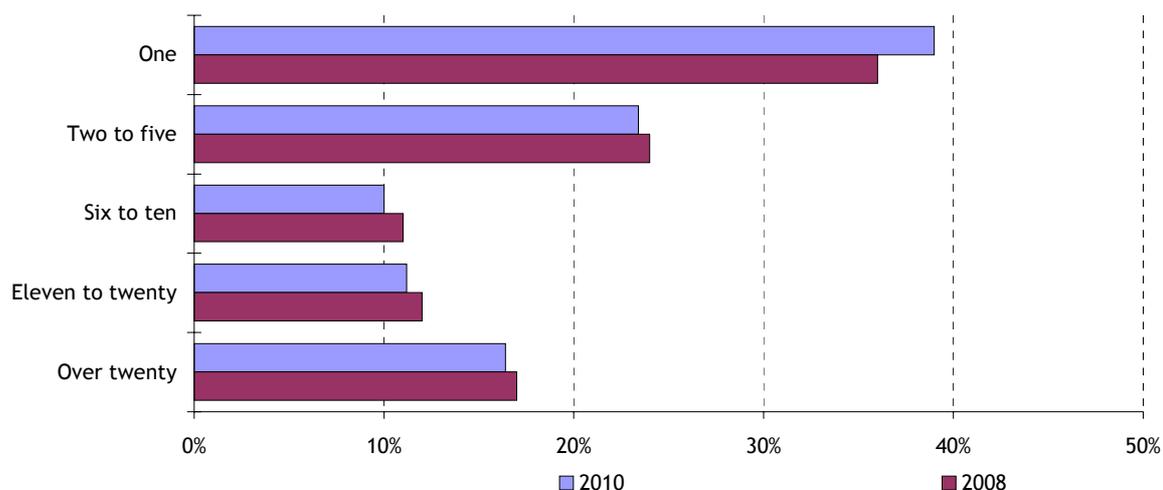
Of the 15 people who intend to leave the profession after qualification, all are female, 80 per cent are currently in full-time work, all are working within clinical veterinary practice. Nearly three-quarters (73 per cent) agree or strongly agree that newly qualified VNs need more support, all agree or strongly agree that VN work is stressful, whilst 60 per cent disagree or strongly disagree that VNs are valued by the veterinary profession. Two-thirds are not satisfied with the support they have received from their employer and 93 per cent are dissatisfied with their salary. However, 80 per cent agree or strongly agree that VN work is satisfying and/or that the VN profession gives variety. Their mean WEMWBS score is 43. This measure of well-being is explained in detail in Chapter 13. However, to put this score in context, the mean score for a general population is 51 and for VNs overall 47. The higher the score, the better the population's overall well-being. Therefore a score of 43 is substantially lower than the general population and general VN mean.

## 11.3 EASE OF FINDING STUDENT POSITIONS AND PLACEMENTS

### VN SURVEY

Non-university students were asked how many practice they approached before finding a position as a student veterinary nurse. Their responses are shown in Figure 11.1.

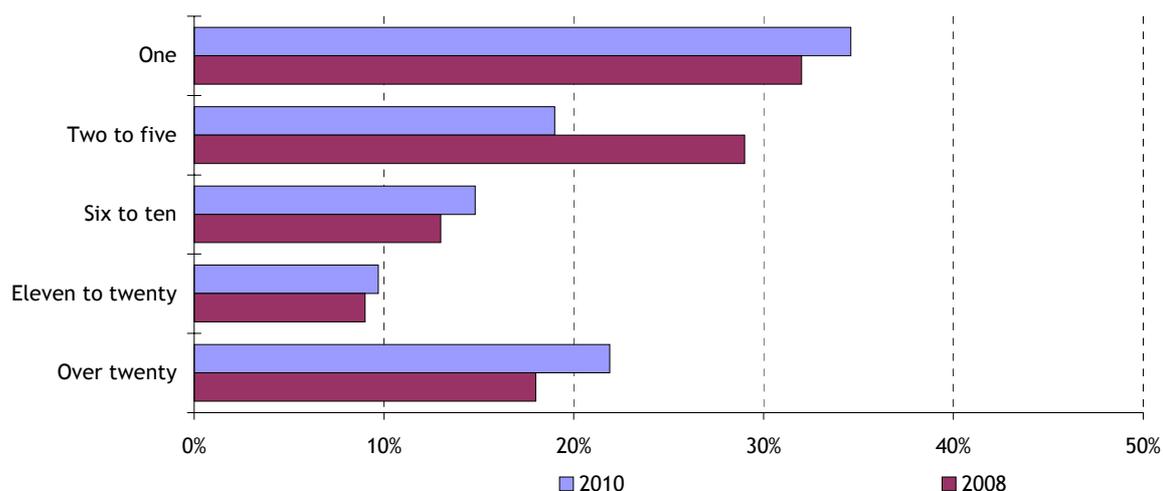
**Figure 11.1: Practices approached by non-university students, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010

Similarly, university students were asked how many practices they approached before finding a placement. Their responses are shown in Figure 11.2, below.

**Figure 11.2: Practices approached by university students, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010

## 11.4 RECENT QUALIFIERS

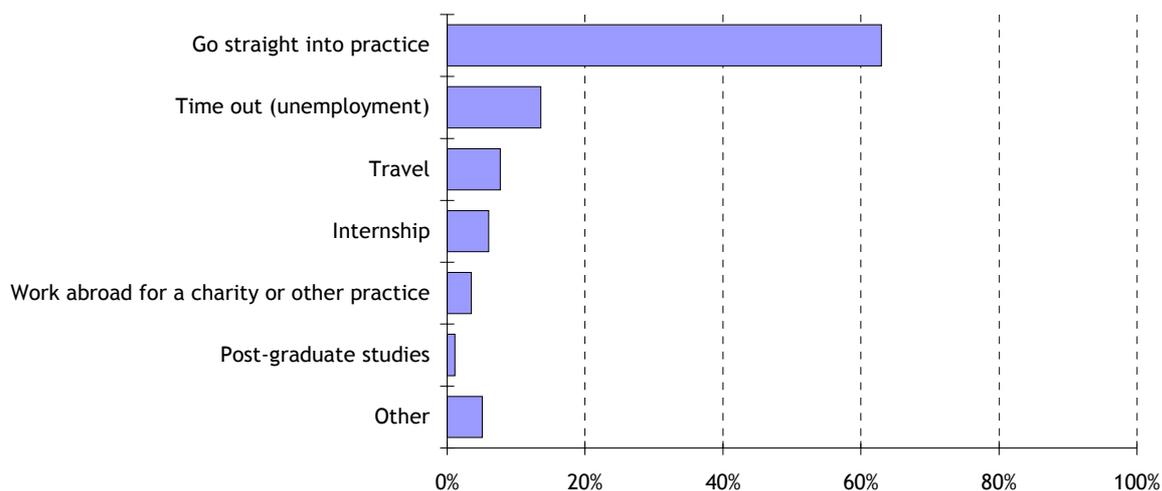
### VS SURVEY

Four per cent of recent qualifiers have yet to find their first post (4.5 per cent). A breakdown of the remaining 95.5 per cent who have shows that just under one-third have found it easy (31.4 per cent), 18 per cent have found it very easy, whilst just over 20 per cent have found it difficult (15.5 per cent) or very difficult (5.7 per cent). Just under 40 per cent of those who have obtain their first post after qualifying say that they approached between two and five practices before securing a position (38.6 per cent), 27.2 per cent approached one, whilst the remaining 34.2 per cent approached over six, including 6.5 per cent who approached over 20. In terms of length of time it took to find their first post after qualifying, the average

(median) is one month, whilst the mode is less than one month, ranging from less than one month to 27 months.

Upon graduation, 63 per cent of post-2006 qualifiers went straight into practice, 7.7 per cent took some time out for travel and 13.6 per cent took some time out as they were unable to find a job (see Figure 11.3).

**Figure 11.3: Destinations of recent qualifiers, VS respondents**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

Of those who ticked 'other', over one-third (34 per cent) took a career break or worked outside the veterinary profession, just under thirty per cent took time out for family/personal reasons, 16 per cent undertook other non-practice work. The activities of the remaining 20 per cent are shown in Table 11.2.

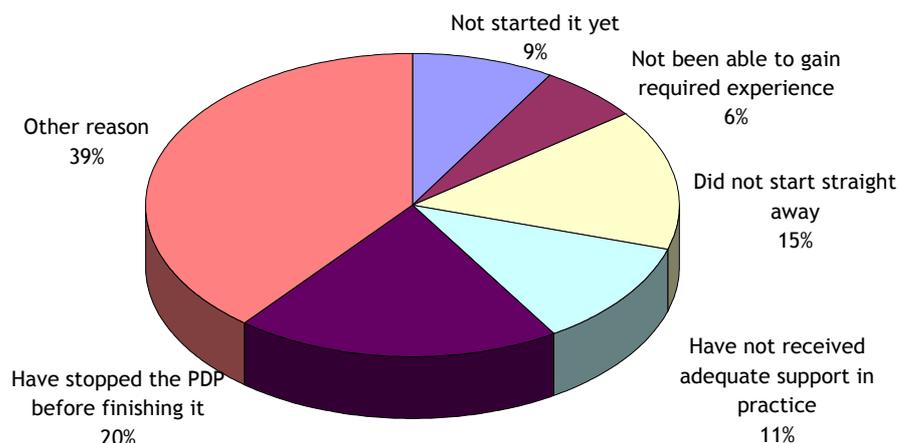
**Table 11.2: Other post graduation destination, VS respondents**

| Other graduation path                    | Percentage |
|--|------------|
| Career break/work outside vet profession | 34         |
| Voluntary work                           | 2.6        |
| Unemployed                               | 2.6        |
| University work/experience/teaching      | 5.3        |
| Other non-practice vet work              | 16         |
| Other study/research                     | 5.3        |
| Other non-vet related work               | 2.6        |
| Family/personal reasons                  | 29         |
| Other                                    | 2.6        |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

Of those who went straight into practice 66 per cent received training during their first year at work and nearly half (48.7 per cent) commenced their Professional Development Phase (PDP) within the first month of starting work. Just over one-third (35 per cent) commenced their PDP within months two to six, 6.6 per cent after month six and 9.7 per cent have not begun yet. For those who have been in practice for more than 12 months and have not yet completed their PDP, reasons for this are shown in Figure 11.4.

**Figure 11.4: Reasons for not completing PDP, VS respondents**



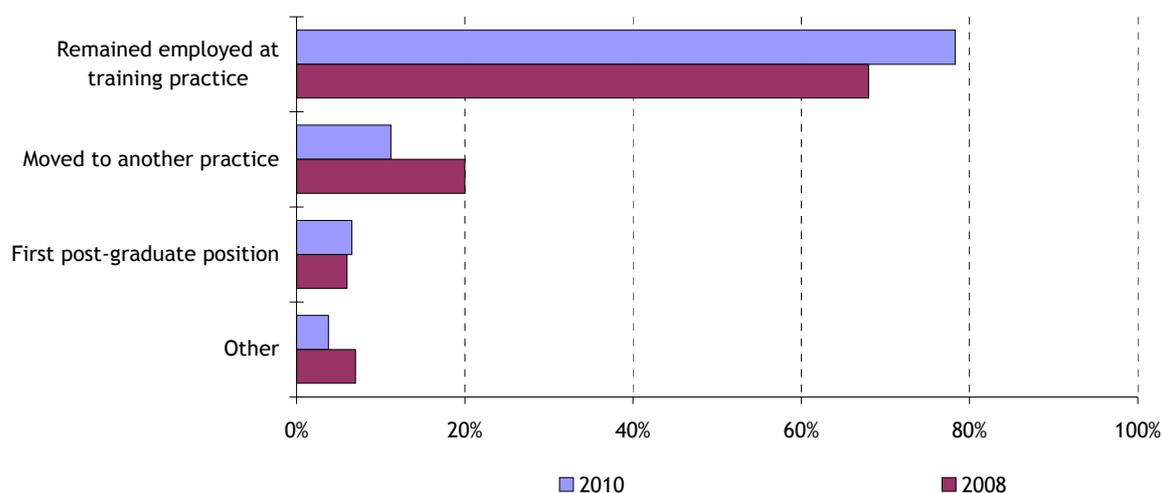
Source: VS Survey, 2010

### VN SURVEY

A total of 334 respondents qualified after 31 December 2008. In the 2008 survey, 317 respondents had qualified in 2007 or 2008. Of the 334 respondents who qualified after 31 December 2008, 93 per cent entered the Register between 2009 and 2010, four per cent between 2006 and 2008 and two per cent between 2000 and 2005.

The immediate destinations of 2009 or 2010 qualifiers are shown in Figure 11.5. As shown, there has been a ten per cent increase in the proportion of recent qualifiers who remained employed at their training practice with near proportional decline in the percentage who moved to another practice.

**Figure 11.5: Destinations of recent qualifiers, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010 and 2008

Eighty-eight per cent are still in their first post-qualification position (in the 2008 survey this stood at 82 per cent). Of the 12 per cent who have moved on, the number of months spent in their first post-qualification post ranged from 1 to 36 with an average (mean) of 5.7 months. In 2008, the time spent in first post-qualification post ranged from 0 to 60 months with a higher average of 9.4 months.

## 11.5 APPRAISALS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

## VS SURVEY

Recently-qualified VSs were asked whether they received appraisals or performance reviews during their first year in practice. Fifty-seven per cent did receive appraisals. Of these, one third say that the appraisal took into account their progress with the PDP.

## VN SURVEY

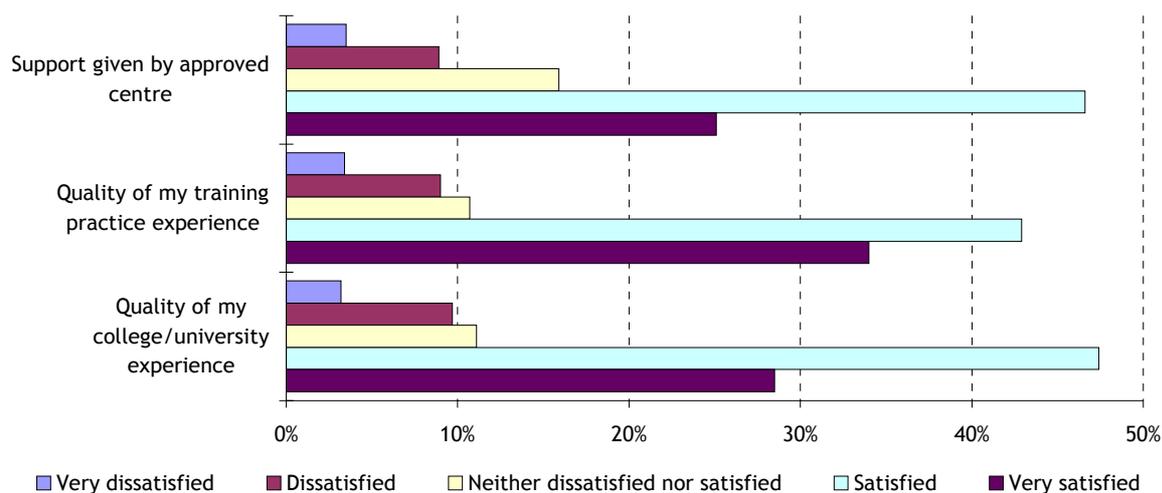
Current student nurses and 2009/2010 qualifiers were asked whether they receive(d) appraisals or performance reviews during their training or after qualification. A total of 75.5 per cent say they do/did. In 2008 this was 72 per cent.

## 11.6 SATISFACTION WITH TRAINING

## VN SURVEY

Current student nurses and 2009/2010 qualifiers were also asked their level of satisfaction with various elements of their training. Their responses are shown in Figure 11.6.

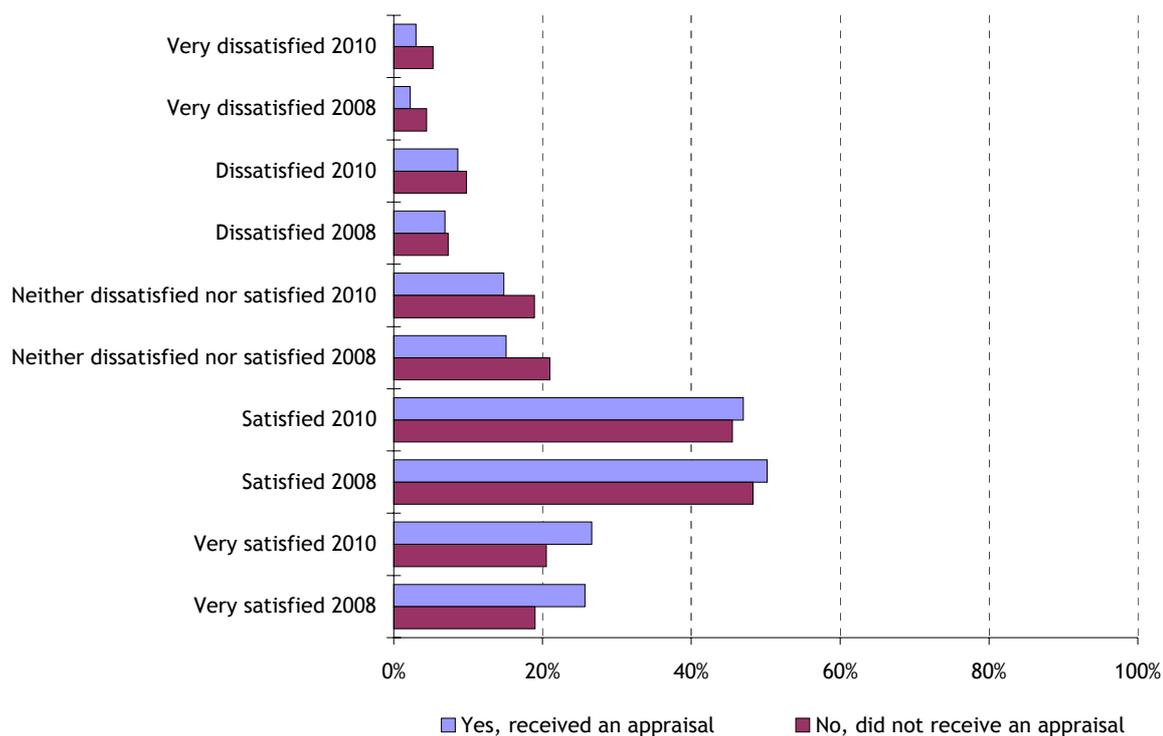
**Figure 11.6: Satisfaction with training, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010

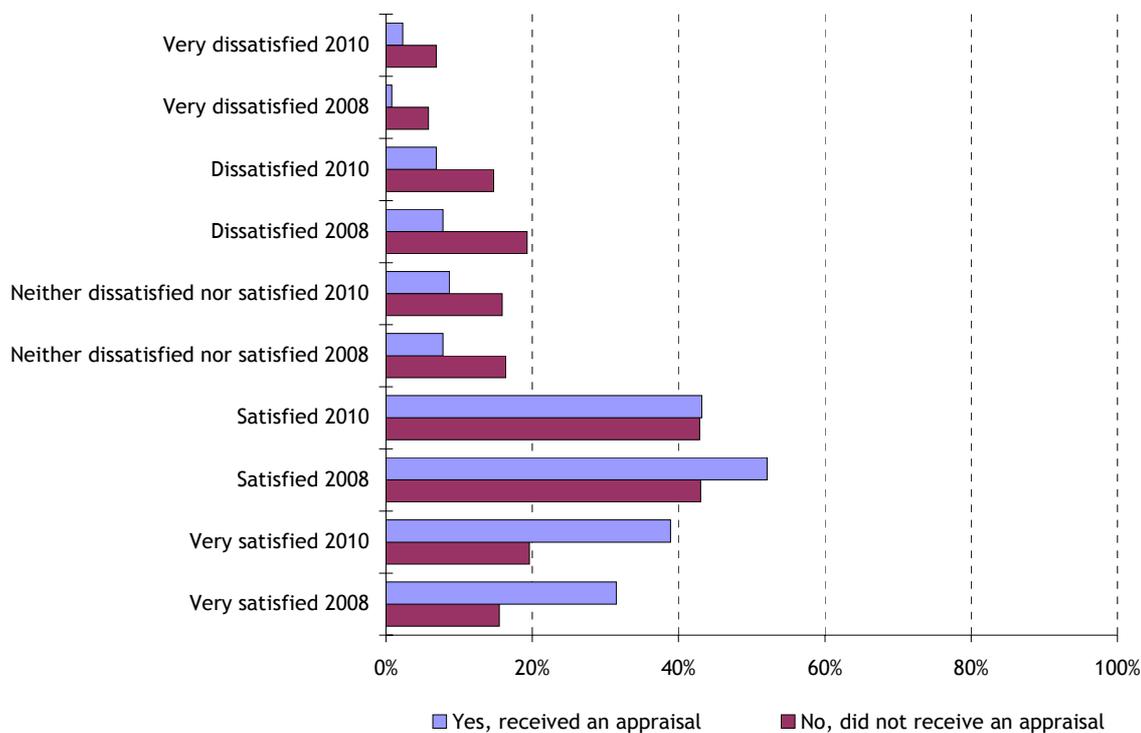
Figure 11.6 shows that over seventy per cent of respondents to this question are satisfied or very satisfied with the support given by their approved centre (VNAC), the quality of their training practice experience and the quality of their college/university experience. Figure 11.7 to Figure 11.9 show the degree of satisfaction with various aspects of training cross-referenced by whether they receive(d) appraisals or performance reviews during their training or after qualification.

**Figure 11.7: Satisfaction with support given by approved centre by receipt of appraisals, VN respondents**

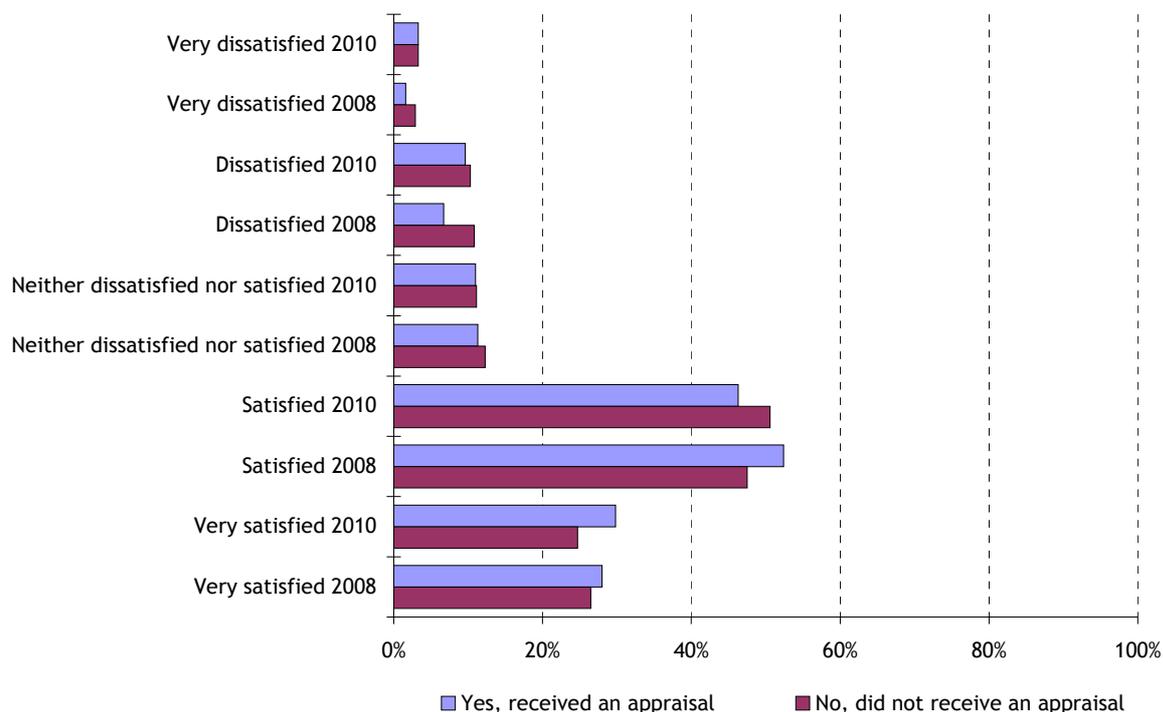


Source: VN Survey, 2010 and 2008

**Figure 11.8: Satisfaction with quality of training practice experience by receipt of appraisals, VN respondents**



Source: VN Survey, 2010 and 2008

**Figure 11.9: Satisfaction with quality of college/university experience by receipt of appraisals, VN respondents**

Source: VN Survey, 2010 and 2008

There is a statistically significant difference in satisfaction with the quality of their training practice experience according to whether appraisals or performance reviews are/were received. Those who do not receive appraisals are slightly more likely to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the quality of their training practice experience. This was also found in 2008.

#### Key comparisons between VSs and VNs

- Fifty-seven per cent of recently qualified VSs received appraisals or performance reviews during their first year in practice appraisals. Three-quarters of current student nurses and 2009/2010 qualifiers receive(d) appraisals or performance reviews during their training or after qualification, compared to 72 per cent in 2008.

#### Evidence of trends

- There has been a ten per cent increase in the proportion of VN recent qualifiers who remained employed at their training practice with near proportional decline in the percentage who moved to another practice.
- VNs who do not receive appraisals or performance reviews during their training or after qualification are slightly more likely to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the quality of their training practice experience. This was also found in 2008.

## 12 VIEWS ABOUT THE PROFESSION

A section of the questionnaires asked both VSs and VNs about various aspects of their professions, if they would still make the same choice if they were starting their career again and to consider the best things about the profession, possible improvements and challenges. This chapter presents a summary of the results which gives a fascinating insight into the opinions, perceptions and preferences of both groups, how they compare with one another and how they have changed over time.

### 12.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

#### **VS Survey**

VSs find their jobs stressful but also experience job satisfaction and variety in their work.

VSs show disagreement with the views that newly qualified VSs have the necessary skills, that too many VNs are trained and that the veterinary profession is family friendly.

Just over half of VSs would still opt for the veterinary profession if they could begin their career again.

Variety, job satisfaction and good client relationships are most commonly seen as the best things about being in the profession.

Better pay, reduction of hours and better work life balance are the top three suggestions for improving the profession.

Economic climate, changing agricultural sector and managing client expectations and demands are most commonly seen as the main challenges currently facing the profession.

#### **VN Survey**

VNs find their role valued by clients, satisfying and offering them variety.

VNs are least positive about newly qualified VSs having the necessary skills, that too many VNs are being trained and their salaries.

Just over half of VNs would remain in the veterinary nursing profession if they began their career again.

Working with animals, variety and job satisfaction are the top three answers given for benefits of being in the profession.

Better pay, more respect in general for the profession and more respect from employers and vets are the top three suggestions for improving the profession.

Poor pay, change of training programme and lack of supply staff are most commonly seen as the main challenges currently facing the profession.

## 12.2 GENERAL VIEWS ABOUT THE PROFESSION

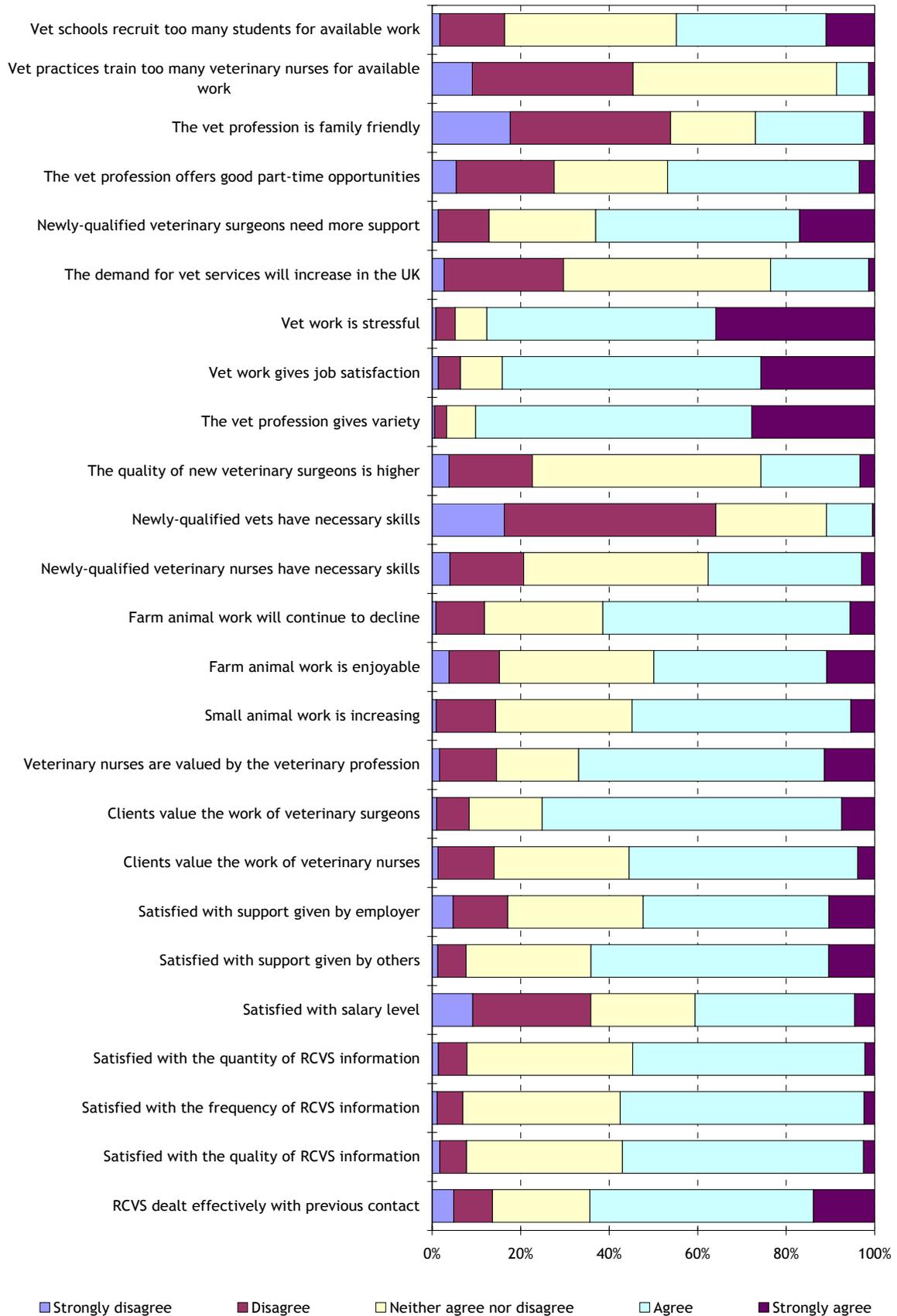
Both VS and VN respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement with a series of attitude statements about their views of their professions. The items used a scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' (scoring 1) to 'strongly agree' (scoring 5), with a midpoint score of 3.

### VS SURVEY

Figure 12.1 shows the spread of responses for VSs and Figure 12.2 gives the mean scores.

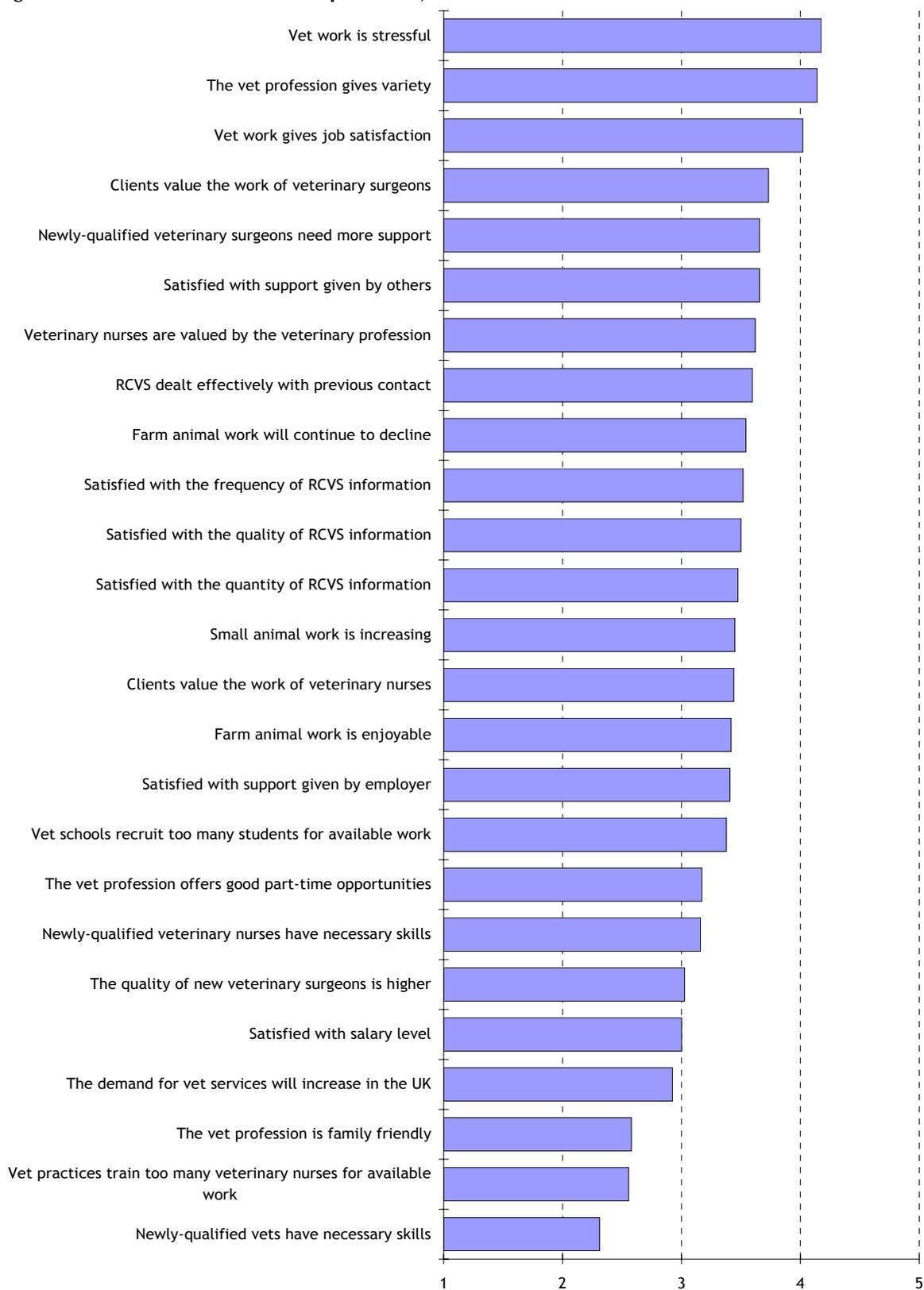
The figures show that although VSs find their jobs stressful they also have great variety in their work and job satisfaction. They agree that they feel valued by their clients. However, they think that newly-qualified VSs need more support now than in the past and show most disagreement with the views that newly-qualified VSs have the necessary skills. They also disagree that that too many VNs are trained and that the veterinary profession is family friendly.

Figure 12.1: Views of VVs about their profession



Source: VS Survey, 2010

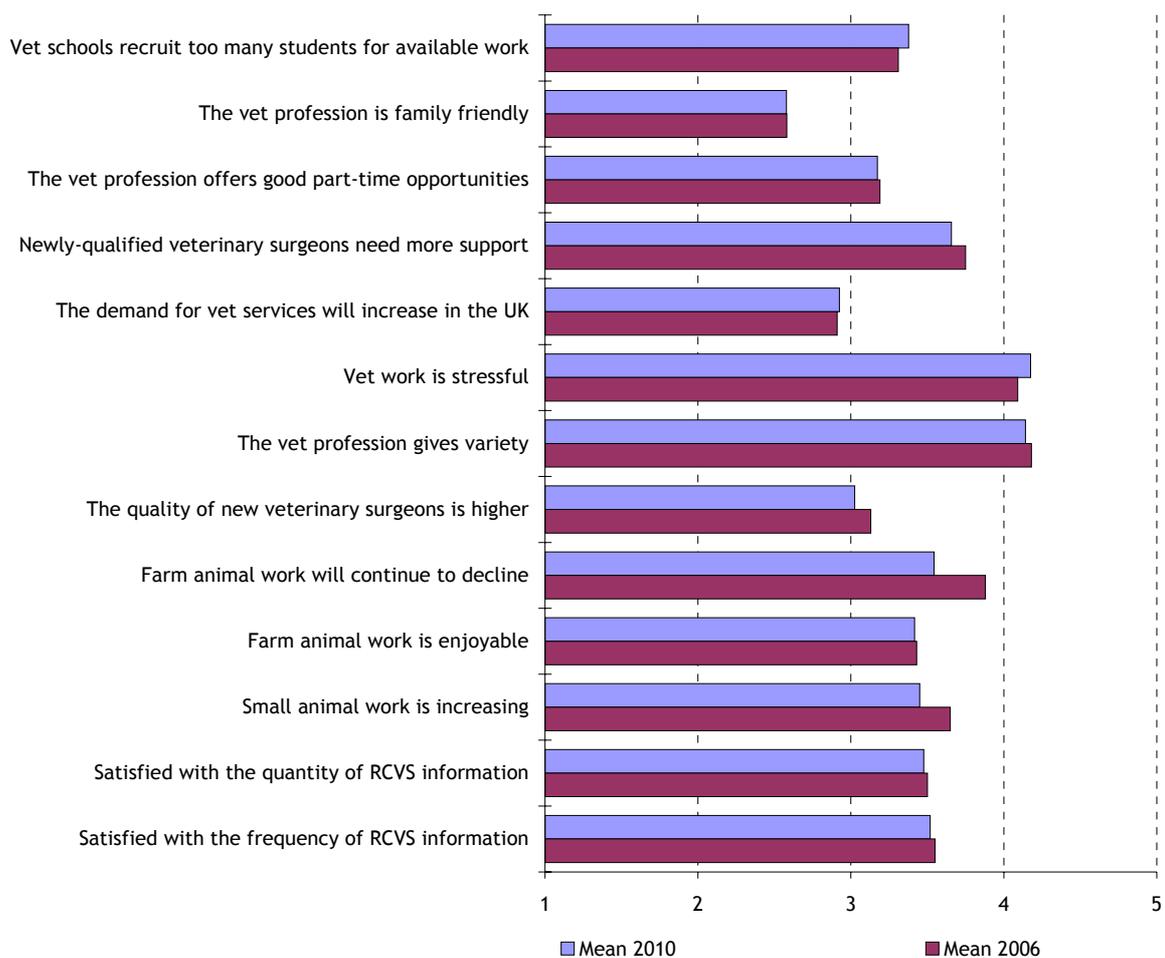
**Figure 12.2: Views of VVs about their profession, mean scores**



Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Source: VS Survey, 2010

**Figure 12.3: Views of VVs about their profession in 2010 and 2006, mean scores**



Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Source: VS Survey, 2010 and 2006

Figure 12.3 shows the comparison with the views of VVs in 2010 with 2006 for those questions which have been asked in both years. The results show a remarkable consistency for most items. The greatest change in views is less agreement with the suggestion that farm animal work will continue to decline and that small animal work is increasing.

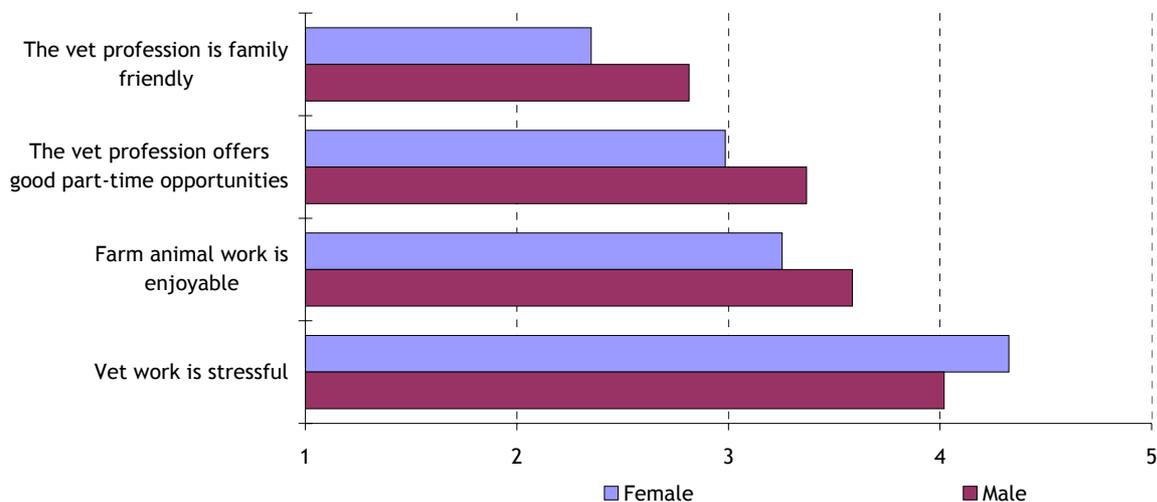
Further analysis showed that some of the VVs’ responses varied by gender (Figure 12.4), age group (Figure 12.5) and whether or not respondents would choose their career if they could start again (Figure 12.6).

It is notable that:

- Men are more positive than women about the veterinary profession being family friendly, offering good part-time opportunities and finding farm work enjoyable. Women tend to find the work more stressful.
- Those respondents in their thirties find the profession least family friendly and farm animal work less enjoyable. Veterinary work is found to be most stressful by those in their twenties but this declines with age.

- Vets who would choose the same career again are more likely to believe that the profession is family friendly, be satisfied with their salary and feel that the job offers variety. They are also less likely to find the work stressful.

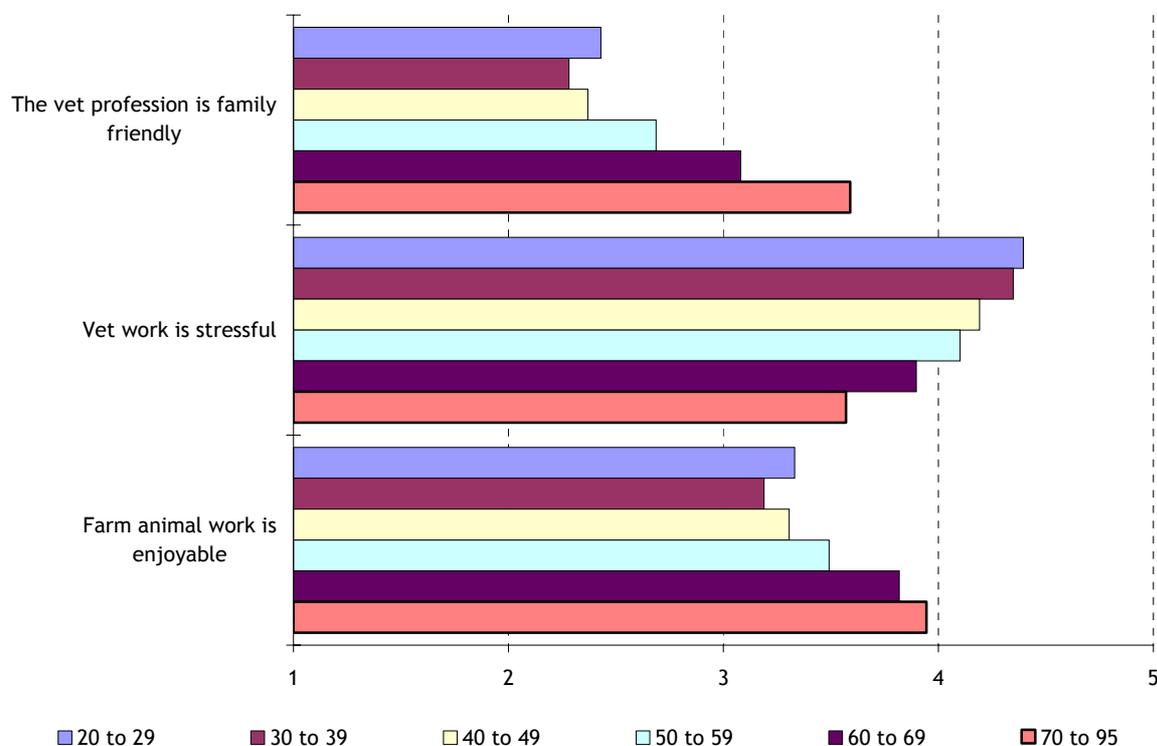
**Figure 12.4: Attitudes of Vets showing marked differences between men and women, mean scores**



Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Source: VS Survey, 2010

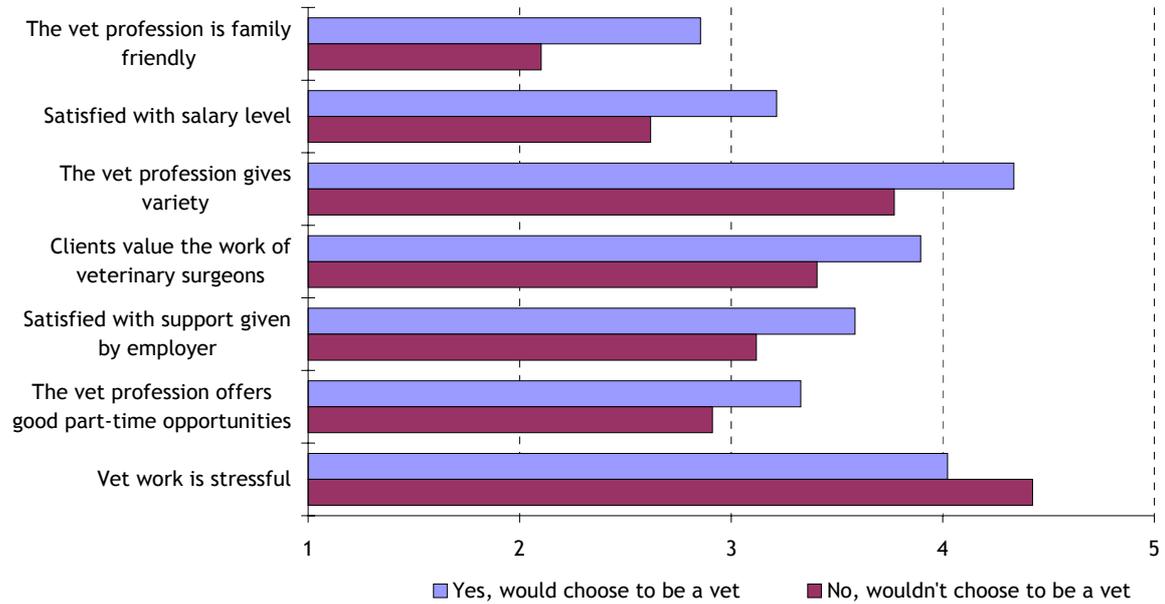
**Figure 12.5: Attitudes of Vets showing marked differences by age group, mean scores**



Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Source: VS Survey, 2010

**Figure 12.6: Attitudes of VSs showing marked differences by whether they would still choose their profession, mean scores**



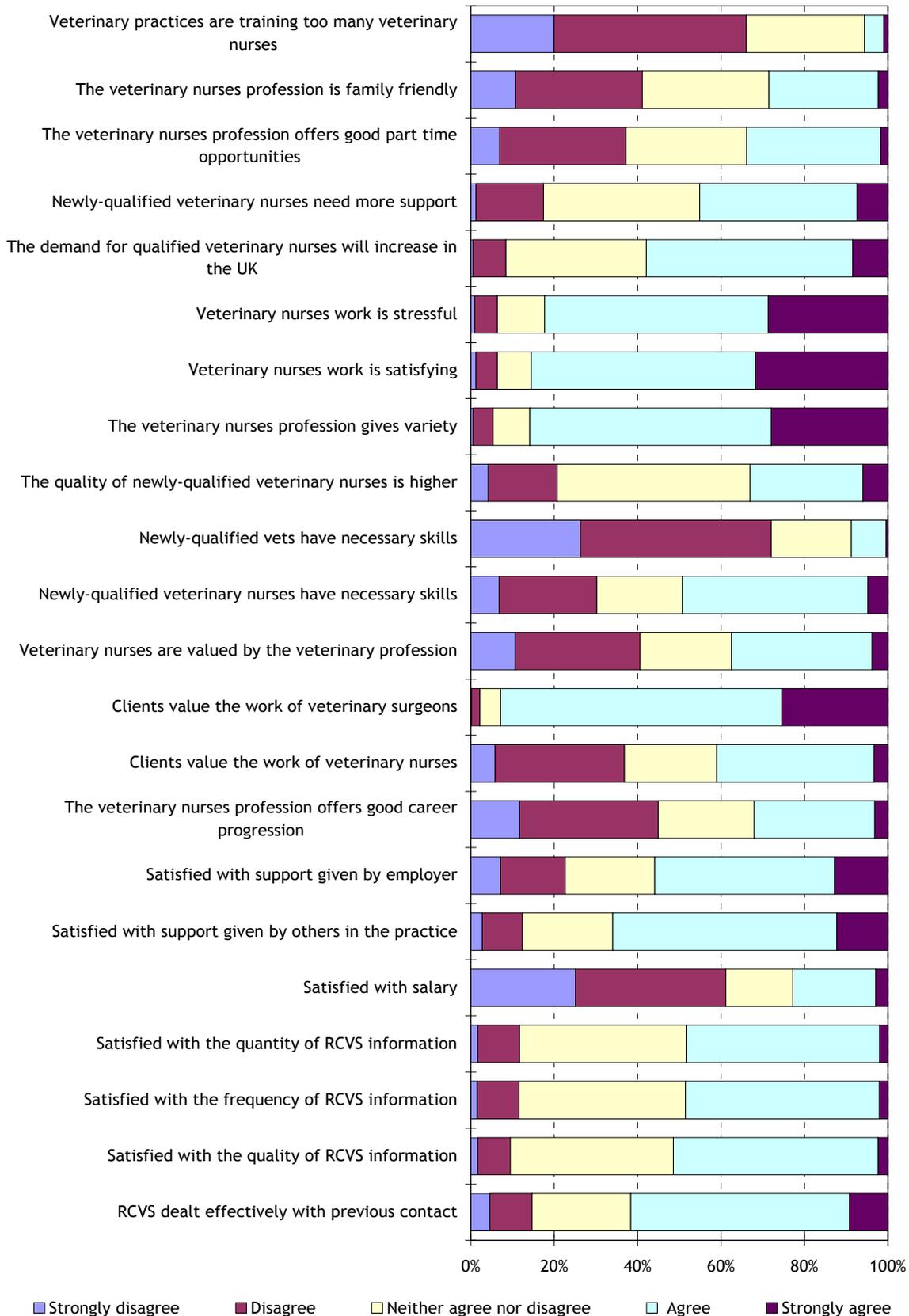
Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Source: VS Survey, 2010

**VN SURVEY**

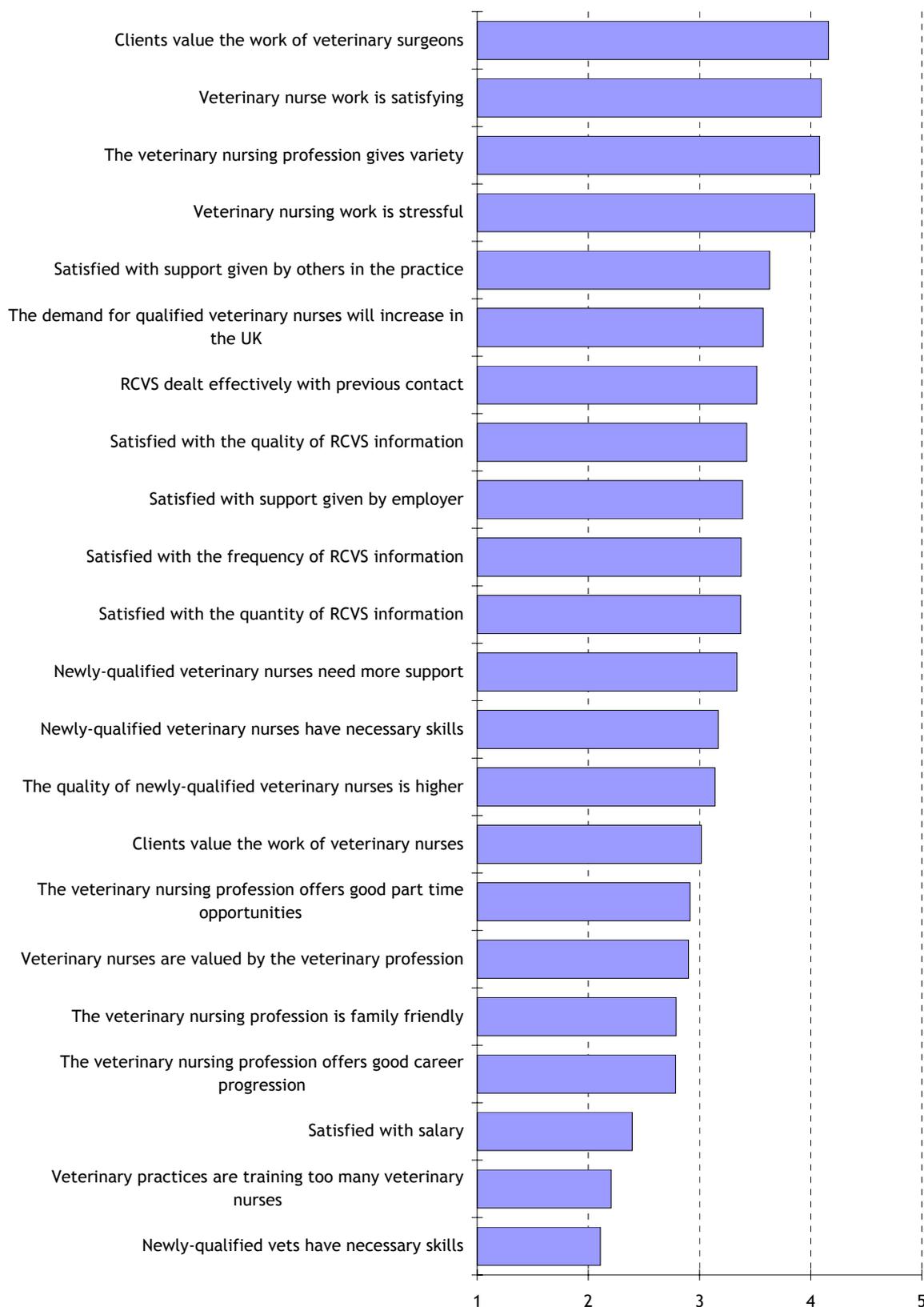
Figure 12.7 shows the spread of responses for VNs and Figure 12.8 shows the mean scores. The figures indicate that VNs show most agreement that they find their role valued by clients, satisfying and that it gives them variety. However, in common with the VSs they also find the work stressful. Most disagreement is expressed by the VNs with the views that newly-qualified VSs have the necessary skills, that too many VNs are being trained and that they are satisfied with their salary.

**Figure 12.7: Views of VNs about their profession**



Source: VN Survey, 2010

Figure 12.8: Views of VNs about their profession, mean scores

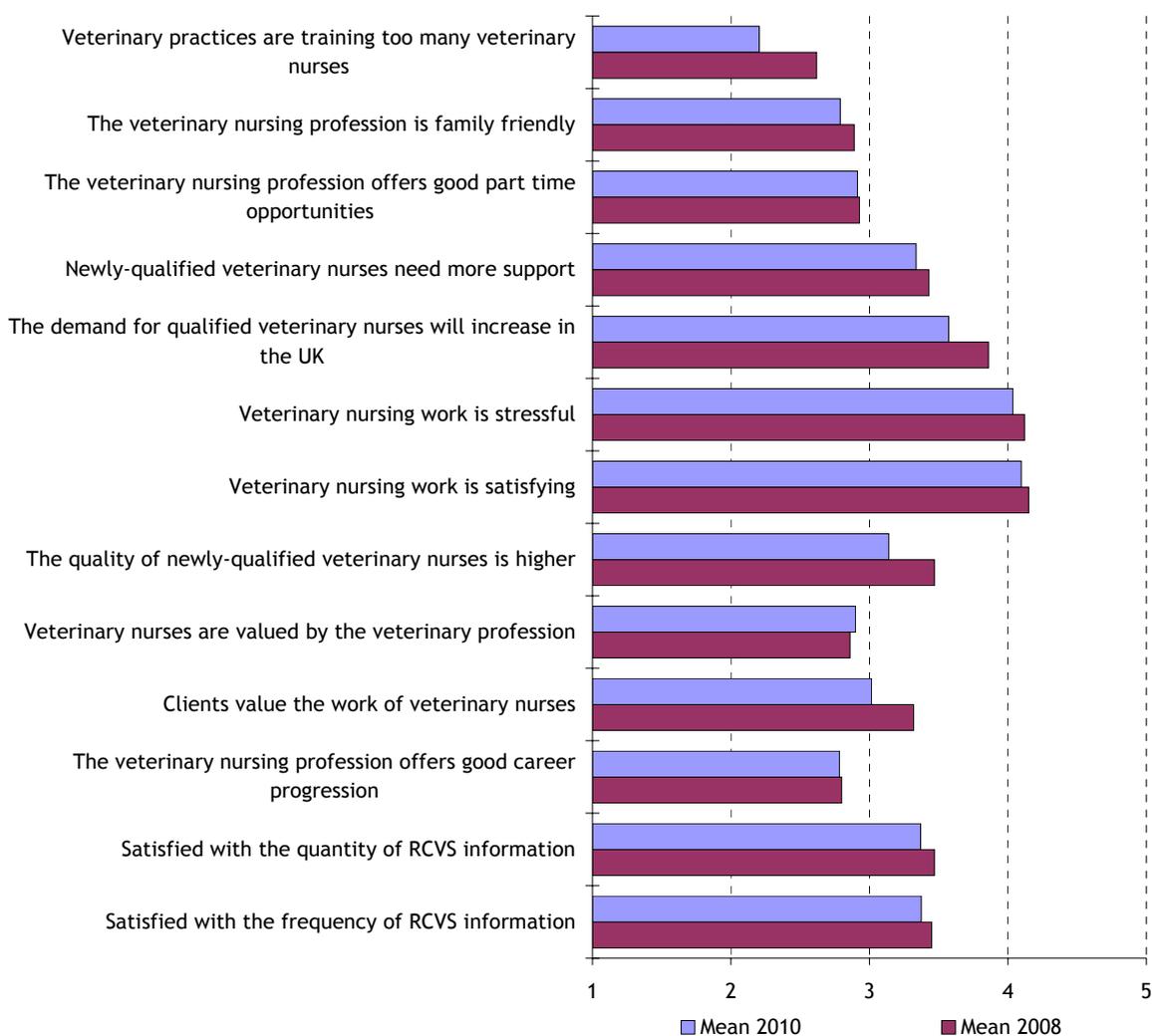


Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Source: VN Survey, 2010

Figure 12.9 presents a comparison of the views of VNs in 2010 with 2008 for those questions which have been asked in both years. The majority of views remain largely unchanged with the exceptions all showing greater disagreement. These items are: that too many VNs are being trained, the quality of newly trained VNs is higher, clients value their work and that the demand for VNs will increase.

**Figure 12.9: Views of VNs about their profession 2010 and 2008, mean scores**



Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Source: VN Survey, 2010

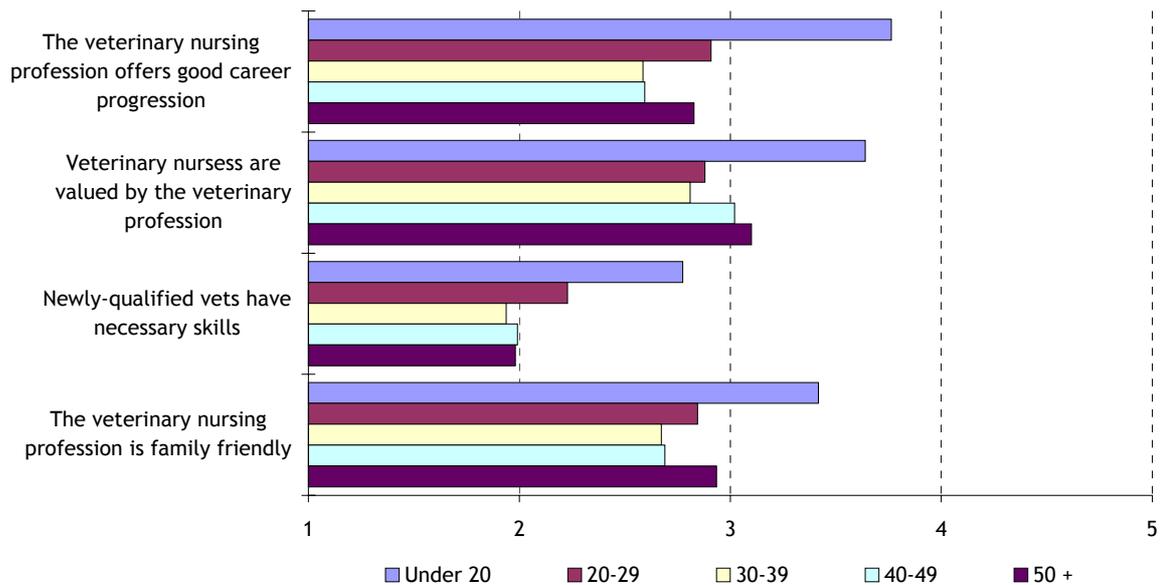
The survey was analysed further by various factors to see if there were any interesting differences by sub-group. This showed that the VNs' responses varied by age group (Figure 12.10), whether they wanted a veterinary nursing qualification (Figure 12.11) and whether or not respondents would choose their career if they could start again (Figure 12.12).

The largest differences in views were:

- VNs aged under 20 were generally the most positive in their views while those in their 30s were the least positive overall. Those under 20 were far more likely to believe that veterinary nursing offered good career progression, that they were valued by the veterinary profession, that newly-qualified VNs had the necessary skills and that the profession was family friendly.

- VNs who wanted to become qualified were clearly dissatisfied with their salaries but were satisfied with the support given to them by both others in the practice and their employers. Interestingly those who did not wish to become qualified were more positive about how they were valued by the veterinary profession and clients.
- When asked if they would still choose the same career, VNs who would make the same choice found the work more satisfying, felt more valued by the veterinary profession, were more satisfied with the support from their employer and found the job more family friendly.

**Figure 12.10: Attitudes of VNs showing marked differences by age group, mean scores**



Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Source: VN Survey, 2010

**Figure 12.11: Attitudes of VNs showing marked differences by wanting veterinary nursing qualification, mean scores**



Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Source: VN Survey, 2010

**Figure 12.12: Attitudes of VNs showing marked differences by whether they would still choose their profession, mean scores**



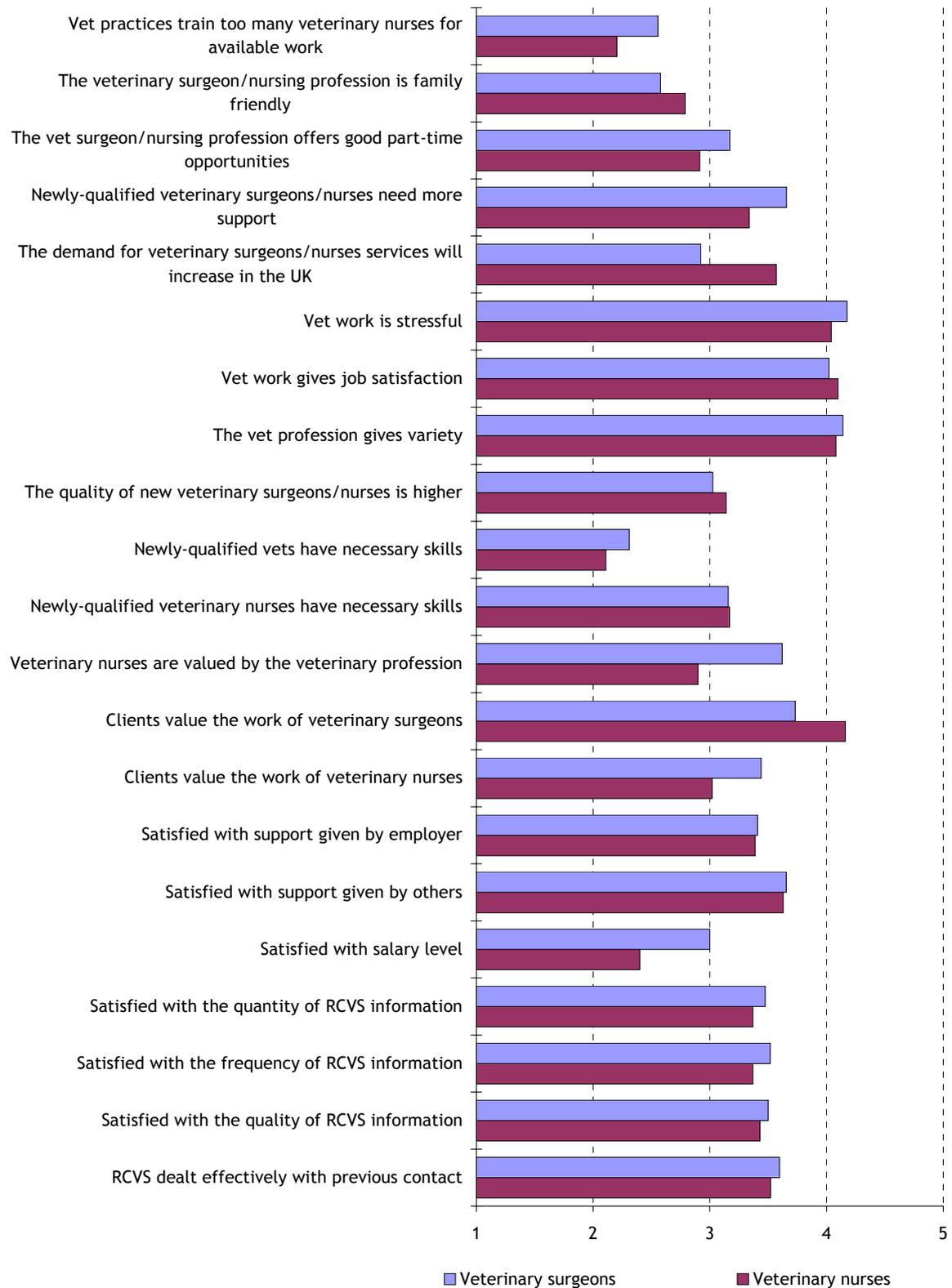
Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Source: VN Survey, 2010

### 12.3 COMPARISON OF THE VIEWS OF VS AND VN

The mean scores for the questions that have been asked of both VSs and VNs in 2010 are shown in Figure 12.13. Their views show greatest divergence concerning how valued VNs are by the veterinary profession with VSs being far more positive in their assessment. A similar pattern is seen when respondents are asked how much they agree with the view that clients value the contribution of each group: the VSs are more positive that VNs are valued and the nurses agree more strongly that VSs are appreciated. There is also a difference in how satisfied they are with their salary levels: VSs are neutral on this item but VNs show dissatisfaction. However, the VNs and VSs are in agreement that newly qualified VNs have the necessary skills and are both broadly satisfied with the support given by their employer and others.

Figure 12.13: Views of VVs and VNs about their professions, mean scores



Note: Scale is based on 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

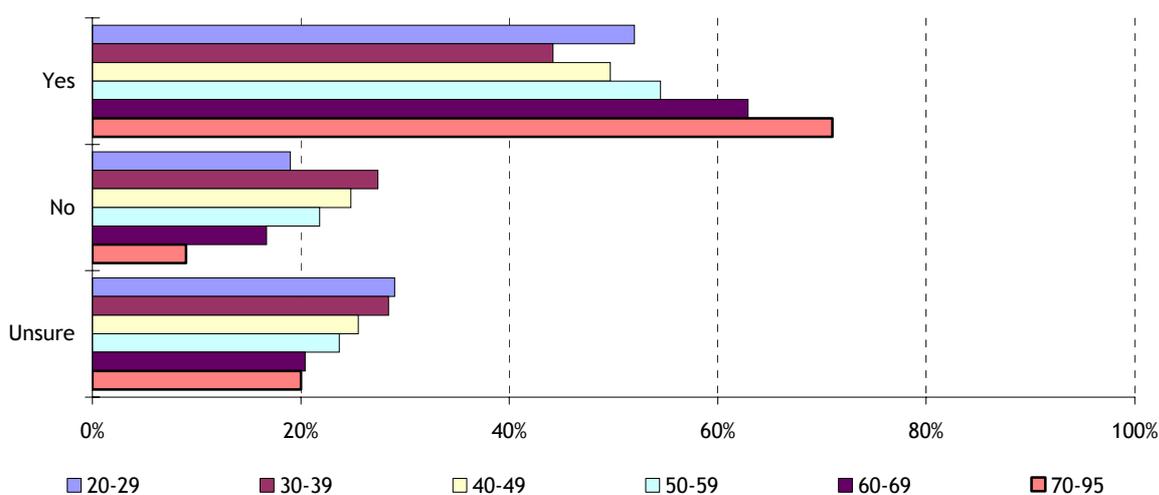
Source: VS and VN Surveys, 2010

## 12.4 REFLECTIONS ON CAREER CHOICE

## VS SURVEY

All VS respondents were asked whether, if they started their career again, they would still opt for the veterinary profession. Just over half (52.5 per cent) say they would still opt for a career in the veterinary profession, 21.8 per cent state that they would not, whilst the remaining 25.6 per cent are unsure. When these figures are compared by gender, there are no significant differences, however notably women appear slightly more likely than men to be unsure about whether they would opt to stay in the veterinary profession if they started their career again (55 per cent of females state 'unsure' compared to 45 per cent of males).

**Figure 12.14: Response of whether VSs would remain in their profession if they began their career again, by age**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

The average age of the veterinary surgeon respondents who state 'yes' they would remain in the veterinary profession again if they restarted their career is 47 years old, whilst those who state 'no' are, on average, 43 years old. The average age of those who are 'unsure' is 44 years old. These figures are similar to the 2006 report where the average age of those who stated 'yes' was 46 years old, whilst the average age of those who said 'no' was 43. Figure 12.14 shows a further breakdown of responses by age group. VSs within the older age brackets tend to have more certainty that they would still opt to remain in the profession if they began their career again. Those within the age bracket 30 to 39 years seem the least sure that they would remain in the profession if they started their career again.

## VN SURVEY

VNs were asked whether they would still opt to become a VN if they could start their career again. Similar to the proportions found in the VS survey, just over half of those who answered (54 per cent) stated 'yes,' 20 per cent said 'no' and 25.9 per cent are 'unsure.' These figures are similar to those obtained in the previous survey in 2008 where 55 per cent stated 'yes,' 19 per cent 'no,' and 26 per cent were 'unsure.' The average age of those who state 'yes' or 'unsure' is 31 years, whilst for those who state 'no' this is 32 years of age. There were no statistically significant differences when the responses were split into age bands.

## 12.5 BEST THINGS, SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND CHALLENGES

### VS SURVEY

All respondents were asked what the three best things were about a career in the veterinary profession. The five most common answers are presented below with illustrative quotes where possible:

- Variety (2010: 51 per cent, 2006: 48 per cent)  
*'No two days are exactly the same.'*
- Job satisfaction (2010: 36 per cent, 2006: 32 per cent)  
*'Job satisfaction when sick animals are healed and the clients are happy.'*
- Good client relationships (2010: 28 per cent, 2006: 28 per cent)  
*'Contact with appreciative clients.'*
- Working with/caring for animals (2010: 27 per cent, 2006: 33 per cent)  
*'Animal contact and the shared respect of other species as well as our own (although some days the respect for animals outweighs that for humans!!!).'*  
*'I like cows.'*
- Challenge/intellectually stimulating (2010: 21 per cent, 2006: 33 per cent)  
*'I enjoy the challenge of working on complicated medical cases.'*

Respondents were also invited to offer suggestions on the three things that, for them, would make the veterinary profession a better profession in which to work. The top five answers are presented below with illustrative quotes:

- Increased pay/fees/remuneration (2010: 38 per cent, 2006: (better pay/benefits) 32 per cent)  
*'Salary (for vets and VNs in all areas of the veterinary profession) that reflects the professional training, experience, time commitment and stress involved and on par with other medical professionals (Consultant Drs, dentists, GPs etc).'*  
*'Higher salary or remuneration for on-call work.'*
- Reduced out-of-hours/on-call work (2010: 19 per cent)  
*'Less on-call or at least time off in lieu of on-call.'*
- Better work/life balance or more flexible hours (2010: 19 per cent, 2006: 37 per cent)  
*'Better, more flexible working hours in practice.'*  
*'Better work-life balance ie more time away from clinical work.'*
- Reduce excessive hours (2010: 20 per cent)  
*'Shorter hours or more compensatory time off.'*
- Less regulation or bureaucracy (2010: 10 per cent, 2006: 10 per cent)  
*'Reduction of government red tape and their interference in the workplace.'*

Respondents were also asked their views on the what the three main challenges currently facing the veterinary profession are. The top six answers are presented below with illustrative quotes where possible:

- Economic climate (2010: 20 per cent)  
*'Financial - credit crunch.'*
- Agricultural sector/farming issues (2010:17 per cent, 2006: 25 per cent)  
*'The demise of animal-based agriculture in UK.'*
- Client expectations and demands (2010:15 per cent, 2006:14 per cent)  
*'The clients' demanding and expectant attitude to get an excellent vet service but yet pay little money.'*
- Misinformed public and bad PR (2010:12 per cent)  
*'Public perception of vets (after 'ashamed to be a vet', pending Panorama + vet involvement in pedigree debate).'*
- Affordability (2010: 11 per cent)  
*'Treating animals not insured when owners unable to afford procedures.'*
- Changing workforce demographics (2010: 10 per cent)  
*'Managing the current demographic of the veterinary profession to ensure it is not dangerously depleted by those leaving due to stress (or similar) or for maternity reasons.'*

#### VN SURVEY

Similar to the VSs, all VNs were asked what the three best things were about a career in the VN profession. The top five answers are presented below with a quote to highlight the point.

- Working with/caring for animals (2010: 56 per cent, 2008: 64 per cent)  
*'Being able to treat and help animals.'*
- Variety (2010: 50 per cent, 2008: 33 per cent)  
*'The variety of workload throughout the day.'*
- Job satisfaction (2010: 47 per cent, 2008: 44 per cent)  
*'Job satisfaction when there is a good outcome to cases.'*
- Successful outcomes/making a difference (2010: 22 per cent)  
*'Making a positive difference to the lives of animals in my care.'*
- Building up client relationships (2010: 20 per cent, 2008: 30 per cent)  
*'Building professional relationships with clients.'*

On suggestions for making the veterinary nursing profession a better profession in which to work. The five most common answers relate to:

- Pay/fees/remuneration (2010: 82 per cent, 2008: 81 per cent)  
*'Better pay, making salaries more public.'*
- Receive more respect/appreciation in general for the profession (2010: 31 per cent, 2008: (better recognition for the profession) 36 per cent)  
*'If it was regarded as a 'real' profession and treated like human nursing, for example.'*
- Receive more respect from employers/vets (2010: 23 per cent, 2008: 21 per cent)  
*'If some vet surgeons were taught to value their nurses more rather than as glorified cleaners.'*
- Have more responsibility (2010:18 per cent, 2008:16 per cent)  
*'Strong responsibility and involvement in individual cases.'*
- Better opportunities for career progression (2010: 15 per cent)  
*'More post-registration qualifications and better career prospects.'*

Respondents were also asked their views on the what they three main challenges currently facing the veterinary nursing profession are. The five most common answers are:

- Pay/fees/remuneration (2010: 48 per cent, 2008: 45 per cent)  
*'Poor salaries forcing people to leave the profession.'*
- Change of training/portfolio system (2010: 43 per cent)  
*'The change to student nurse training. At the moment I can assess students but can't be a mentor as a listed VN.'*
- Lack of support staff (VN support) (2010: 34 per cent)  
*'Not enough nurses to cover VSs.'*
- Obtaining respect for the profession generally (2010: 21 per cent, 2008: (lack of recognition for the profession) 27 per cent)  
*'Recognition of the profession/qualifications.'*
- Obtaining respect from employers/vets (2010:11 per cent)  
*'Gaining recognition/credit from the veterinary profession.'*

**Key comparisons between VSs and VNs**

- Both VSs and VNs are generally in agreement that they find their role valued by their clients and they have variety in their work and job satisfaction, however both have in common that they find their work stressful and VNs and VSs both generally disagree with the opinion that newly-qualified VSs have the necessary skills and that too many VNs are being trained.
- The views of both VSs and VNs show the greatest divergence concerning how valued VNs are by the veterinary profession with VSs being far more positive in their assessment.

- A similar pattern is seen when respondents are asked how much they agree with the view that clients value the contribution of each group; the VSs are more positive that VNs are valued and the nurses agree more strongly that VSs are appreciated.
- There is also a difference in how satisfied they are with their salary levels; VSs are neutral on this item but VNs show dissatisfaction. However, VNs and VSs are in agreement that newly qualified VNs have the necessary skills and are both broadly satisfied with the support given by their employer and others.
- Similar proportions of respondents from both professions say they would still opt for a career in the relevant profession if they were able to start again; just over half of veterinary surgeons and just over half of veterinary nurses.
- Variety tops the list for VSs when asked what are the best things about a career in their profession, whilst this comes second to working with/caring for animals for VNs. However both VSs and VNs generally agree that the best things about working in their profession are the variety, and job satisfaction it gives, as well as working with animals and building up client relationships.
- For both VSs and VNs, increased pay/fees/remuneration tops the list of things that, for them, would make theirs a better profession in which to work. VNs also see this as one of main challenges currently facing their profession, whilst VSs see the economic climate to be one of the main challenges.

#### **Evidence of trends**

- For VSs and VNs, comparison with the views of previous surveys shows that in both cases the majority of views remain largely unchanged. Where there was change, for VSs, the greatest change in views since 2006 is less agreement with the suggestion that farm animal work will continue to decline and that small animal work is increasing. For VNs, several items show greater disagreement on the 2008 findings, namely greater disagreement that too many VNs are being trained, that the quality of newly-trained VNs is higher, that clients value their work and that the demand for VNs will increase.
- Variety remains the most common answer given by VSs when asked what the best things are about a career in the veterinary profession.
- Increased pay/fees/remuneration is now the most commonly cited suggestion given by VSs on the things that, for them, would make their profession a better profession in which to work. In 2006 this was second to better work/life balance or more flexible hours. As in 2008, pay/fees/remuneration tops the list for VNs.

## 13 WELL-BEING

This year, for the first time, all respondents to both the VS and VN surveys were invited to complete a short section of questions on their well-being, not just in the work setting but about their feelings about their life in general. For this, the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS) was used; a 14-item scale of mental well-being<sup>9</sup>. It was hoped that inclusion of these questions would help RCVS to track the mental well-being of the profession at a population level over successive years of the survey. Respondents were informed that they were not obliged to complete the questions if they chose not to. This section provides details of the responses to the WEMWBS in both the VS and VN surveys.

**Please note:** differences in well-being scores between groups identified in this section must be interpreted with extreme caution because of the influence of confounding factors such as differences in the age and gender structure of the respective groups.

### 13.1 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

#### VS Survey

The mean score overall for all the respondents on all 14 item responses is 49 with scores ranging from a low of 14 to a high of 70.

Over half 'often' feel useful, think clearly and are able to make up their own mind. There are a few factors that they do not feel so positive about.

#### VN Survey

The mean score overall for all the respondents on all 14 item responses is 47 which is only marginally lower than VSs. Scores range from a low of 14 to a high of 70.

The well-being statements that nurses are most positive about are feeling useful, being able to make up their own mind, being interested in other people and thinking clearly.

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<sup>9</sup> Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS), NHS Health Scotland, University of Warwick and University of Edinburgh, 2006, all rights reserved.

### 13.2 BACKGROUND TO THE WARWICK-EDINBURGH MENTAL WELL-BEING SCALE (WEMWBS)

Each of the 14 item responses in WEMWBS is scored from one (none of the time) to five (all of the time) and a total scale score is calculated by summing the 14 individual item scores. The minimum score possible is 14, whilst the maximum is 70.

*'The average population mean is around 51 and this varies according to the population group studied. The mean score for the population under study can be compared with these provisional population norms to assess whether the level of mental well-being is above or below this level.'*

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)  
User Guide, Version 1, 2008

In their cross-sectional study of mental health and well-being and their associations in the UK veterinary profession, Bartram *et al.* (2009) found that, amongst their 1,796 VS respondents (a sample whose demographic and occupational profile was representative of the UK veterinary profession), the mean WEMWBS score for their VS sample was 48.85 (and the score was significantly higher for men than for women (49.86 versus 47.83). This is significantly lower than the corresponding means for a representative general population sample from Scotland (48.85 versus 51.05)<sup>10</sup>. There was also a significant relationship between WEMWBS and age, whereby the score increased by 0.05 for every one-year increase in age.

### 13.3 RESPONSES TO THE WEMWBS

#### VS SURVEY

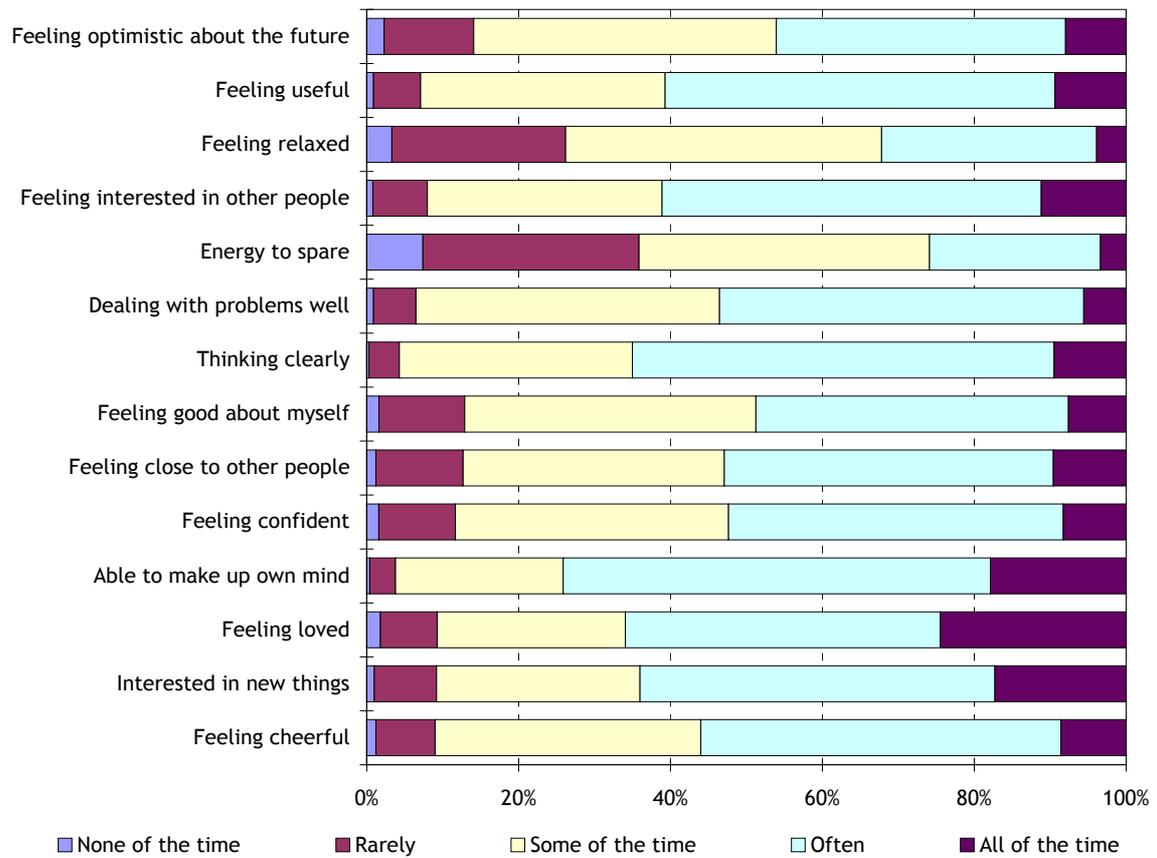
In the main, VSs are positive in the way they rate factors associated with their well-being in terms of their feelings about their life in general. This can be seen from the results in Figure 13.1. The mean score overall for all the respondents on all 14 item responses was 49 with scores ranging from a low of 14 to a high of 70.

Six people attained the lowest possible score of 14, ticking 'none of the time' to each of the 14 statements. Of these all are of white ethnicity, all qualified in the UK, there is an equal gender divide, one individual has dependent children and one cares for a dependent adult, there is an equal disability split, three are currently in full-time work whilst two are fully retired. Of those who are currently in full-time work, all three are working in the UK and working within the profession.

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<sup>10</sup> Bartram D J, Yadegarfar G, Baldwin D (2009), 'A cross-sectional study of mental health and well-being and their associations in the UK veterinary profession, *Soc Psychiatry Epidemiol*, Vol. 44, pp. 1075-1085

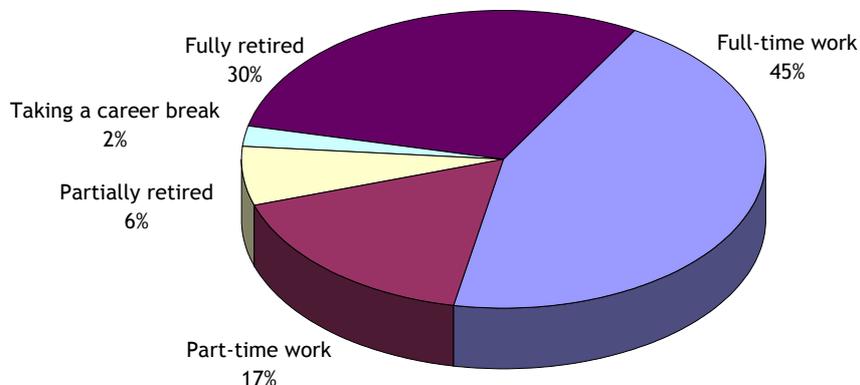
Figure 13.1: Self ratings for well-being statements, VS respondents



Source: VS Survey, 2010

Forty-seven people attained the highest possible score of 70, ticking 'all of the time' to each of the 14 statements. Of these 35 (74.5 per cent) are male, 45 (96 per cent) are white, none have dependent adult responsibilities, 17 per cent have dependent children, only two per cent have a disability, 75 per cent qualified in the UK and 45 per cent are in full-time work (see Figure 13.2). Of those currently working (ie not fully retired or taking a career break), 77 per cent are currently working in the UK and 92 per cent are working within the profession.

Figure 13.2: Breakdown of those scoring 70 by employment status, VS respondents



Source: VS Survey, 2010

Over half of the VSs surveyed were 'often' feeling useful, thinking clearly and able to make up their own mind. There were a few factors that they did not feel so positive about. For example, only around a quarter of the VSs surveyed were often feeling relaxed or had energy to spare.

The responses to these statements were analysed separately by a number of personal characteristics eg gender, employment status etc. in order to see if there were any groups of surgeons that had better mental well-being than others. There were some interesting differences and results can be found in Appendix Tables 3.16 to 3.22. In terms of employment status, respondents who were working on a voluntary basis, were on a career break or were partially or fully retired each had higher percentages stating that they were feeling optimistic about the future 'all of the time' than those working on either a full-time or part-time basis. In terms of gender, more men rated themselves as feeling relaxed 'often' and 'all of the time' than women.

In terms of scores overall, females score two points lower, on average, than males (see Table 13.1). The younger the individual the lower their average score with 20 to 49 year olds scoring five points lower, on average, than 60 to 95 year olds. In terms of ethnicity, whites score, on average, one point lower than other ethnic groups on well-being. Dependent children or adults appear to have no influence on VS WEMWBS scores. Females score, on average, three points or more lower than males if they are aged between 60 to 69 years old or have a disability. VSs under the age of forty score equal or lower, on average, than those 40 years and above across all minority ethnic groups. In terms of year of qualification, the findings indicate that the earlier the year, the higher the WEMWBS score, with VSs who qualified before 1964 scoring five points higher, on average, than those who qualified between 2005 and 2010.

**Table 13.1: Breakdown of average VS WEMWBS scores, mean**

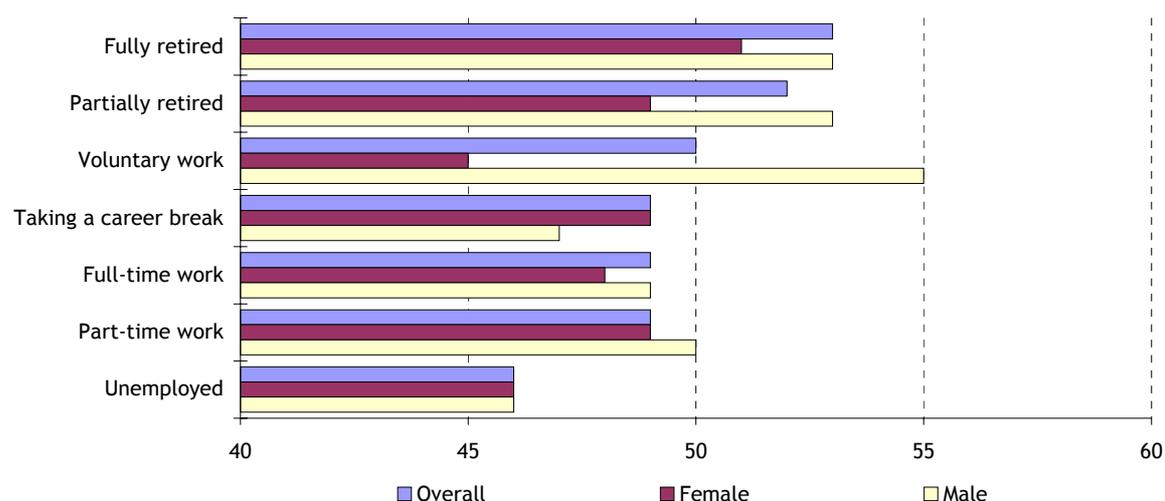
|                           | Overall | Female | Male | Below 40 years of age | 40 years of age & above |
|---------------------------|---------|--------|------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>             |         |        |      |                       |                         |
| Female                    | 48      |        |      |                       |                         |
| Male                      | 50      |        |      |                       |                         |
| <b>Age bands</b>          |         |        |      |                       |                         |
| 20 to 29                  | 48      | 48     | 49   |                       |                         |
| 30 to 39                  | 48      | 48     | 49   |                       |                         |
| 40 to 49                  | 48      | 48     | 49   |                       |                         |
| 50 to 59                  | 49      | 48     | 49   |                       |                         |
| 60 to 69                  | 53      | 50     | 53   |                       |                         |
| 70 to 95                  | 53      | 51     | 53   |                       |                         |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>          |         |        |      |                       |                         |
| White                     | 49      | 48     | 50   | 48                    | 50                      |
| Other ethnic group        | 50      | 49     | 50   | 49                    | 51                      |
| <b>Dependent children</b> |         |        |      |                       |                         |
| Yes                       | 49      | 49     | 49   | 49                    | 49                      |
| No                        | 49      | 48     | 50   | 48                    | 50                      |
| <b>Dependent adult</b>    |         |        |      |                       |                         |
| Yes                       | 49      | 48     | 50   | 47                    | 49                      |

|                           | Overall | Female | Male | Below 40 years of age | 40 years of age & above |
|---------------------------|---------|--------|------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Disability</b>         |         |        |      |                       |                         |
| No                        | 49      | 48     | 50   | 48                    | 50                      |
| Yes                       | 47      | 45     | 48   | 43                    | 48                      |
| <b>Qualification year</b> |         |        |      |                       |                         |
| No                        | 49      | 48     | 50   | 49                    | 50                      |
| Before 1964               | 53      | 51     | 53   |                       |                         |
| 1965 to 1974              | 52      | 50     | 53   |                       |                         |
| 1975 to 1984              | 49      | 48     | 49   |                       |                         |
| 1985 to 1994              | 48      | 48     | 49   |                       |                         |
| 1995 to 2004              | 48      | 48     | 49   |                       |                         |
| 2005 to 2010              | 48      | 48     | 49   |                       |                         |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

Vs who work within the profession score one point lower, on average, than those working outside it (49 compared to 50). There is little difference in well-being scores according to the number of hours worked in a basic work week for those working full-time outside the profession (below 34<sup>11</sup> hours: 50, 34 hours plus: 50) or for those working full-time within it (below 40<sup>12</sup> hours: 49, 40 hours plus: 48). There are also no differences in the scores of those working within or outside clinical veterinary practice, both score an average of 49. Fully retired or partially retired Vs score higher than those in full-time, part-time or voluntary work. Vs who are unemployed have the lowest mean score, seven points below fully retired Vs (see Figure 13.3). When broken down by gender, it is noteworthy that the average score for females who are currently undertaking voluntary work is ten points lower than that for males with the same employment status.

Figure 13.3: Average VN WEMWBS scores by employment status, mean



Source: VS Survey, 2010

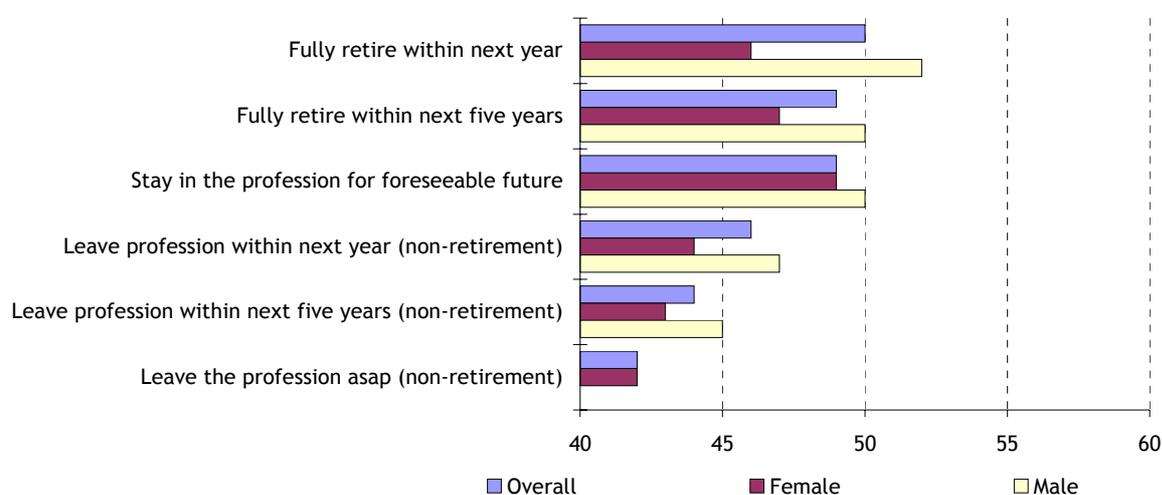
<sup>11</sup> Division at mean

<sup>12</sup> Division at mean

For those working outside the profession, those who work in an animal-related organisation score two points lower, on average than those who work in a non-animal related organisation (49 versus 51).

When looking at the career plans of those working within the veterinary profession, the findings indicate that Vets who intend to leave the profession as soon as possible for reasons other than retirement score lowest in terms of well-being, whilst those who plan to fully retire within the next year score the highest comparatively, with an eight point gap in between the two (see Figure 13.4). For those who intend to leave the profession as soon as possible for non-retirement reasons, males score two points lower than females in their average well-being score, whilst females score lower on well-being across the remaining career options. In particular, females who intend to fully retire within the next year score six points lower on well-being than males.

**Figure 13.4: Average VS WEMWBS scores by career plans, mean**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

**Table 13.2: Average VS WEMWBS scores by position in practice**

|                     | Overall mean |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Sole Principal      | 50           |
| Director            | 49           |
| Equity Partner      | 49           |
| Part-time Assistant | 49           |
| Consultant          | 49           |
| Locum               | 49           |
| Salaried Partner    | 48           |
| Full-time Assistant | 48           |
| Other               | 48           |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

Those who are sole principal in their practice, overall, have higher well-being scores than those in other positions in the practice, scoring two points higher than full-time assistants and salaried partners (see Table 13.2).

Interesting to note, VSs currently working within the profession who say that their practice does not take steps to provide 24/7 cover have a higher average score on their well-being than VSs from practices that cover the work themselves especially those whose practices use a locum for this (see Table 13.3).

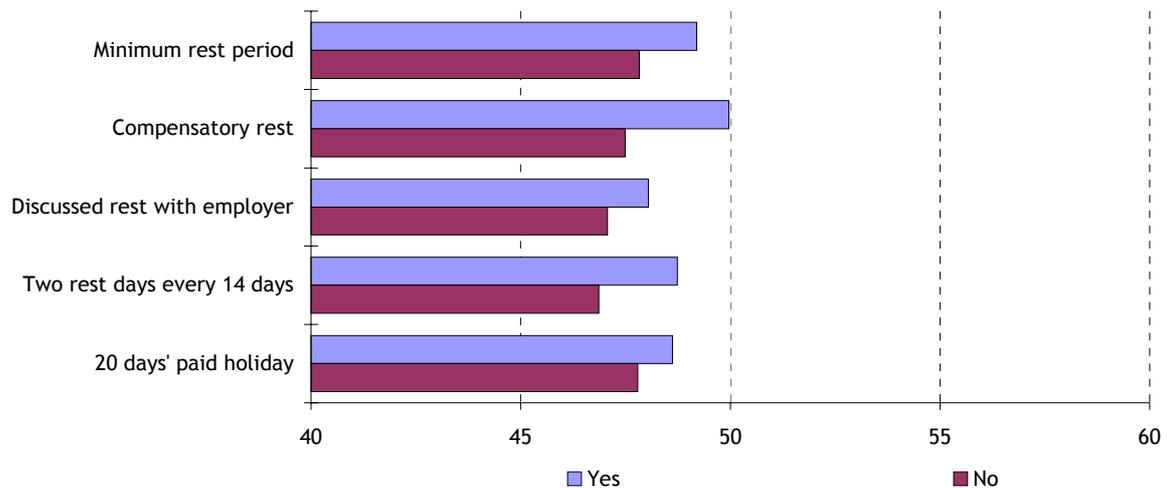
**Table 13.3: Average VS WEMWBS scores by practices approach to 24/7 emergency cover**

|   | Overall mean |
|---|--------------|
| Do not provide for 24/7 cover                                     | 51           |
| Practice covers out-of-hours work                                 | 49           |
| Use dedicated out-of-hours services provider                      | 49           |
| Another local practice does most or all of the out-of-hours work  | 49           |
| Co-operates with other local practices to share out-of-hours work | 48           |
| Practice covers out-of-hours work with locum                      | 47           |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

With regards to the minimum rest period of 11-hours in each 24-hour period that is specified by the Working Time Regulations, VSs currently working within practice who do receive a minimum 11-hour rest period score one point higher than those who do not in their well-being (49 versus 48) (see Figure 13.5).

**Figure 13.5: Average VS WEMWBS scores by rest periods, mean**

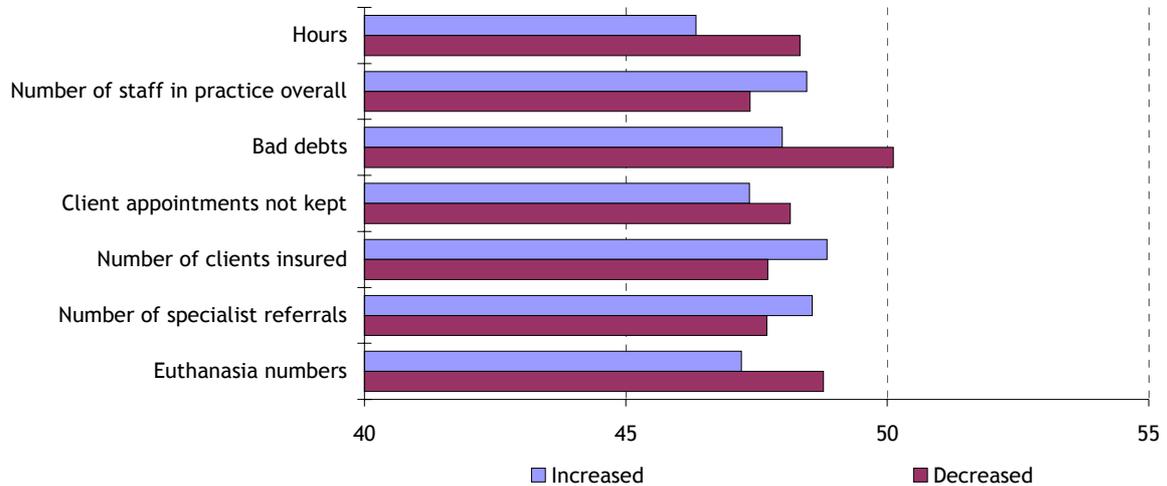


Source: VS Survey, 2010

However, for those who do not receive this, the average well-being score rises two points to 50 if they have signed a workforce agreement that provides other compensatory rest. For those who have not signed up to any such agreement the average score drops one point to 47. However, this average does rise to 48 if they have discussed rest with their employer or stays at 47 if they have not. VSs working within the profession also score lower on well-being if they do not have at least two rest days every 14 days (47 compared to 49 for those who do) or if they do not have at least 20 days' paid holiday per year (plus bank holidays and pro-rata for part-time) (48 compared to 49 for those who do). For females who do not have at least two rest days, the average falls to 45, compared to 48 for males. Figure 13.5 shows therefore that there is a relationship between adherence to the Working Time Regulations and VS well-being.

In addition to these findings, the survey also finds that VNs working within the profession who believe that the current economic climate is having an impact on the practices where they work score two points lower, on average, to those who see no impact (see Figure 13.6).

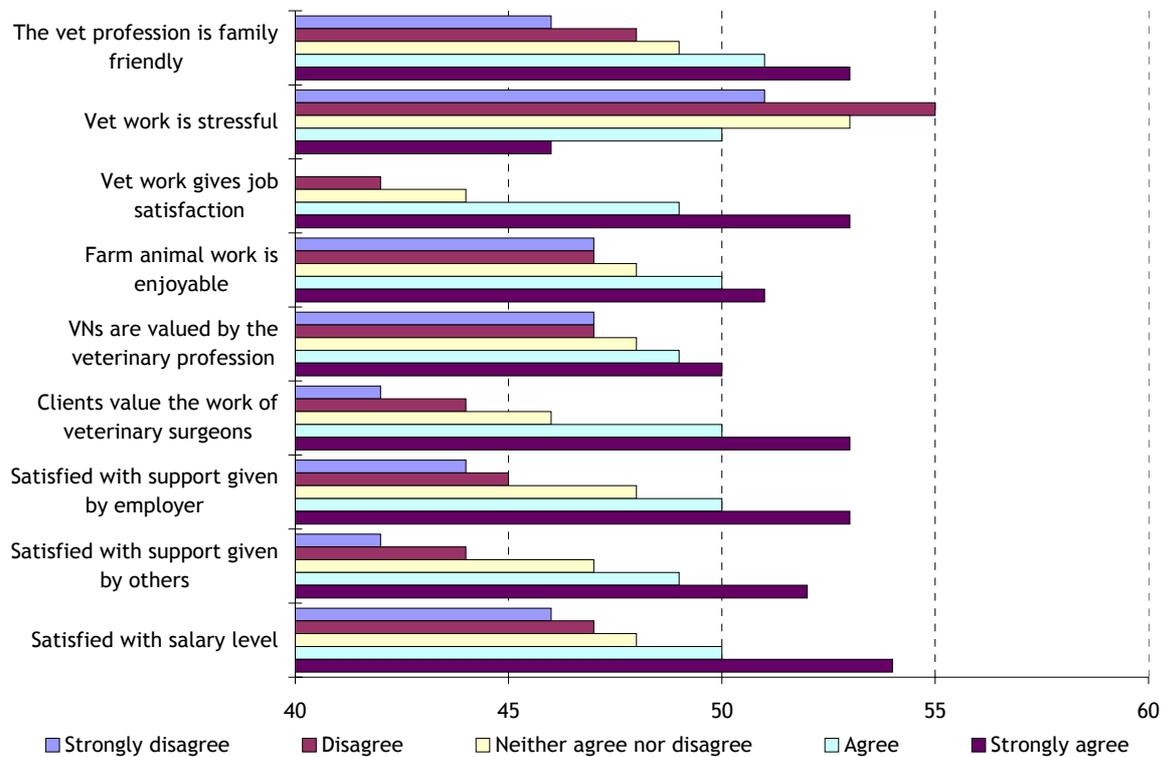
**Figure 13.6: Average VS WEMWBS scores by impact of economic climate, mean**



Source: VS Survey, 2010

Of those who see an impact well-being scores appear to vary according to the nature of the impact. For instance a reduction in hours yields a higher well-being score than an increase, an increase in bad debts yields a lower well-being score than a decrease, as does an increase in euthanasia numbers.

**Figure 13.7: Average VS WEMWBS scores by views on the professions, mean**



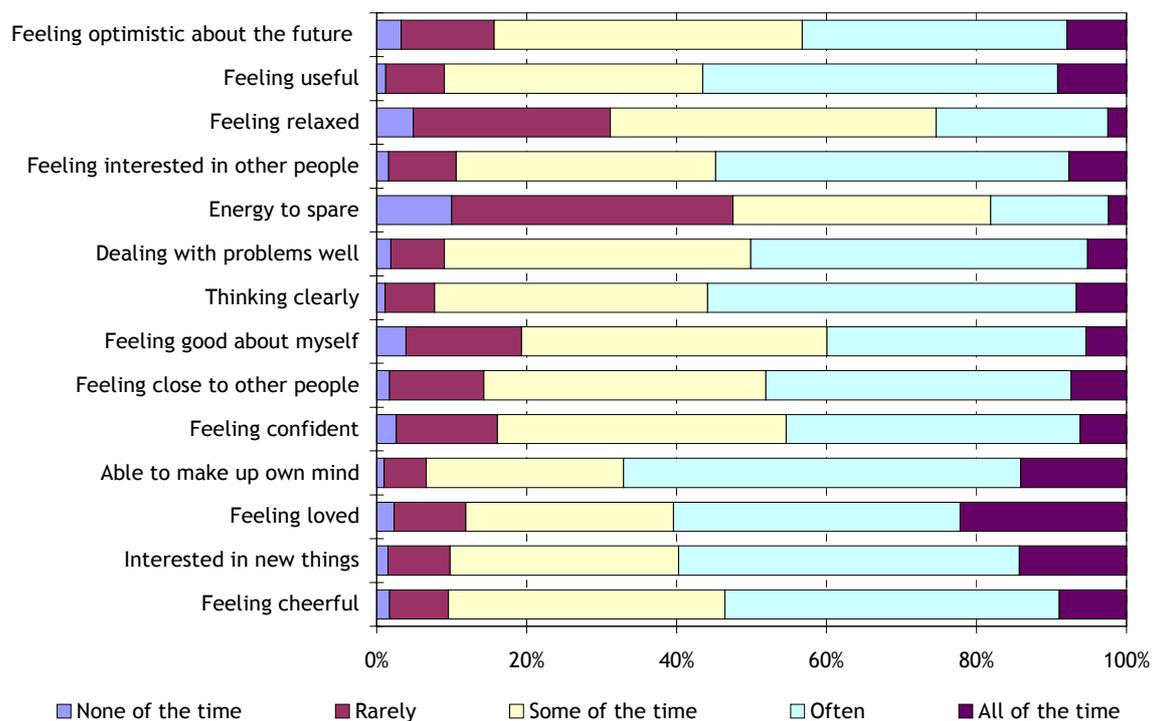
Source: VS Survey, 2010

When comparing well-being scores to answers given to a series of attitudinal statements pertaining to views about the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions, it is evident that there is a consistent trend in that the greater the strength of agreement with ‘positively worded’ statements the greater the well-being score. In turn, the greater the agreement with a ‘negatively worded’ statement *ie* ‘vet work is stressful’, generally the lower the well-being score (see Figure 13.7), suggesting a more positive view of the professions is related to greater well-being.

When reflecting on their career choice, VSs who say they would still opt to become a vet if they could start their career again achieve a well-being score, on average, six points higher than those who would not (51 versus 45).

VN SURVEY

Figure 13.8: VN self-ratings for well-being statements



Source: VN Survey, 2010

Again, as was the case with veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses are overall very positive in the way they rate factors associated with their well-being in terms of their feelings about their life in general. This can be seen from the results in Figure 13.8. The mean score overall for all the respondents on all 14 item responses was 47 which is only marginally lower than it was for surgeons. Scores ranged from a low of 14 to a high of 70. The well-being statements that nurses were most positive about were feeling useful, being able to make up their own mind, being interested in other people and thinking clearly. In terms of statements that staff were not so positive about, only around a quarter of the surgeons surveyed ‘often’ had energy to spare and the same figure for nurses was even lower.

These results were analysed separately by a number of personal characteristics, eg gender, etc. in the same manner as they were for surgeons. Again there are some interesting results. In terms of scores overall, as with VSs females score two points lower, on average than males, however it must be acknowledged that this based on a proportionally small number of males (see Table 13.4). Younger VNs (under 20 years old) and older VNs (over 60) score more highly on well-being than those in other age brackets. In terms of ethnicity, white VNs score

two points lower, on average, than other ethnic groups. This gap increases further if VNs from other ethnic groups are below forty years of age.

VNs with dependent children score two points higher on well-being than those with no child dependents, whilst those with dependent adults score one point lower than those with no such responsibilities. Overall, VNs who are undertaking unpaid clinical work experience score the highest in well-being compared to other employment status'.

**Table 13.4: Breakdown of average VN WEMWBS scores, mean**

|                                   | Overall | Below 40 years<br>of age | 40 years of age<br>& above |
|-----------------------------------|---------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                     |         |                          |                            |
| Female                            | 47      |                          |                            |
| Male                              | 49      |                          |                            |
| <b>Age bands</b>                  |         |                          |                            |
| Under 20                          | 50      |                          |                            |
| 20 to 29                          | 47      |                          |                            |
| 30 to 39                          | 48      |                          |                            |
| 40 to 49                          | 47      |                          |                            |
| 50 to 59                          | 48      |                          |                            |
| 60 to 69                          | 50      |                          |                            |
| 70 to 95                          | 50      |                          |                            |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                  |         |                          |                            |
| White                             | 47      | 47                       | 48                         |
| Other ethnic group                | 49      | 50                       | 47                         |
| <b>Dependent children</b>         |         |                          |                            |
| Yes                               | 49      | 49                       | 48                         |
| No                                | 47      | 47                       | 47                         |
| <b>Dependent adult</b>            |         |                          |                            |
| Yes                               | 46      | 45                       | 47                         |
| No                                | 47      | 47                       | 48                         |
| <b>Disability</b>                 |         |                          |                            |
| Yes                               | 44      | 45                       | 43                         |
| No                                | 48      | 47                       | 48                         |
| <b>Employment status</b>          |         |                          |                            |
| Full-time work                    | 47      | 47                       | 47                         |
| Part-time work                    | 48      | 48                       | 48                         |
| Clinical work experience (paid)   | 48      | 48                       | -                          |
| Clinical work experience (unpaid) | 50      | 50                       | -                          |
| Unemployed                        | 48      | 47                       | *                          |
| Taking a career break             | 48      | 48                       | 48                         |
| Fully retired                     | 49      | *                        | *                          |
| <b>Qualification year</b>         |         |                          |                            |

|              | Overall | Below 40 years<br>of age | 40 years of age<br>& above |
|--------------|---------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1965 to 1974 | 49      |                          |                            |
| 1975 to 1984 | 48      |                          |                            |
| 1985 to 1994 | 48      |                          |                            |
| 1995 to 2004 | 48      |                          |                            |
| 2005 to 2013 | 47      |                          |                            |

Note: \*Mean scores not calculated due to small numbers

Source: VN Survey, 2010

As with VSs, the findings indicate that the earlier the year of qualification, the higher the WEMWBS score, with VNs who qualified between 1965 and 1974 scoring two points higher, on average, than those who qualified between 2005 and 2013.

**Table 13.5: Average VN WEMWBS scores by main employment**

|   | Overall mean |
|---|--------------|
| Outside the VN profession   | 50           |
| Outside clinical practice but in work using your VN qualification | 49           |
| Within VN clinical practice                                       | 47           |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

Table 13.5 shows that VNs who work within the VN profession score lower on well-being than those who work outside the VN profession; VNs working within clinical practice score, on average, three points lower than those working outside the profession. For those working outside clinical practice, those working within an animal-related organisation score one point lower, on average, than those working for a non-animal-related organisation (49 versus 50). For VNs working full-time outside clinical veterinary practice, those who work above below 39 hours in a basic working week score one point less on well-being than those who work 39 hours or more (below 39 hours: 48, 39 hours or more 49), whilst there is no difference in scores according to hours worked for those working full-time within clinical veterinary practice (below 39<sup>13</sup> hours: 47, 39 hours or more: 47).

**Table 13.6: Average VN WEMWBS scores by career plans**

|                                     | Overall mean |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Fully retire in the next five years | 49           |
| Stay for the foreseeable future     | 48           |
| Leave as soon as possible           | 45           |
| Leave within the next year          | 44           |
| Leave in the next five years        | 44           |

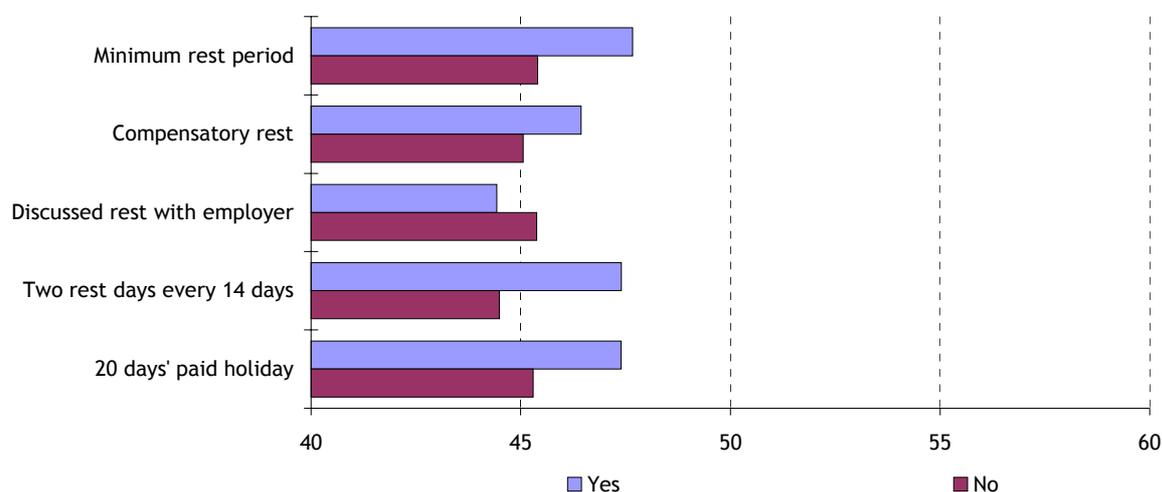
Source: VN Survey, 2010

When looking at the careers plans of those currently working within clinical practice, VNs who intend to retire in the next five years or stay for the foreseeable future score higher on

<sup>13</sup> Division at mean

well-being than those who intend to leave, especially VNs who intend to leave with a year to five years (see Table 13.6). The mean score of those who intend to fully retire within the next year was not calculated due to small numbers. There are few differences across age groups in the means shown.

**Figure 13.9: Average VN WEMWBS Scores by rest periods, mean**



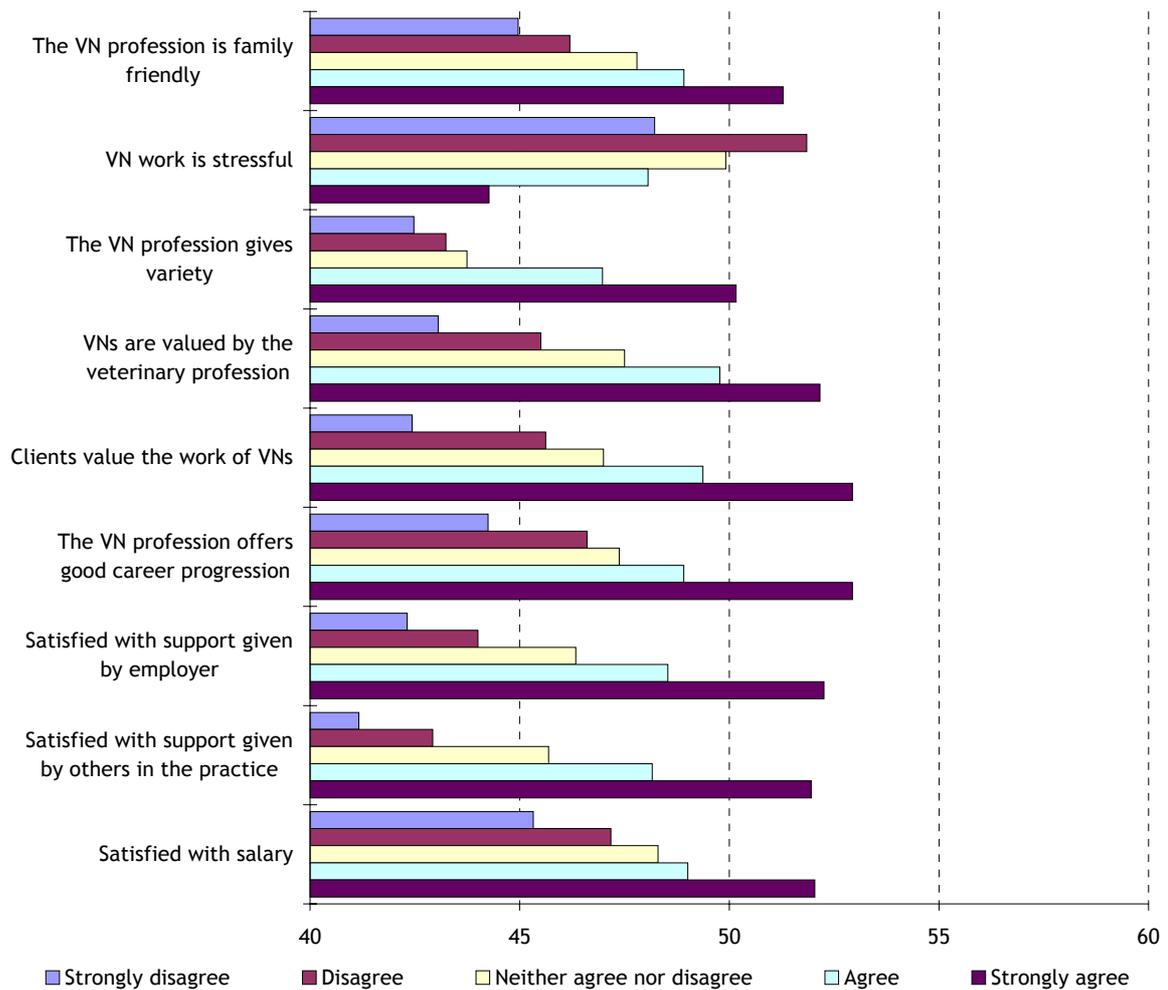
Source: VN Survey, 2010

With regard to the minimum rest period of 11-hours in each 24-hour period that is specified by the Working Time Regulations, VNs currently working within clinical veterinary practice who do receive a minimum 11-hour rest period score, on average, three points higher on well-being than those who do not however this average increases by one point if they have signed up to a workforce agreement that provides other compensatory rest (see Figure 13.9). Interestingly those who have not signed up to such an agreement but have discussed rest with their employer show a lower well-being score compared with those who have not discussed rest with their employer. In addition, VNs who have at least two days rest every 14 days and/or at least 20 days paid holiday per year (plus bank holidays, pro-rate for part-time) show higher well-being than those who do not.

As with VNs, when comparing well-being scores to answers given to a series of attitudinal statements pertaining to views about the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions, it is evident that there is a consistent trend in that the greater the strength of agreement with 'positively worded' statement, the greater the well-being score. In turn, the greater the agreement with a 'negatively worded' item *ie* 'VN work is stressful', generally the lower the well-being score (see Figure 13.10), suggesting a more positive view of the professions is related to greater well-being.

When reflecting on their career choice, VNs who say they would still opt to become a VN if they could begin their career again achieve a well-being score of 49, four points higher than those who would not.

Figure 13.10: Average VN WEMWBS Scores by views on the profession, mean



Source: VN Survey, 2010

**Key comparisons between VSs and VNs**

- Both VSs and VNs are overall very positive in the way they rate factors associated with their well-being and their feelings about their life in general, however the mean score for VNs is two points lower than that for VSs and whilst in line with other research, for both VSs and VNs the means are significantly lower than the corresponding means for a representative general population sample from Scotland.
- Only around a quarter of VSs surveyed ‘often’ had energy to spare and the same figure for VNs was even lower.

## 14 CONCLUSION

This report has presented the findings from the 2010 RCVS surveys of the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions, carried out on behalf of the RCVS by IES. The surveys have provided RCVS, and other interested parties, with an evidence-based view of the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions and important insights about the changes taking place within them.

The response rates for both surveys this year have been slightly lower than those achieved in previous years. This overall decline may be due to a combination of 'survey fatigue' (the upsurge in surveys in recent years) and also to the time required to complete the long questionnaires. Nevertheless, response rates can be considered good, given the length and complexity of the survey questionnaires. Interesting to note is the consistency in the proportions of respondents opting to complete the survey online rather than complete the postal version. Only a small proportion of respondents opted for an online version, as with previous years, which may have been expected to have increase over the years.

### 14.1 GENERAL COMPARISONS BETWEEN VS AND VN

For the first time, this year, the VS and VN surveys were run at the same time, which allowed some interesting comparisons in responses to be made. Several of the key comparisons are as follows:

- This year the gender split in VS respondents provides further evidence of the 'feminisation' of the VS profession, with an increase on previous years in the proportion of females represented. However, whilst there is an equal gender split amongst VS respondents, the VN profession continues to be almost exclusively female.
- Across both professions those who work outside the profession are, on average, older than those who work within, this is particularly the case for VNs, where the average age of those in full-time work is much lower than VSs, demonstrating that the VN profession is generally a much newer profession, a finding supported even further by a comparison of the average year of qualification for the two professions which showed that the average year for VSs is 12 years earlier than that for VNs. In addition, whilst the same proportion of respondents across both professions provide care to a dependent adult, this is more prevalent in VNs under 50, while for VSs, carers are more likely to be over 50, indicating that VNs may also have adult caring responsibilities at a younger age.
- Whilst still in the majority, a smaller proportion of VSs qualified in the UK compared to VNs. VSs, however, are much more varied in their country of qualification than VNs, indicating that the VS profession is more mobile across international borders.

- In terms of current employment, VSs who are employed on a full-time and part-time basis work more hours on average than VNs who are employed in the same capacity. There is little difference in the unemployment rate or the proportions who are taking a career break and both groups tend to cite 'parental responsibilities/looking after children' as the main reason for their break.
- There are slight discrepancies in responses of VSs and VNs in relation to the amount of time VNs spend on certain tasks, with VSs tending to overestimate how often veterinary nurses spend on various tasks, such as caring for hospitalised animals, monitoring of anaesthesia, processing and taking radiographs and performing in-house laboratory tests, when compared to VN responses.
- In terms of the Working Time Regulations, VSs are more likely to not have a minimum 11-hour rest period in 24 hours than VNs. Half of VSs do not have a minimum 11-hour rest period compared to 17 per cent of VNs. However, similar proportions of VSs and VNs receive at least two days' rest every 14 days, with only a slightly higher (seven per cent) proportion of VNs receiving this.
- The VS profession is more highly qualified than the VN, making is harder to enter the profession and making greater demands on VSs for qualifications, therefore the percentage of VNs who hold additional qualifications is not as high as VSs and VSs spend on average, slightly more days away from work receiving CPD than VNs.
- Whilst there is an increase in the number of respondents in both professions who access the internet, it is interesting that there is no corresponding increase in the proportions who completed the survey online. However, this may partially be explained by the continued desire of both VSs and VNs to prefer to receive RCVS communications via the post.
- In terms of respondents' views on their professions, both VSs and VNs are generally in agreement that they find their role valued by their clients and they have variety and satisfaction in their work; however, both have in common that they find their work stressful. The views of both VSs and VNs show the greatest divergence concerning how valued VNs are by the veterinary profession, with VSs being far more positive in their assessment and in their salary levels.
- Over half of VS and VN respondents say they would still opt for a career in their profession if they were able to start again and both generally agree that the best things about working in their profession are the variety and job satisfaction it gives, as well as working with animals and building up client relationships, and that increased pay/fees/remuneration for them, would make theirs a better profession in which to work.
- Both VSs and VNs are overall very positive in the way they rate factors associated with their well-being and their feelings about their life in general. However, whilst in line with other research, for both VSs and VNs the means are significantly lower than the corresponding means for a general population sample.

## 14.2 EVIDENCE OF TRENDS

For VSs, there is little change in the proportion outside the profession who are employed, self-employed or working on a voluntary basis since the 2006 survey, with only a four per cent increase in the proportions who are employed and working voluntarily. In addition there is little change in the average time they have been in their current organisation, 8.2 years in 2010, 8.5 in 2006 and only a two per cent increase on the proportion who say they intend to seek employment in the profession in the future; 16 per cent compared to 14 per cent in 2006.

The percentage of VSs working within the profession in government has decreased by six per cent since 2000, whilst a nine per cent rise is evident in those working in practice. There is a notable increase in average hours worked within practices in 2010, with those working full-time generally working on average longer hours than in 2006. Eighty-three per cent of those currently working in the profession plan to stay within it for the foreseeable future, a one per cent increase on the 2006 survey findings.

For VNs there is a small rise in the proportion working outside clinical veterinary practice who are employed, with, in turn, a slight decline in the proportions who are self-employed and working on a voluntary basis, compared to 2008. For VNs, time spent outside clinical veterinary practice remains, on average, the same as that found in 2008, as does the proportion of respondents who have worked in clinical veterinary practice in the past. In addition, there is evidence of a six per cent decline in the proportion of VNs who are intending to seek employment in clinical veterinary practice since the 2008 survey and a nine per cent rise in the proportion who are unsure of their intentions.

For VNs working in clinical veterinary practice, there is general decline in the average number of hours worked by VNs in a typical week across nearly all types of practice since 2008.

For VSs, there is a two per cent increase in the proportion of working time spent on dogs between 2006 and 2010. There is also a very slight decline in the proportion of working and on-call time spent with cattle. Overall, the time spent on small animals continues to increase, while farm animal work is decreasing. Whilst it was predicted that by 2011 the amount of time spent with small animals would decrease, in particular that spent with dogs, in 2010 the actual trend shows an increase in the proportion of time spent with dogs, with a corresponding decrease in the proportion of time spent with rabbits and birds.

The highest proportion of VN working time, on average, is spent with small animals; however, the proportion of time spent has decreased by 11 per cent since 2008. This year we added the option of 'cleaning' which may have previously been included in work with small animals in previous years.

In terms of position in practice, nearly half of VNs say they are nurses in their practice, which is a slight drop on the proportion in the 2008 survey. Almost one-third say they are a head nurse, which is an eight per cent increase on the proportion in 2008. There is also a slight drop in the proportion of student nurses and those ticking 'other' this year, with a corresponding increase in the proportion of practice managers/administrators. The mean number of full-time assistants/employees in VNs' practices is four. This is a one per cent rise of the average of three found in 2006. The proportion of VSs who are sole principals in the practice in which they work has nearly halved since 2002.

According to VSs, 41 per cent of practices have partnership ownership, whilst a quarter are owned by a sole principal, with a further 20 per cent owned by a limited company – all showing a slight decline on the 2006 survey findings. However, there is a small rise in the proportion of ownership by a corporate concern.

There is a slight increase on the 2008 survey findings in the proportion of VNs working within clinical veterinary practice who intend to stay in clinical practice for the foreseeable future.

In terms of their views of their profession, in the main views of both VSs and VNs remain largely unchanged in comparison with previous years. Where there was change, for VSs, the greatest change in views since 2006 is less agreement with the suggestion that farm animal work will continue to decline and that small animal work is increasing. For VNs, several items show greater disagreement on the 2008 findings, namely greater disagreement that too

many VNs are being trained, that the quality of newly-trained VNs is higher, that clients value their work and that the demand for VNs will increase.

Variety remains the most common answer given by VSs when asked what the best things are about a career in the veterinary profession. Increased pay/fees/remuneration is now the most commonly-cited suggestion given by VSs on the things that, for them, would make theirs a better profession in which to work. In 2006 this was second to better work/life balance or more flexible hours. As in 2008, pay/fees/remuneration tops the list for VNs.

### 14.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Looking to the future, the trends identified in this report suggest that the outlook for the VS and VN professions may be as follows:

- The feminisation of the VS profession will continue in the coming years. This finding is evidenced by the fact that less than one quarter of veterinary students who started their degree (24 per cent) or obtained their veterinary degree (21 per cent) in 2009 are male<sup>14</sup>. In addition, male VSs have a notably higher average age than female VSs (53 compared to 38 respectively) and, perhaps unsurprisingly, the trends therefore indicate that there will be a rise in the proportion of males who are fully retired. However, the current economic climate may impact upon this given that trends indicate a future decline in the proportion of VSs, overall, who intend to retire within the next five years, suggesting that VSs may need to continue working instead of retiring if the recession persists.
- The proportion of VSs who are taking career breaks on the grounds of parental responsibilities looks set to rise, considering the 13 per cent rise this year, with career breaks for the reason of travel or study likely to lessen in coming years. This may be partially due to the current economic climate, but also demonstrates the increasing feminisation of the profession. Similarly, the proportion of VS respondents in part-time work may continue to increase, with a corresponding decline in the proportion in full-time work for both males and females.
- Trends, together with public sector spending cuts, indicate that there may be a rise in the proportion of VSs working within the profession within practice, given the nine per cent rise since 2000, with a corresponding decline in the proportion working in government, following the six per cent decline since 2000.
- For VNs working in clinical veterinary practice, we may continue to see a decline in the average hours worked across nearly all types of practice given the slight decline since 2008 seen this year. There could also be a rise in the proportion of VNs who intend to stay in clinical practice for the foreseeable future, given the three per cent rise since 2008.
- For VSs working within clinical veterinary practice, there may continue to be a reduction in the proportion who are sole principals and whose practice is under sole principal or partnership ownership, and an increase in the proportion owned by a limited company or corporate concern. For VNs an increasing number are termed 'head nurse' and this looks likely to continue.
- The allocation of work hours for VSs working in clinical practice may continue to favour dogs and small animals overall, with a corresponding decline in the time allocated to cattle. However, this could be a short-term effect related to the recession, which seems to

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<sup>14</sup> RCVS (2010), *RCVS Facts: The Annual Report of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons: Part 2*

be leading clients to prioritise spending on certain animals over others. The decline in VN working time spent directly with dogs and small animals overall may continue, if VNs spend increasing time on other activities such as running clinics and becoming involved in practice administration/management.

- The reduction in days VSs spend away from the workplace for CPD-related activity may be set to continue given the concern from VSs that one of the main challenges to the profession is the economic climate and therefore possible cost-cutting may hit such activities.

APPENDIX 1: VS SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE 2010

**Section A: About you**

Please provide the following details to help us analyse your responses. These details will only be used to produce statistics.

- A1 Gender** Female <sup>1</sup> Male <sup>2</sup>
- A2 What is your age?** Years:
- A3 What is your ethnicity? These are the main headings from the 2001 census. (Please tick one box only)**  
 White <sup>1</sup> Asian/Asian British <sup>3</sup> Chinese <sup>5</sup>  
 Mixed <sup>2</sup> Black/Black British <sup>4</sup> Other (please specify) <sup>6</sup>
- 
- A4 Do you have dependent children living with you?** Yes <sup>1</sup> No <sup>2</sup>
- A5 Do you provide care to a dependent adult?** Yes <sup>1</sup> No <sup>2</sup>
- A6 Do you consider yourself to have a disability or medical condition that limits the work you can do?** Yes <sup>1</sup> No <sup>2</sup> Go to A8
- A7 If YES, please tell us more about the nature of your disability or medical condition, and how it limits what you can do at work.**
- A8 In what year did you qualify?** Year:
- A9 Where did you qualify? (Please tick one box only)**  
 UK <sup>01</sup> Australia <sup>05</sup> South Africa <sup>09</sup>  
 Ireland <sup>02</sup> New Zealand <sup>06</sup> Other <sup>10</sup>  
 Other EU <sup>03</sup> Canada <sup>07</sup>  
 Europe, outside EU <sup>04</sup> USA <sup>08</sup>
- A10 Of which veterinary organisations are you currently a member? (Please tick all that apply)**  
 a) None .....  d) BVA specialist division (eg BSAVA, BCVA).....   
 b) BVA .....  e) Other UK associations.....   
 c) BVA Territorial Division (eg Herts & Beds/Metropolitan)  f) European/International associations .....

**Section B: About your work status**

- B1 What is your main current employment status (in any capacity, regardless of whether you are in veterinary or non-veterinary employment)? (Please tick one box only then go to the section/question indicated next to it)**  
 Full-time work ..... <sup>1</sup> Go to C1 Unemployed ..... <sup>5</sup> Go to B4  
 Part-time work ..... <sup>2</sup> Go to B3 Taking a career break ..... <sup>6</sup> Go to B8  
 Partially retired ..... <sup>3</sup> Go to B2 Fully retired..... <sup>7</sup> Go to B10  
 Voluntary work..... <sup>4</sup> Go to C1
- If you are partially retired:**
- B2 In what year did you partially retire?** Year:
- Continue with B3**
- If you are working part-time or are partially retired:**
- B3 How many hours do you work in a typical week?** Hours:
- Now go to C1**

**If you are unemployed:**

- B4** How many months have you been unemployed? Months:
- B5** Are you seeking work? Yes.....  1 No .....  2 Go to B11
- B6** Are you seeking work within the veterinary profession? Yes .....  1  
 No, but may do in future .....  2  
 No, and do not intend to .....  3
- B7** Are you seeking work outside the veterinary profession? Yes .....  1  
 No, but may do in future .....  2  
 No, and do not intend to .....  3
- Now go to B11

**If you are taking a career break:**

- B8** For what purpose have you taken your current career break? (Please tick one box only)
- |                     |                            |  |                            |
|---------------------|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Travel.....         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Parental leave/looking after children..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Study.....          | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Looking after adult dependant.....         | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |
| Illness (self)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Other reason.....                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 |
| Sabbatical.....     | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |  |                            |
- B9** For how many months do you expect your current career break to last from start to finish? Months:   
 Now go to B11

**If you are fully retired:**

- B10** In what year did you retire? Year:
- Continue with B11

**If you are fully retired, taking a career break or unemployed:**

- B11** What was your most recent employment? (Please tick one box only)
- |   |                            |  |                            |
|---|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Worked outside the veterinary profession..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Veterinary-related industry.....         | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| Clinical veterinary practice.....             | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Government veterinary work.....          | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Veterinary-related teaching.....              | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Other veterinary-related employment..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |
- B12** Where were you employed? (Please tick one box only)
- |                         |                             |                   |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| UK.....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 01 | New Zealand.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> 06 |
| Ireland.....            | <input type="checkbox"/> 02 | Canada.....       | <input type="checkbox"/> 07 |
| Other EU.....           | <input type="checkbox"/> 03 | USA.....          | <input type="checkbox"/> 08 |
| Europe, outside EU..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 04 | South Africa..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 09 |
| Australia.....          | <input type="checkbox"/> 05 | Other.....        | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 |
- Now go to H1

**Section C: All veterinary surgeons in current work (veterinary or non-veterinary)**

- C1** In which country do you work? (Please tick one box only)
- |                         |                             |          |                   |                             |          |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| UK.....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 01 | Go to C2 | New Zealand.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> 06 | Go to C6 |
| Ireland.....            | <input type="checkbox"/> 02 | Go to C6 | Canada.....       | <input type="checkbox"/> 07 | Go to C6 |
| Other EU.....           | <input type="checkbox"/> 03 | Go to C6 | USA.....          | <input type="checkbox"/> 08 | Go to C6 |
| Europe, outside EU..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 04 | Go to C6 | South Africa..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 09 | Go to C6 |
| Australia.....          | <input type="checkbox"/> 05 | Go to C6 | Other.....        | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 | Go to C6 |
- C2** What is the first part of the postcode of your main workplace (eg RG41, SW1A, LE1)? (We are asking this only to get a picture of where vets are working, not to track individual responses) Postcode:
- C3** If you are NOT a British national and work in the UK, why did you come to the UK, this time? (If you are a British national, Go to C6)
-

- C4 In what year did you come to the UK, this time? Year:
- C5 How long, from now, do you plan to stay in the UK? Years:
- C6 In your main employment are you working within or outside the veterinary profession? *Within the profession* .....  1 Go to E1  
*Outside the profession* .....  2 Go to D1

**Section D: All veterinary surgeons working OUTSIDE the veterinary profession**

- D1 Are you: *Employed* .....  1 *Working on a voluntary basis* .....  3  
*Self-employed* .....  2
- D2 In your job do you have managerial or supervisory responsibility? Yes  1  
 No  2
- D3 Do you work full-time or part-time? *Part-time*  1  
*Full-time*  2
- D4 What is your basic annual salary (excluding unsocial hours, benefits & overtime)? £
- D5 What is your basic working week (excluding overtime)? Hours:
- D6 How many hours overtime did you work in the last month? Hours:
- D7 Do you get paid extra for overtime? Yes, always  1  
 Yes, sometimes  2  
 No, never  3
- D8 Whether you answered yes or no, do you have the option of taking 'time off in lieu' for overtime? Yes  1  
 No  2
- D9 Is the organisation in which you work? *Animal-related*  1  
*Non-animal-related*  2
- D10 How long have you worked in this organisation? Number of years:
- D11 How long have you worked outside the veterinary profession? Number of years:
- D12 Have you ever worked in clinical veterinary practice? Yes  1  
 No  2 Go to D14
- D13 If YES, how long for? Number of years:
- D14 If NO, why not?
- D15 Do you intend to seek employment in the veterinary profession in the future? (Please tick one box only)  
*Yes, within the next year* .....  1 *No* .....  3  
*Yes, longer term* .....  2 *Unsure* .....  4

Go to H1

**Section E: All veterinary surgeons working WITHIN the veterinary profession**

**E1 The following question asks you to tell us about the type of organisation(s) in which you work, the hours you work in a typical week (excluding meal breaks) and the hours you spend on call in a typical week.**

*Note: 'Hours worked' should be the hours you attend at your practice (including university practice) or place of work during 'open hours' (eg 08.30 to 19.30) when clients can visit the practice or when outside visits are made by appointment. If the practice or place of work is normally 'open' during Saturdays, and Sundays and you are on duty, include your attendance as hours worked. Please include overtime above your contractual hours.*

*Note: 'Hours on-call' are the hours that you are required to be available for emergencies, if this is applicable to you. Please include all time 'on-call' regardless of how the time is spent. It is important that 'on-call' time spent on veterinary or administrative work is not double counted as hours worked.*

|   | Type of organisation: (if you work in more than one tick all that apply) | Hours worked in a typical week (including overtime but excluding on-call) | Hours on-call in a typical week (if applicable) when required to be available but not on premises | Hours on-call in a typical week (if applicable) when required to be available & present on premises |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Clinical practice:</b>                   |  |   |   |   |
| a) Mixed practice                           | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| b) Small animal/exotic practice             | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| c) Equine practice                          | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| d) Farm practice/Production animal practice | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| e) Other first opinion practice             | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| f) Referral practice/consultancy            | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <b>Government:</b>                          |  |   |   |   |
| g) DEFRA                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| h) Animal Health                            | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| i) Other UK government                      | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| j) Overseas government                      | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <b>University:</b>                          |  |   |   |   |
| k) Veterinary school                        | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| l) Other                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <b>Other:</b>                               |  |   |   |   |
| m) Commerce and Industry                    | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| n) Charities and Trusts                     | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| o) Research Council                         | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| p) Other                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |

**E2 Which of the above a) to p) is your main employment? (Enter the appropriate letter)**

Main employment

- E3** If you have indicated you are required to be on-call and present are you normally:
- Awake all night .....  1
- Asleep when not working .....  2
- E4** What are your career plans with regard to the veterinary profession? (Please tick one box only)
- Stay in the profession for the foreseeable future (including partial retirement) .....  1
- Fully retire within the next year .....  2
- Fully retire within the next five years .....  3
- Leave the profession as soon as possible (for reasons other than retirement) .....  4
- Leave the profession within the next year (for reasons other than retirement) .....  5
- Leave the profession within the next five years (for reasons other than retirement) .....  6
- E5** If you are planning to leave for reasons other than retirement, please tell us why: (Please tick all that apply)
- a) Pay .....
- b) Not rewarded/valued (non-financial) .....
- c) Study .....
- d) Career change/new challenge .....
- e) Emigration/travel .....
- f) Care of dependants/to have family .....
- g) Dissatisfaction with veterinary work (eg hours, stress) .....
- h) Fed-up with the way the veterinary profession is going .....
- i) Lack of career opportunities .....
- j) Burden of bureaucracy/legislation .....
- k) Other (please specify below) .....
- 
- E6** Do you work in clinical veterinary practice? Yes  1 Go to F1
- No  2 Go to G1

**Section F: All veterinary surgeons working within clinical veterinary practice**

- F1** What is your position in the practice? (Please tick one box only)
- Sole Principal .....  1 Go to F4
- Director (of limited company) .....  2 Go to F4
- Equity Partner .....  3 Go to F4
- Salaried Partner .....  4 Go to F4
- Full-time Assistant (or employee of limited company) .....  5 Go to F4
- Part-time Assistant (or employee of limited company) .....  6 Go to F4
- Consultant .....  7 Continue
- Locum .....  8 Continue
- Other (please specify below) .....  9 Go to F4
- 
- F2** If you ticked 'Locum' or 'Consultant' above, are you currently working in more than one practice? Yes  1
- No  2 Go to F4
- F3** If YES, how many practices altogether? Number of practices
- F4** How is the practice you work in owned? (Please tick one box only)
- Sole Principal .....  1
- Partnership .....  2
- Limited Liability Partnership .....  3
- Limited Company .....  4
- Corporate concern .....  5
- Charity .....  6
- Other .....  7

**F5 Please tell us how many people are employed in your practice in the categories below. If the practice operates from more than one premises, or is part of a commercial or charitable chain, tell us only about the people employed in your immediate workplace.**

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| <b>Veterinary surgeons:</b>                               |                      |
| a) Partners/Directors/Owners.....                         | <input type="text"/> |
| b) Full-time Assistants/Employees.....                    | <input type="text"/> |
| c) Part-time Assistants/Employees.....                    | <input type="text"/> |
| d) Locums.....  | <input type="text"/> |
| <b>Others:</b>  |                      |
| e) Partners/Directors/Owners (no vet qualifications)..... | <input type="text"/> |
| f) Practice Manager.....                                  | <input type="text"/> |
| g) Qualified (listed) VNs.....                            | <input type="text"/> |
| h) Qualified (registered) VNs.....                        | <input type="text"/> |
| i) Qualified (unlisted) VNs.....                          | <input type="text"/> |
| j) Student VNs.....                                       | <input type="text"/> |
| k) Qualified VCA, ANA.....                                | <input type="text"/> |
| l) Other qualified clinical staff.....                    | <input type="text"/> |
| m) Unqualified VN Assistant.....                          | <input type="text"/> |
| n) Other non-qualified clinical staff.....                | <input type="text"/> |
| o) Clerical/Reception staff.....                          | <input type="text"/> |
| p) Domestic cleaning staff.....                           | <input type="text"/> |
| q) Other staff.....                                       | <input type="text"/> |

**F6 Please indicate which of the following clinical and non-clinical work VETERINARY NURSES undertake in your practice, and how often. If there are no VNs in your practice, please omit this question and go to F7. (Please tick one box on each row)**

|  | Every day                  | Several times per week     | Once per week or less      | Rarely                     | Never                      |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) Caring for hospitalised animals   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| b) Nursing clinics/counselling   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| c) Nutritional advice/counselling  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| d) Administration of medicines by injection  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| e) Setting up intravenous fluids   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| f) Dispensing of medications to clients  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| g) Administration of anaesthetic pre-medication                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| h) Monitoring of anaesthesia   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| i) Assisting during surgical procedures  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| j) Performing minor surgical procedures  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| k) Dental hygiene work   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| l) Assisting with dental extractions   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| m) Clinical cleaning (eg consult rooms, theatre, instruments)                        | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| n) Taking radiographs  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| o) Processing radiographs  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| p) Assisting with ultrasound   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| q) Performing in-house laboratory tests  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| r) Taking blood samples  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| s) Teaching/supervising student VNs  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| t) Reception work  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| u) Practice administration   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| v) General domestic cleaning (eg consulting rooms, waiting room, kitchen, corridors) | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

**F7 Do you use the services of technicians/therapists (eg, hoof trimmers, equine dentists, physiotherapists, artificial inseminators) in your practice?** Yes  1 No  2 Go to F9

**F8 If YES, please select a description below, and indicate, by ticking the appropriate box, whether they are employed or contracted:**

|                      | <i>Employed by the practice</i> | <i>Contracted</i>          |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) Behaviourist      | <input type="checkbox"/> 1      | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| b) Dentist           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1      | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| c) Farrier           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1      | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| d) Hoof/foot trimmer | <input type="checkbox"/> 1      | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| e) Hydrotherapist    | <input type="checkbox"/> 1      | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| f) Osteopath         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1      | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| g) Physiotherapist   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1      | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| h) Other             | <input type="checkbox"/> 1      | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |

**F9 Do you have clinical specialists/consultants working in your practice? Include small animals, equine, food animal, exotic, avian, and fish specialists.** Yes  1 No  2 Go to F11

**F10 If YES, please indicate in which specialist area your practice offers services, and who does it by ticking the appropriate boxes below.**

|                        | <i>I do it</i>             | <i>Someone else employed by the practice does it</i> | <i>Someone who visits the practice does it</i> |
|------------------------|----------------------------|--|--|
| a) Anaesthesia         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| b) Avian               | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| c) Cardiology          | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| d) Dentistry           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| e) Dermatology         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| f) Diagnostic imaging  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| g) Epidemiology        | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| h) Exotics             | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| i) Fish                | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| j) Food hygiene/safety | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| k) Health & Production | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| l) Internal medicine   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| m) Neurology           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| n) Oncology            | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| o) Ophthalmology       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| p) Orthopaedic surgery | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| q) Pathology           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| r) Public Health       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| s) Reproduction        | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| t) Soft tissue surgery | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |
| u) Other               | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3                     |

**F11 Please indicate the percentages of your working time and on-call time, during a typical week, which is spent on veterinary work with each of the following species or disciplines, and the percentage of time which you spend on practice management or administrative work. Please also estimate the time you expect to be spending on these categories in five years from now, in 2015.**

|   | % of working time NOW<br>(excluding on-call) | % of on-call time NOW | % of working time 5 yrs from<br>now (2015) (excluding on-call) |
|---|--|-----------------------|--|
| a) Dogs                                       | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| b) Cats                                       | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| c) Rabbits                                    | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| d) Birds                                      | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| e) Other small animal (eg tortoises, gerbils) | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| f) Exotics*                                   | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| g) Horses (excluding LVI)                     | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| h) Beef cattle (excluding LVI)                | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| i) Dairy cattle (excluding LVI)               | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| j) Sheep (excluding LVI)                      | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| k) Pigs (excluding LVI)                       | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| l) Poultry                                    | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| m) Laboratory animals                         | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| n) Meat hygiene                               | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| o) Fish for food                              | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| p) Local Veterinary Inspector (LVI)           | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| q) Practice management/administration         | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |
| r) Other                                      | <input type="text"/>                         | <input type="text"/>  | <input type="text"/>   |

% of working time

% of on call time

*\*Exotics are animals that are more likely to be known as living wild in another climate than as household pets in the UK. Snakes and iguanas would be considered exotics but not rabbits, budgerigars or tortoises.*

- F12 Do you personally carry out *routine* (not out-of-hours) visits to your clients? Yes  1  
 No  2 Go to F14
- F13 If YES, what is the: **average** (one way, in miles) distance you travel to a routine call?   
**maximum** (one way, in miles) distance you travel to a routine call?
- F14 Which of the following best describes your practice's approach to providing 24/7 emergency cover? (Please tick one box only)
- The practice generally covers its out-of-hours work itself .....  1  
 The practice generally covers its out-of-hours work with the help of a locum .....  2  
 We use a dedicated out-of-hours services provider .....  3  
 Another local practice does most or all of the out-of-hours work .....  4  
 The practice co-operates with other local practices to share out-of-hours work .....  5  
 The practice does not take steps to provide for 24/7 cover .....  6  
 Other (please specify below) .....  7
- 
- F15 Do you personally do any out-of-hours work? Yes  1  
 No  2
- F16 When on-call, how many full-time vets are you on-call for? Number of vets:
- F17 Does your practice carry out any domiciliary visits out-of-hours to provide emergency veterinary care? Yes  1  
 No  2 Go to F19
- F18 If YES, how far in: **time** (in minutes) is the furthest client from the furthest practice in your out-of-hours rota ?.....   
**distance** (in miles) is the furthest client from the furthest practice in your out-of-hours rota ?...   
**distance** (in miles) is the average client from the practice in your out-of-hours rota?.....
- F19 With regards to the minimum rest period of 11 hours in each 24-hour period, that is specified by the Working Time Regulations, do you have this 11-hour rest period every 24 hours? Yes  1 Go to F22  
 No  2
- F20 If NO, have you signed up to a workforce agreement that provides other compensatory rest? Yes  1 Go to F22  
 No  2  
 Don't know  3 Go to F22
- F21 If NO, have you discussed it with your employer? Yes  1  
 No  2
- F22 Do you have at least two rest days every 14 days? Yes  1  
 No  2
- F23 Do you have at least 20 days' paid holiday per year (plus bank holidays), pro-rata for part-time? Yes  1  
 No  2
- F24 Do you think the current economic climate is having an impact on the practice(s) where you work? Yes  1 Continue  
 No  2 Go to G1  
 Don't know  3 Go to G1

**F25 If YES, in what ways has the economic climate impacted? (Please tick one box on each row)**

|  | <i>Increased</i>           | <i>Decreased</i>           | <i>Stayed the same</i>     |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) Hours                               | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| b) Number of vets                      | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| c) Number of VNs                       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| d) Number of staff in practice overall | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| e) Bad debts                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| f) Demand for services overall         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| g) Demand for high-cost procedures     | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| h) Client appointments not kept        | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| i) Charges                             | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| j) Number of clients insured           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| k) Number of specialist referrals      | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| l) Euthanasia numbers                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| m) Other (please specify below)        | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |

**F26 If you would like to give us more detail on how the economic climate has impacted on the practice you work in, please do so below.**

Continue with G1

**Section G: All veterinary surgeons working WITHIN the veterinary profession**

- G1 What is your basic annual salary (excluding unsocial hours, benefits and overtime)? (Please note: if you own your practice, answer this by telling us how much, on average, you take annually for remuneration)** £
- G2 What is your basic working week (excluding on-call and overtime)?** Hours
- G3 How many hours overtime did you work in the last month?** Hours
- G4 Do you get paid extra for overtime?**  
 Yes, always  1  
 Yes, sometimes  2  
 No, never  3
- G5 Do you have the option of taking 'time off in lieu' for overtime?**  
 Yes  1  
 No  2
- G6 Are you on an on-call rota?**  
 Yes  1  
 No  2 Go to G9
- G7 If YES, are you paid for being on-call?**  
 Yes  1  
 No  2
- G8 Whether or not you are paid for being on-call, do you receive additional payment if you are called out?**  
 Yes  1  
 No  2

**G9 Does the employer provide you with the following? (Please tick all that apply)**

|                                |                          |  |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| a) Accommodation.....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | g) Free/reduced pet insurance .....              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Health insurance .....      | <input type="checkbox"/> | h) Training/CPD support (time and/or cost).....  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Uniform/work clothing ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | i) RCVS retention fees paid (whole or part)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Pension .....               | <input type="checkbox"/> | j) Professional subscriptions (eg BVA) .....     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Car.....                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | k) Professional indemnity insurance.....         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) No/reduced vet fees .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | l) Other.....                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**G10 How many days have you spent, in the last 12 months, away from your workplace due to the following?**

|   |                      |                                   |                      |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| a) CPD (giving).....                          | <input type="text"/> | f) Maternity/paternity leave..... | <input type="text"/> |
| b) CPD (receiving).....                       | <input type="text"/> | g) Compassionate leave .....      | <input type="text"/> |
| c) Holidays .....                             | <input type="text"/> | h) Caring for dependants .....    | <input type="text"/> |
| d) Veterinary politics, committees, etc ..... | <input type="text"/> | i) Other .....                    | <input type="text"/> |
| e) Illness.....                               | <input type="text"/> |                                   |                      |

**G11 Other than your primary veterinary qualification, do you hold any further work-related qualifications, are you studying for any qualifications or do you plan to study for any qualifications in the next five years? (Please tick all that apply)**

|  | Further qualifications held | Currently studying for   | Plan to study for in the next five years |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| a) Bachelors degree (non-veterinary)               | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| b) Business-related qualification                  | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| c) Certificate (RCVS)                              | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| d) Diploma (RCVS European or American College)     | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| e) Fellowship (RCVS)                               | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| f) Masters degree (veterinary)                     | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| g) Masters degree (non-veterinary)                 | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| h) Overseas qualification                          | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| i) PGCE or equivalent teaching qualification       | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| j) PhD   | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| k) Specialist (RCVS, European or American College) | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| l) Other   | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |

**G12 Which of the following CPD provision methods have you used in the past 12 months? (Please indicate the total hours spent on each in last 12 months)**

|   |                      |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| a) External weekend courses/study days..... | <input type="text"/> | f) Distance learning, online or correspondence courses..... | <input type="text"/> |
| b) External weekday courses/study days..... | <input type="text"/> | g) Books/journals/articles.....                             | <input type="text"/> |
| c) External evening courses/study days..... | <input type="text"/> | h) Seminars.....  | <input type="text"/> |
| d) In-courses, eg within own practice.....  | <input type="text"/> | i) Other .....  | <input type="text"/> |
| e) Videos/DVDs .....                        | <input type="text"/> |   |                      |

**G13 Which CPD provision method do you prefer? (Please write in the letter, a, b) etc from the list above)**

First preference .....       Second preference .....

**G14 What percentage of your CPD in the past year was funded by the following means? (Note: percentages should total 100%)**

|  |                      |                              |                      |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| a) Free .....  | <input type="text"/> | d) Employer or practice..... | <input type="text"/> |
| b) Yourself .....  | <input type="text"/> | e) Grant.....                | <input type="text"/> |
| c) Commercial sponsorship (eg drug or pet food company)..... | <input type="text"/> | f) Other.....                | <input type="text"/> |

**Section H: Electronic communications and the use of the Internet**

This section should be completed by everyone responding to the survey.

**H1 Do you have access to the Internet? (Please tick one box only)**

Yes, at home .....  1                      Both .....  3  
 Yes, at work .....  2                      Neither .....  4

**H2 Where do you mainly use the Internet? (Please tick one box only)**

At work .....  1                      Both .....  3  
 At home .....  2                      Neither .....  4

If you have access at home or at work or both, how often do you use the internet?

**H3 At home: (Please tick one box only)**

Frequently, eg several times a week .....  1                      Rarely, eg a few times a year .....  3  
 Occasionally, eg a few times a month .....  2                      Never .....  4

**H4 At work: (Please tick one box only)**

Frequently, eg several times a week .....  1                      Rarely, eg a few times a year .....  3  
 Occasionally, eg a few times a month .....  2                      Never .....  4

**H5 In the past 12 months, how frequently have you used the RCVS website? (Please tick one box only)**

Frequently eg several times a week .....  1                      Rarely eg a few times over the year .....  3  
 Occasionally eg a few times a month .....  2                      Never .....  4

**H6 Do you use email regularly?**

Yes  1  
 No  2 Go to H8

**H7 If YES, do you have a work/home email address? (Please tick one box only)**

Yes, work email address .....  1                      Both home and work .....  3  
 Yes, home email address .....  2

**H8 Do you frequently (ie several times per week) use a networking site (eg Facebook, Twitter, vet sites)? (Please tick all that apply)**

Yes, general site .....  1                      No .....  3  
 Yes, vet sites .....  2

**H9 How would you prefer to receive RCVS communications?**

Via work email .....  1                      In the post .....  3  
 Via home email .....  2                      Via networking site .....  4

**H10 Would you pay your annual registration/retention fees or other RCVS fees online (on a secure connection) if this was possible?**

Yes  1  
 No  2

**H11 Do you receive RCVS e-News?**

Yes  1  
 No  2

If NO, but you would like to sign up, please visit: [www.rcvs.org.uk/enews](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/enews) - it's free**H12 Which of the following is your BEST source of information about the RCVS? (Please tick one box only)**

RCVS News .....  1                      RCVS e-News .....  6  
 RCVS VN Standard .....  2                      RCVS Review/Facts (annual report) .....  7  
 RCVS website .....  3                      Veterinary/Vet nursing press .....  8  
 Other website(s) .....  4                      Other .....  9  
 Meetings .....  5

**H13 How do/would you prefer to register for RCVS events?**

Online  1  
 Email  2  
 Post  3

If you qualified after 31 December 2006 continue to Section I. Otherwise go to Section J: 'Your views about the Veterinary Profession'.

**Section I: For recently-qualified Veterinary Surgeons**  
 You should only complete this section if you qualified in 2007 onwards, ie the new Professional Development Phase (PDP) arrangements apply to you.

- 11 If you graduated in 2007 onwards, on graduation did you: (Please tick one box only)**
- |  |                            |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| <i>Go straight into practice</i> .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <i>Take some time out for travel</i> .....                       | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| <i>Begin post-graduate studies</i> .....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <i>Take some time out as you were unable to find a job</i> ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |
| <i>Begin an internship</i> .....                         | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <i>Other (please specify below)</i> .....                        | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 |
| <i>Work abroad for a charity or other practice</i> ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |  |                            |
- 
- 12 If you went into practice, were you given training during your first year at work?** Yes  1  
 No  2
- 13 If you went into practice, did you commence your Professional Development Phase? (Please tick one box only)**
- |  |                            |   |                            |
|--|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| <i>Within the first month of starting work</i> ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <i>After month six</i> .....                    | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| <i>From month two to six</i> .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <i>Did not start/have not started yet</i> ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
- 14 If you have been in practice for more than 12 months and have not yet completed your PDP, is this because: (Please tick one box only)**
- |  |                            |   |                            |
|--|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| <i>I have not started it yet</i> .....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <i>Have not received adequate support in practice</i> ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| <i>Not been able to gain required experience</i> ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <i>Have stopped the PDP before finishing it</i> .....       | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| <i>Did not start straight away</i> .....               | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <i>Other reason (please specify)</i> .....                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |
- 
- 15 Did you receive appraisals or performance review during your first year in practice?** Yes  1  
 No  2 Go to 17
- 16 If YES, did this take account of your progress with the Professional Development Phase?** Yes  1  
 No  2
- 17 How easy or difficult did you find it to obtain your first post, after qualifying? (Please tick one box only)**
- |   |                            |         |  |                            |
|---|----------------------------|---------|--|----------------------------|
| <i>Haven't yet found first post</i> ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Go to J | <i>Neither difficult or easy</i> ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| <i>Very difficult</i> .....               | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |         | <i>Easy</i> .....                      | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| <i>Difficult</i> .....                    | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |         | <i>Very easy</i> .....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |
- 18 How many practices did you approach before finding your first post? (Please tick one box)**
- |                          |                            |                               |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>One</i> .....         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <i>Eleven to twenty</i> ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| <i>Two to five</i> ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <i>Over twenty</i> .....      | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| <i>Six to ten</i> .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |                               |                            |
- 19 How long did it take to find your first post, after qualifying?** Years:..... Months:.....

**Section J: Your views about the veterinary profession**

This section should be completed by everyone responding to the survey.

**J1 We would like to gather your views about various aspects of the veterinary profession. (Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements, by selecting one box on each row.)**

|  | <i>Strongly disagree</i>   | <i>Disagree</i>            | <i>Neither agree nor disagree</i> | <i>Agree</i>               | <i>Strongly agree</i>      |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) Veterinary schools are recruiting too many students for the available future work                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| b) Veterinary practices are training too many VNs for the available future work                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| c) The veterinary profession is a 'family friendly' profession in which to work                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| d) The veterinary profession offers good opportunities for those wishing to work part-time               | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| e) Newly qualified veterinary surgeons need more support now than in the past                            | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| f) Over the next ten years, the demand for veterinary services will increase overall in the UK           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| g) Veterinary work is stressful  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| h) Veterinary work gives me job satisfaction   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| i) The veterinary profession gives variety   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| j) The quality of newly qualified veterinary surgeons is higher now than in the past                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| k) Newly qualified vets have the necessary skills required for general practice employment, from day one | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| l) Newly qualified VNs have the necessary skills required for general practice employment, from day one  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| m) Farm animal work will continue to decline   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| n) Farm animal work is enjoyable   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| o) Small animal work is increasing   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| p) VNs are valued by the veterinary profession   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| q) Clients value the work of veterinary surgeons   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| r) Clients value the work of VNs   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| s) I am satisfied with the support given by my employer  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| t) I am satisfied with the support given by others in the practice                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| u) I am satisfied with my salary level   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| v) I am satisfied with the quantity of information I receive from RCVS                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| w) I am satisfied with the frequency of information I receive from the RCVS                              | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| x) I am satisfied with the quality of information I receive from the RCVS                                | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| <i>For those who have contacted the RCVS during the last 12 months only:</i>                             |                            |                            |                                   |                            |                            |
| y) Last time I contacted the RCVS, I was dealt with effectively  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

**J2 If you could start your career again, would you still opt for the veterinary profession?**
 Yes  1  
 No  2  
 Unsure  3

**J3 What are the three best things about being in the veterinary profession?**

1)

2)

3)

**J4 What three things would, for you, make the veterinary profession a better profession in which to work?**

1)

2)

3)

**J5 In your opinion, what are the three main challenges currently facing the veterinary profession?**

1)

2)

3)

**Section K: Your well-being**

The following statements relate to current feelings about your life in general, not just in the work setting. The responses will be used to track the mental well-being of the profession at a population level over successive years of this survey. Please answer as honestly as possible. You do not have to answer these questions if you would prefer not to, in which case please leave them blank.

**K1 Below are some statements about your feelings and thoughts. Please select the answer that best describes your experience of each OVER THE LAST TWO WEEKS.**

|   | <i>None of the time</i>    | <i>Rarely</i>              | <i>Some of the time</i>    | <i>Often</i>               | <i>All of the time</i>     |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) I've been feeling optimistic about the future      | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| b) I've been feeling useful                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| c) I've been feeling relaxed                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| d) I've been feeling interested in other people       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| e) I've had energy to spare                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| f) I've been dealing with problems well               | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| g) I've been thinking clearly                         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| h) I've been feeling good about myself                | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| i) I've been feeling close to other people            | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| j) I've been feeling confident                        | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| k) I've been able to make up my own mind about things | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| l) I've been feeling loved                            | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| m) I've been interested in new things                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| n) I've been feeling cheerful                         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

*Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)*

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We have tried to ensure that the questions in this survey do not cause distress to you. However, if completion of this questionnaire has raised any upsetting concerns about your well-being, you may wish to discuss these concerns with your GP or other healthcare professional, Vet Helpline (Tel: 07659 811 118; Web: [www.vetlife.org.uk](http://www.vetlife.org.uk)) or Samaritans (Tel: 0845 909 090; Web: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org))

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return this questionnaire to: Employment Research, FREE POST SEA 1044, PO Box 2106, HOVE, East Sussex, BN3 5ZB in the reply-paid envelope provided.

APPENDIX 2: VN SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE 2010

**Section A: About you**

Please provide the following details to help us analyse your responses. These details will only be used to produce statistics.

- A1 Gender:** Female <sup>1</sup> Male <sup>2</sup>
- A2 What is your age?** Years:
- A3 What is your ethnicity? These are the main headings taken from the 2001 census. (Please tick one box only)**  
 White <sup>1</sup> Asian/Asian British <sup>3</sup> Chinese <sup>5</sup>  
 Mixed <sup>2</sup> Black/Black British <sup>4</sup> Other (please specify below) <sup>6</sup>
- 
- A4 Do you have dependent children living with you?** Yes <sup>1</sup>  
No <sup>2</sup>
- A5 Do you provide care to a dependent adult?** Yes <sup>1</sup>  
No <sup>2</sup>
- A6 Do you consider yourself to have a disability or medical condition that limits the work you can do?** Yes <sup>1</sup>  
No <sup>2</sup> Go to A8
- A7 If YES, please tell us more about the nature of your disability or medical condition, and how it limits what you can do at work.**
- A8 Of which VN organisations are you currently a member? (Please tick all that apply)**
- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| a) None.....                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) BVNA.....                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Other UK associations.....                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) European/international organisations..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- A9 What is your status? (Please tick all that apply)**
- |  |                          |           |
|--|--------------------------|-----------|
| a) Registered small animal VN.....           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Go to A13 |
| b) Registered equine VN.....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Go to A13 |
| c) Listed small animal VN.....               | <input type="checkbox"/> | Go to A13 |
| d) Listed equine VN.....                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Go to A13 |
| e) Qualified VN (not Listed/Registered)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Go to A13 |
| f) Student VN.....                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Go to A13 |
| g) Qualified VCA, ANA.....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Continue  |
| h) Unqualified VN assistant.....             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Continue  |
| i) Other.....                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | Go to A13 |
- A10 If you ticked response g) or h) in question A9, do you want to qualify as a VN?** Yes <sup>1</sup>  
No <sup>2</sup> Go to A12
- A11 If YES, what is preventing you from training?**  
  
 Go to B1
- A12 If NO, why not?**  
  
 Go to B1

- A13 Before embarking on your VN qualification, what is the highest educational level you reached? (Please tick one box only)**
- Secondary education - GCSE, O level or equivalent .....  01
  - Secondary education - A level or equivalent.....  02
  - National certificate/diploma/level 2 NVQ/SVQ (non-VN).....  03
  - HND/level 3 NVQ/SVQ (non-VN) .....  04
  - Level 4-5 NVQ/SVQ (non-VN) .....  05
  - Degree .....  06
  - Postgraduate qualification.....  07
  - Masters Degree.....  08
  - Doctorate .....  09
  - Other .....  10

- A14 Which qualification do you predominantly use or, if you are a student VN, are you working towards?**
- Small animal VN  1
  - Equine VN  2

**A15 If qualified, in what year did you qualify?** Year:

- A16 If qualified, where did you qualify?**
- UK  1
  - Other EU  2
  - Other  3

**Section B: About your work status**

- B1 What is your MAIN current employment status (in any capacity, regardless of whether you are in veterinary or non-veterinary employment)? (Please tick one box only, then go to the section or question indicated next to it)**
- Full-time work .....  1 Go to B11
  - Part-time work .....  2 Go to B2
  - Clinical work experience (paid) .....  3 Go to B11
  - Clinical work experience (unpaid) .....  4 Go to B11
  - Unemployed .....  5 Go to B3
  - Taking a career break .....  6 Go to B7
  - Fully retired .....  7 Go to B9

**If you are working part-time:**

**B2 How many hours do you work in a typical week?** Hours:

Go to B11

**If you are unemployed:**

**B3 How many months have you been unemployed?** Months:

- B4 Are you seeking work?**
- Yes.....  1
  - No .....  2 Go to B9

- B5 Are you seeking work within the veterinary nursing profession, ie in employment in which listing/registration with RCVS or an equivalent overseas professional body is mandatory?**
- Yes.....  1
  - No, but may do in future .....  2
  - No, and do not intend to .....  3

- B6 Are you seeking work outside the veterinary nursing profession, ie work that does not require you to hold a veterinary qualification or use veterinary skills?**
- Yes.....  1
  - No, but may do in future .....  2
  - No, and do not intend to .....  3

Go to B9

**If you are taking a career break:**

- B7 For what purpose have you taken your current career break? (Please tick one box only)**
- Travel .....  1
  - Study .....  2
  - Illness (self) .....  3
  - Sabbatical .....  4
  - Parental leave/looking after children .....  5
  - Looking after adult dependant .....  6
  - Other reason .....  7
- B8 For how many months do you expect your current career break to last from start to finish?** Months:
- Continue with B9

**If you are fully retired, taking a career break or are unemployed:**

- B9 What was your most recent employment? (Please tick one box only)**
- Worked outside VN profession .....  1
  - Clinical veterinary practice .....  2
  - VN-related teaching .....  3
  - VN-related research .....  4
  - Government VN work .....  5
  - Other VN-related employment .....  6
- B10 Where were you employed? (Please tick one box only)**
- UK .....  01
  - Ireland .....  02
  - Other EU .....  03
  - Europe, outside EU .....  04
  - Australia .....  05
  - New Zealand .....  06
  - Canada .....  07
  - USA .....  08
  - South Africa .....  09
  - Other .....  10
- Continue with B11

**Regardless of work status:**

- B11 Do you currently do any voluntary work? (Please tick all that apply)**
- Yes, veterinary-related .....  1
  - Yes, non-veterinary-related .....  2
  - No .....  3

**If you are fully retired, taking a career break or are unemployed please now go to G1, otherwise continue with C1**

**Section C: All VNs in current work (veterinary or non-veterinary)**  
**Students should answer this section in relation to their training practice/placement**

**C1 In which country do you work? (Please tick one box only)**

- |                          |                          |    |          |                              |                          |    |          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----|----------|------------------------------|--------------------------|----|----------|
| UK .....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 01 | Go to C2 | New Zealand .....            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 08 | Go to C6 |
| Ireland .....            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 02 | Go to C6 | Canada .....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 07 | Go to C6 |
| Other EU .....           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 03 | Go to C6 | USA .....                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 08 | Go to C6 |
| Europe, outside EU ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 04 | Go to C6 | South Africa .....           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 09 | Go to C6 |
| Australia .....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 05 | Go to C6 | Other (please specify) ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10 | Go to C6 |

**C2 What is the first part of the postcode of your main workplace (eg RG41, SW1A, LE1)? (We are asking this only to get a picture of where VNs are working, not to track individual responses)**

Postcode:

**C3 If you are NOT a British national and work in the UK, why did you come to the UK, this time? (If you are a British national, Go to C6)**

**C4 In what year did you come to the UK, this time?**

Year:

**C5 How long, from now, do you plan to stay in the UK?**

Years:

**C6 Do you have a second job?**

- Yes.....  1  
 No .....  2    Go to C9

**C7 If YES, please state the nature of your second job? (Please tick one box only)**

- Working for another veterinary practice .....  0  
 Assessor/internal verifier.....  0  
 Voluntary work for a veterinary-related charity (eg PDSA, RSPCA) .....  0  
 Other animal-related work (eg pet sitting, dog walking) .....  0  
 Non-veterinary voluntary work .....  0  
 Farm work (non-veterinary).....  0  
 Teaching .....  0  
 Bar work.....  0  
 Retail.....  0  
 Catering .....  0  
 Health & beauty.....  0  
 Childcare (eg babysitting) .....  0  
 Office work.....  0  
 Other (please specify).....  0

**C8 On average, how many hours a week do you work in your second job?**

Hours:

- C9 In your MAIN employment are you working within VN clinical practice or outside it?**
- Within VN clinical practice .....  1 Go to E1  
 Outside clinical practice but in work using your VN qualification .....  2 Go to D1  
 Outside the VN profession .....  3 Go to D1

**Section D: All VNs working OUTSIDE clinical veterinary practice**

You should only complete this section if your main work is outside clinical veterinary practice

- D1 In your main job are you:**
- Employed .....  1  
 Self-employed .....  2  
 Working on a voluntary basis .....  3
- D2 Is the organisation in which you work?**
- Animal related .....  1  
 Non-animal related .....  2
- D3 How long have you worked in this organisation (or in this way if self-employed)?**
- Number of years:
- D4 In your job do you have managerial/supervisory responsibility? (Please tick one box only)**
- Yes .....  1  
 No .....  2
- D5 What is your basic annual salary (excluding unsocial hours, benefits and overtime)?**
- £
- D6 What was your take-home pay (after tax and deductions) last month?**
- £
- D7 What is your basic working week (excluding overtime)?**
- Hours:
- D8 How many hours overtime did you work in the last month?**
- Hours:
- D9 Do you get paid extra for overtime? (Please tick one box only)**
- Yes, always .....  1  
 Yes, sometimes .....  2  
 No, never .....  3
- D10 Whether you answered yes or no, do you have the option of taking 'time off in lieu' for overtime?**
- Yes .....  1  
 No .....  2
- D11 How long have you worked outside clinical veterinary practice?**
- Number of years:
- D12 Have you ever worked in clinical veterinary practice?**
- Yes .....  1  
 No .....  2 Go to D14
- D13 If YES, how long for?**
- Number of years:
- Go to D15
- D14 If NO, why not?**
- 
- D15 Do you intend to seek employment in clinical veterinary practice in the future? (Please tick one box only)**
- Yes, within the next year .....  1  
 Yes, longer term .....  2  
 No .....  3  
 Unsure .....  4

Now go to F1

**Section E: All VNs working WITHIN clinical veterinary practice**  
 You should only complete this section if your main employment is a clinical post

**E1 The following question asks you to tell us about the type of practice(s) in which you work, the hours you work in a typical week (excluding meal breaks) and the hours you spend on call in a typical week.**

|   | <i>Kind of practice employed in: (if employed in more than one tick all that apply)</i> | <i>Hours worked in a typical week (including overtime but excluding on-call)</i> | <i>Hours on-call in a typical week (if applicable) when required to be available but not on premises</i> | <i>Hours on-call in a typical week (if applicable) when required to be available &amp; present on premises</i> |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| a) Mixed practice                           | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| b) Small animal/exotic practice             | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| c) Equine practice                          | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| d) Farm practice/Production animal practice | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| e) Other first opinion practice             | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| f) Referral practice/consultancy            | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |

**E2 Which of the above (a to f) is your main employment? (Enter the appropriate letter)**

**E3 If you have indicated you are required to be on-call and present are you normally:**  
 Awake all night .....  1  
 Asleep when not working .....  2

**E4 Do you consider yourself to have a particular area of expertise (eg nutrition, behaviour, dentistry, intensive care, VN assessor or verifier)?**  
 Yes .....  1  
 No .....  2 **Go to E6**

**E5 If YES, what expertise areas have you provided to clients or your employer(s) in the past 12 months? (Please tick all that apply)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| a) Anaesthesia..... <input type="checkbox"/>                    | h) Nutrition/diabetes..... <input type="checkbox"/>                      |
| b) Behavioural management..... <input type="checkbox"/>         | i) Physio/hydrotherapy..... <input type="checkbox"/>                     |
| c) Dentistry..... <input type="checkbox"/>                      | j) Specific animal specialist (eg Exotics)..... <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Dermatology..... <input type="checkbox"/>                    | k) Surgery/theatre..... <input type="checkbox"/>                         |
| e) Emergency/critical care..... <input type="checkbox"/>        | l) VN assessor/verifier..... <input type="checkbox"/>                    |
| f) General/referral nurse clinics..... <input type="checkbox"/> | m) Weight management..... <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| g) Management/office specialist..... <input type="checkbox"/>   | n) Other (please specify below)..... <input type="checkbox"/>            |

**E6 What are your career plans with regard to clinical practice? (Please tick one box only)**

Stay in clinical practice for the foreseeable future .....  1  
 Fully retire within the next year .....  2  
 Fully retire in the next five years .....  3  
 Leave the profession as soon as possible (for reasons other than retirement) .....  4  
 Leave the profession within the next year (for reasons other than retirement) .....  5  
 Leave the profession in the next five years (for reasons other than retirement) .....  6

**E7 If you are planning to leave for reasons other than retirement, please tell us why. (Please tick all that apply)**

- |  |                          |   |                          |
|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| a) Pay .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | g) Dissatisfaction with VN work (eg hours, stress) .....                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Not feeling rewarded/valued (non financial) ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | h) Fed-up with the way the veterinary nursing profession is going ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Study .....                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | i) Lack of career opportunities .....                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Career change/new challenge .....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | j) Burden of bureaucracy/legislation .....                              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Emigration/travel .....                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | k) Other (please specify) .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Care of dependants/to have family .....           | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |                          |

**E8 What is your position in the practice? (Please tick all that apply)**

- |  |                          |   |                          |
|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| a) Student nurse .....                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | f) Practice manager/administrator .....     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Unqualified VN assistant .....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | g) Locum .....                              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Nurse .....                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | h) Practice owner or partner/director ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Head nurse (inc. deputy & senior) ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | i) Other (please specify) .....             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Assessor/training manager .....         | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |                          |

**If you ticked 'Locum', please continue with E9, otherwise go to E11**

- E9 Are you currently working in more than one practice?** Yes  1  
 No  2 Go to E11

- E10 If YES, how many practices altogether?** Number of practices

- E11 What was your take-home pay (after tax and deductions) last month?** £

- E12 What is your basic annual salary (excluding unsocial hours, benefits and overtime)?** £

**E13 Does the practice provide you with any of the following: (Please tick all that apply)**

- |                                |                          |  |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| a) Accommodation .....         | <input type="checkbox"/> | g) Free/reduced pet insurance .....                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Health insurance .....      | <input type="checkbox"/> | h) Training/CDP supported (time and/or cost) ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Uniform/work clothing ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | i) RCVS retention fees paid (whole or part) .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Pension .....               | <input type="checkbox"/> | j) Professional subscriptions (eg BVNA) .....      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Car .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | k) Professional indemnity insurance .....          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) No/reduced vet fees .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | l) Other .....                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- E14 What is your basic working week (excluding on-call and overtime)?** Hours

- E15 How many hours overtime did you work in the last month (including on-call)?** Hours

- E16 Do you get paid extra for overtime (including on-call)? (Please tick one box only)**  
 Yes, always  1  
 Yes, sometimes  2  
 No, never  3

- E17 If you are on-call, whether or not you are paid for being on-call, do you receive additional payment if you are called out?**  
 Yes  1  
 No  2

- E18 Whether you answered 'Yes' or 'No', do you have the option of taking 'time off in lieu' for overtime?**  
 Yes  1  
 No  2

- E19 Do you personally carry out any visits to clients?**  
 Yes  1  
 No  2

- E20 With regards to the minimum rest period of 11 hours in each 24-hour period, that is specified by the Working Time Regulations, do you have this 11-hour rest period every 24 hours? Yes  1 Go to E23  
No  2
- E21 If NO, have you signed up to a workforce agreement that provides other compensatory rest? Yes  1 Go to E23  
No  2  
Don't know  3 Go to E23
- E22 If NO, have you discussed it with your employer? Yes  1  
No  2
- E23 Do you have at least two rest days every 14 days? Yes  1  
No  2
- E24 Do you have at least 20 days' paid holiday per year (plus bank holidays), pro-rata for part-time? Yes  1  
No  2

E25 Please indicate the percentages of your working time and on-call time, during a typical week, which is spent on veterinary nursing work with each of the following species or disciplines, and the percentage of time which you spend on practice management or administrative work.

|  | % of working time:   | % of on call time:   |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| a) Dogs  | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| b) Cats  | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| c) Rabbits                                     | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| d) Birds                                       | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| e) Other small animals (eg tortoises, gerbils) | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| f) Exotics*                                    | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| g) Horses                                      | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| h) Farm/Production animals                     | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| i) Practice management/administration          | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| j) Reception                                   | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| k) Cleaning                                    | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| l) Other (please specify below)                | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

-----  
**Total = 100%**

**Total = 100%**

*\*Exotics are animals that are more likely to be known as living wild in another climate than as household pets in the UK. Snakes and iguanas would be considered exotics but not rabbits, budgerigars or tortoises.*

**E26 Please indicate which of the following clinical and non-clinical work you undertake in practice, and how often. (Please tick one box on each row)**

|  | Every day                  | Several times per week     | Once per week or less      | Rarely                     | Never                      |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) Caring for hospitalised animals                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| b) Nursing clinics/counselling                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| c) Nutritional advice/counselling                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| d) Administration of medicines by injection                        | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| e) Setting up intravenous fluids                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| f) Dispensing of medications to clients                            | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| g) Administration of anaesthetic pre-medication                    | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| h) Monitoring of anaesthesia                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| i) Assisting during surgical procedures                            | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| j) Performing minor surgical procedures                            | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| k) Dental hygiene work   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| l) Assisting with dental extractions                               | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| m) Clinical cleaning (eg consulting rooms, theatre, instruments)   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| n) Taking radiographs  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| o) Processing radiographs  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| p) Assisting with ultrasound                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| q) Performing in-house laboratory tests                            | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| r) Taking blood samples  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| s) Teaching/supervising student VNs                                | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| t) Reception work  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| u) Practice administration   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| v) General domestic cleaning (eg waiting room, kitchen, corridors) | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

**E27 Which nursing clinics are you involved in? (Please tick all that apply)**

- a) None .....
- b) Nutrition .....
- c) Dental .....
- d) Puppy/kitten .....
- e) Vaccination .....
- f) Geriatric/senior wellness .....
- g) General check-ups .....
- h) Other (please specify below) .....

**E28 In your workplace, how many people are employed as:**

Vets

Qualified VNs

Other staff

**Section F: CPD and Further Education**

Only complete this section if you are employed in a post (clinical or non-clinical) that requires you to hold, or be studying for, a VN qualification. If not, go to Section G.

**F1 How many days have you spent, in the last 12 months, away from your workplace due to the following?**

|   |                      |                                   |                      |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| a) CPD (giving).....                                | <input type="text"/> | f) Maternity/paternity leave..... | <input type="text"/> |
| b) CPD (receiving).....                             | <input type="text"/> | g) Compassionate leave.....       | <input type="text"/> |
| c) Holidays.....                                    | <input type="text"/> | h) Caring for dependents.....     | <input type="text"/> |
| d) Veterinary nursing politics, committees etc..... | <input type="text"/> | i) Other.....                     | <input type="text"/> |
| e) Illness.....                                     | <input type="text"/> |                                   |                      |

**F2 Other than your primary VN qualification, do you hold any further work-related qualifications, are you studying for any qualifications or do you plan to study for any qualifications in the next five years? (Please tick all that apply)**

|   | Further qualifications held | Currently studying for   | Plan to study for in the next five years |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| a) Bachelors degree (non VN-related)              | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| b) Masters degree (VN-related)                    | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| c) Masters degree (non VN-related)                | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| d) PGCE or equivalent teaching qualification      | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| e) PhD  | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| f) RCVS DipAVN                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| g) Veterinary nursing degree (pre-qualification)  | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| h) Veterinary nursing degree (post-qualification) | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| i) Other 'business-related qualifications'        | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |

**F3 Which of the following CPD provision methods have you used in the past 12 months? (Please indicate which you have used by entering the total hours spent on each method in last 12 months)**

|   |                      |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| a) External weekend courses/study days..... | <input type="text"/> | f) Distance learning, online or correspondence courses..... | <input type="text"/> |
| b) External weekday courses/study days..... | <input type="text"/> | g) Books/journals/articles.....                             | <input type="text"/> |
| c) External evening courses/study days..... | <input type="text"/> | h) Seminars.....  | <input type="text"/> |
| d) In-courses, eg within own practice.....  | <input type="text"/> | i) Other.....   | <input type="text"/> |
| e) Videos/DVDs.....                         | <input type="text"/> |   |                      |

**F4 Of the above methods, which do you prefer? (Please write in the letter (a, b, etc.) from the above list)**

|                       |                      |                        |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| First preference..... | <input type="text"/> | Second preference..... | <input type="text"/> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|

**F5 What percentage of your CPD in the past year was funded by the following means? (Note: percentages should total 100%)**

|                              |                      |  |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|----------------------|
| a) Free.....                 | <input type="text"/> | d) Grant.....  | <input type="text"/> |
| b) Yourself.....             | <input type="text"/> | e) Commercial sponsorship (eg drug or pet food company)..... | <input type="text"/> |
| c) Employer or practice..... | <input type="text"/> | f) Other.....  | <input type="text"/> |

**Section G: Electronic communications and the use of the Internet**

This section should be completed by everyone responding to the survey

**G1 Do you have access to the Internet? (Please tick one box only)**

Yes, at home.....  1 Both .....  3  
 Yes, at work.....  2 Neither .....  4

**G2 Where do you mainly use the Internet? (Please tick one box only)**

At work .....  1 Both .....  3  
 At home.....  2 Neither .....  4

**If you have access at home or at work or both, how often do you use the internet?**

**G3 At home: (Please tick one box only)**

Frequently, eg several times a week .....  1 Rarely, eg a few times a year .....  3  
 Occasionally, eg a few times a month .....  2 Never .....  4

**G4 At work: (Please tick one box only)**

Frequently, eg several times a week .....  1 Rarely, eg a few times a year .....  3  
 Occasionally, eg a few times a month .....  2 Never .....  4

**G5 In the past 12 months, how frequently have you used the RCVS website? (Please tick one box only)**

Frequently, eg several times a week .....  1 Rarely, eg a few times over the year .....  3  
 Occasionally, eg a few times a month .....  2 Never .....  4

**G6 Do you use email regularly? Yes  1 No  2 Go to G9**

**G7 If YES, do you have a work/home email address? (Please tick one box only)**

Yes, work email address.....  1 Both .....  3  
 Yes, home email address .....  2

**G8 Do you frequently (ie several times per week) use a networking site (eg Facebook, Twitter, vet nursing sites)? (Please tick all that apply)**

Yes, general site .....  No .....   
 Yes, vet nursing sites.....

**G9 How would you prefer to receive RCVS communications? (Please tick one box only)**

Via work email.....  1 In the post .....  3  
 Via home email .....  2 Via networking site .....  4

**G10 Would you pay your annual registration/retention fees or other RCVS fees online (on a secure connection) if this was possible? Yes  1 No  2**

**G11 Do you receive RCVS e-News? Yes  1 No  2**

**If NO, but you would like to sign up, please visit: [www.rcvs.org.uk/enews](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/enews) - it's free**

**G12 Which of the following is your best source of information about the RCVS? (Please tick one box only)**

RCVS News .....  1 RCVS e-News.....  6  
 RCVS VN Standard .....  2 RCVS Review/Facts (annual report) .....  7  
 RCVS website .....  3 Veterinary/Vet nursing press .....  8  
 Other website(s).....  4 Other .....  9  
 Meetings .....  5

**G13 How do/would you prefer to register for RCVS events? Online .....  1**

Email .....  2  
 Post .....  3

**If you are a student VN or you qualified after 31 December 2008 continue to H1, otherwise go to I1.**

**Section H: For student VNs and recent qualifiers**

You should only complete this section if you are a student VN, or you qualified after 31 December 2008. Begin at H1 if you are a student nurse. Begin at H4 if you qualified after 31 December 2008.

- H1 When you qualify what do you intend to do? (Please tick one box only)**
- Remain employed in your training practice (TP).....  1
  - Move from your TP to another practice .....  2
  - Take up your first post-graduate position .....  3
  - Other (please specify below) .....  4
- 

**Non-university students only:**

- H2 Before commencing training, how many practices did you approach before finding a position as a student veterinary nurse? (Please tick one box only)**
- One.....  1
  - Two to five .....  2
  - Six to ten.....  3
  - Eleven to twenty .....  4
  - Over twenty .....  5

Go to H8

**University students only:**

- H3 How many practices did you approach before finding a placement? (Please tick one box only)**
- One.....  1
  - Two to five .....  2
  - Six to ten.....  3
  - Eleven to twenty .....  4
  - Over twenty .....  5

Go to H8

**2009/10 qualifiers only:**

- H4 When did you enter the Register?** Year:   
Month:

- H5 When you qualified what did you do? (Please tick one box only)**
- Remained employed in your training practice (TP).....  1
  - Moved from your TP to another practice .....  2
  - Took up your first post-graduate position .....  3
  - Other (please specify below) .....  4
- 

- H6 Are you still in your first post-qualification position?** Yes  1 No  2

- H7 If NO, after how many months did you leave this post?** Months:

**Both student nurses and 2009/10 qualifiers:**

- H8 Do/did you receive appraisals or performance reviews during your training or after qualification?** Yes  1 No  2

**H9 How satisfied are/were you with the following? (Please tick one box on each row)**

|  | Very dissatisfied          | Dissatisfied               | Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied | Satisfied                  | Very satisfied             |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) Support given by my approved centre (VNAC)  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3         | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| b) Quality of my training practice experience  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3         | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| c) Quality of my college/university experience | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3         | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

**Section I: Your views about the veterinary nursing profession**

This section should be completed by everyone responding to the survey

**11 We would like to gather your views about various aspects of the veterinary nursing profession. (Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements, by selecting one box on each row.)**

|  | <i>Strongly disagree</i>   | <i>Disagree</i>            | <i>Neither agree nor disagree</i> | <i>Agree</i>               | <i>Strongly agree</i>      |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) Veterinary practices are training too many VNs for the available future work                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| b) The veterinary nursing profession is a 'family friendly' profession in which to work                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| c) The veterinary nursing profession offers good opportunities for those wishing to work part time       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| d) Newly qualified VNs need more support now than in the past  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| e) Over the next ten years, the demand for qualified VNs will increase overall in the UK                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| f) Veterinary nursing work is stressful  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| g) Veterinary nursing work gives me job satisfaction   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| h) The veterinary nursing profession gives variety   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| i) The quality of newly qualified VNs is higher now than in the past                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| j) Newly qualified vets have the necessary skills required for general practice employment, from day one | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| k) Newly qualified VNs have the necessary skills required for general practice employment, from day one  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| l) VNs are valued by the veterinary profession   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| m) Clients value the work of veterinary surgeons   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| n) Clients value the work of VNs   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| o) Veterinary nursing offers good opportunities for career progression                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| p) I am satisfied with the support given by my employer  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| q) I am satisfied with the support given by others in the practice                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| r) I am satisfied with my salary level   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| s) I am satisfied with the quantity of information I receive from the RCVS                               | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| t) I am satisfied with the frequency of information I receive from the RCVS                              | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| u) I am satisfied with the quality of information I receive from the RCVS                                | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| <i>For those who have contacted the RCVS during the last 12 months only:</i>                             |                            |                            |                                   |                            |                            |
| v) Last time I contacted the RCVS, I was dealt with effectively  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

**12 If you could start your career again, would you still opt to become a veterinary nurse?**

Yes  1  
 No  2  
 Unsure  3

**I3 What are the three best things about being a veterinary nurse?**

1)

2)

3)

**I4 What three things would, for you, make veterinary nursing a better profession in which to work?**

1)

2)

3)

**I5 In your opinion, what are the three main challenges currently facing the veterinary nursing profession?**

1)

2)

3)

**Section J: Your well-being**

The following statements relate to current feelings about your life in general, not just in the work setting. The responses will be used to track the mental well-being of the profession at a population level over successive years of this survey. Please answer as honestly as possible. You do not have to answer these questions if you would prefer not to, in which case please leave them blank.

**J1** Below are some statements about your feelings and thoughts. Please select the answer that best describes your experience of each OVER THE LAST TWO WEEKS.

|   | None of the time           | Rarely                     | Some of the time           | Often                      | All of the time            |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) I've been feeling optimistic about the future      | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| b) I've been feeling useful                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| c) I've been feeling relaxed                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| d) I've been feeling interested in other people       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| e) I've had energy to spare                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| f) I've been dealing with problems well               | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| g) I've been thinking clearly                         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| h) I've been feeling good about myself                | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| i) I've been feeling close to other people            | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| j) I've been feeling confident                        | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| k) I've been able to make up my own mind about things | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| l) I've been feeling loved                            | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| m) I've been interested in new things                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| n) I've been feeling cheerful                         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

*Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)*

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We have tried to ensure that the questions in this survey do not cause distress to you. However, if completion of this questionnaire has raised any upsetting concerns about your well-being, you may wish to discuss these concerns with your GP or other healthcare professional, Vet Helpline (Tel: 07659 811 118; Web: [www.vetlife.org.uk](http://www.vetlife.org.uk)) or Samaritans (Tel: 0845 909 090; Web: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org))

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return this questionnaire to: Employment Research, Freepost SEA 1044, PO Box 2106, Hove, BN3 5ZB, UK in the reply paid envelope provided.

## APPENDIX 3: ADDITIONAL TABLES

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

**Appendix Table 3.1: What is your status, VN pilot respondents**

|                                      | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Registered small animal VN           | 61         |
| Registered equine VN                 | 0          |
| Listed small animal VN               | 11         |
| Listed equine VN                     | 0          |
| Qualified VN (not Listed/Registered) | 0          |
| Student VN                           | 28         |
| Qualified VCA, ANA                   | 0          |
| Unqualified VN assistant             | 0          |
| Other status                         | 0          |

*Source: VN Pilot Survey, 2010*

## CHAPTER 2: PERSONAL DETAILS

**Appendix Table 3.2: What is your gender, VS percentage**

|   | Female | Male |
|---|--------|------|
| All respondents   | 50.3   | 49.7 |
| Those working within profession and not fully retired                       | 54.4   | 45.6 |
| Those working within profession, in clinical practice and not fully retired | 56.7   | 43.3 |

*Source: VS Survey, 2010*

**Appendix Table 3.3: Dependants by employment status, VS percentage**

|                       | Living with dependent children | Provide care to dependent adult |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Full-time work        | 62                             | 53                              |
| Part-time work        | 29                             | 16                              |
| Partially-retired     | 1                              | 6.5                             |
| Voluntary work        | 0.2                            | 1                               |
| Unemployed            | 1                              | 1                               |
| Taking a career break | 5                              | 2                               |
| Fully retired         | 2                              | 20.5                            |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

**Appendix Table 3.4: Dependants by employment status, VN percentage**

|                                   | Living with dependent children | Provide care to dependent adult |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Full-time work                    | 33                             | 61                              |
| Part-time work                    | 56.7                           | 32                              |
| Clinical work experience (paid)   | 0.2                            | 0                               |
| Clinical work experience (unpaid) | 0.1                            | 0                               |
| Unemployed                        | 0.8                            | 3                               |
| Taking a career break             | 9.1                            | 4                               |
| Fully retired                     | 0                              | 0                               |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

## CHAPTER 6: WORKING WITHIN THE PROFESSION

**Appendix Table 3.5: Type of practice employed in, VS percentage**

| Type of practice employed in  | 2010*     | 2006*     | 2002*     | 2000*     | Main Employment 2010 |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------------|
| Mixed practice                | 22.1      |           |           |           | 21.7                 |
| Small animal/exotic practice  | 48.9      |           |           |           | 45.8                 |
| Equine practice               | 7.6       |           |           |           | 5.9                  |
| Farm/production practice      | 3.8       |           |           |           | 2.9                  |
| Other first opinion practice  | 1         |           |           |           | .5                   |
| Referral practice/consultancy | 6.7       |           |           |           | 3.7                  |
| <b>Total Practice Areas</b>   | <b>90</b> | <b>89</b> | <b>80</b> | <b>81</b> | <b>80.5</b>          |
| DEFRA                         | 1.6       |           |           |           | 1.2                  |
| Animal Health                 | 2.4       |           |           |           | 2.1                  |
| Other UK Government           | 3.6       |           |           |           | 3.2                  |
| Overseas Government           | 1.6       | 2         |           |           | 1.4                  |

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| Type of practice employed in                    | 2010*      | 2006*     | 2002*     | 2000*     | Main Employment<br>2010 |
|---|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|
| <b>Total Government</b>                         | <b>9</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>7.9</b>              |
| Veterinary school                               | 5.9        | 6         |           |           | 4.7                     |
| Other university                                | 1.2        | 1         |           |           | .8                      |
| <b>Total Universities</b>                       | <b>7</b>   | <b>7</b>  | <b>9</b>  | <b>7</b>  | <b>5.5</b>              |
| Commerce and Industry                           | 3.9        | 4         | 4         | 3         | 3.2                     |
| Charities and Trusts                            | 2.7        | 2         | 3         | 2         | 1.5                     |
| Research Council                                | 0.2        |           |           |           | .1                      |
| Other   | 2.3        |           |           |           | 1.3                     |
| <b>Total Other (including Research Council)</b> | <b>2.5</b> | <b>1</b>  |           |           | <b>1.4</b>              |
| <b>Total Non-Practice</b>                       | <b>25</b>  | <b>24</b> | <b>30</b> | <b>27</b> | <b>19.5</b>             |

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Note: \*Percentages total more than 100, as some VSs work in more than one area.

Source: VS Survey, 2010

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**Appendix Table 3.6: Overtime, by full-time VSs last month**

| Overtime hours | Percentage |
|----------------|------------|
| 0 to 9.9       | 34.1       |
| 10 to 19.9     | 28.6       |
| 20 to 39.9     | 20.9       |
| 40 to 59.9     | 7.3        |
| 60 to 79.9     | 2.8        |
| 80 to 99.9     | 2.1        |
| 100 to 119.9   | 1.3        |
| 120 to 139.9   | 1.0        |
| 140 to 159.9   | .6         |
| 160 to 179.9   | .3         |
| 180 to 199.9   | .4         |
| Over 200       | .7         |

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Source: VS Survey, 2010

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**Appendix Table 3.7: Reasons for leaving the profession, by gender and age, VS percentage**

|                                     | Female | Male | 20-29yrs | 30-39yrs | 40-49yrs | 50-59yrs | 60-69yrs | 70-95yrs |
|-------------------------------------|--------|------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Pay                                 | 59.2   | 40.8 | 31.6     | 42.7     | 18.1     | 5.8      | 1.2      | 0.6      |
| Not feeling valued                  | 66.1   | 33.9 | 27.8     | 43.9     | 17.6     | 9.1      | 1.1      | 0.5      |
| Study                               | 60.5   | 39.5 | 52.6     | 39.5     | 2.6      | 5.3      | 0        | 0        |
| Career change                       | 55.9   | 44.1 | 29.6     | 39.2     | 18.8     | 10.8     | 1.1      | 0.5      |
| Emigration/travel                   | 65.1   | 34.9 | 40.5     | 23.8     | 16.7     | 16.7     | 0        | 2.4      |
| Family                              | 91.8   | 8.2  | 36.8     | 54.7     | 4.7      | 3.8      | 0        | 0        |
| Dissatisfaction                     | 68     | 32   | 31.3     | 42.2     | 18.2     | 7.3      | 0.6      | 0.3      |
| Fed-up with direction of profession | 58     | 42   | 19.6     | 42.9     | 23.9     | 11.4     | 1.6      | 0.5      |
| Lack of career opportunities        | 59.5   | 40.5 | 26.4     | 50       | 20       | 2.7      | 0        | 0.9      |
| Burden of bureaucracy/legislation   | 45     | 55   | 18.5     | 34.3     | 25.9     | 18.5     | 2.8      | 0        |
| Other                               | 52.5   | 47.5 | 12.8     | 38.5     | 28.2     | 15.4     | 2.6      | 2.6      |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

## CHAPTER 8: WORKING WITHIN CLINICAL VETERINARY PRACTICE

**Appendix Table 3.8: Main employment, VN percentage**

|                                 | 2010 | 2008 |
|---------------------------------|------|------|
| Mixed practice                  | 21.3 | 21.6 |
| Small animal/exotic practice    | 68.6 | 68.4 |
| Equine practice                 | 2.0  | 1.2  |
| Farm/production animal practice | .2   | 0.2  |
| Other first opinion             | 1.2  | 1.7  |
| Referral/consultancy practice   | 6.7  | 6.9  |

Source: VN Survey, 2010 and 2008

**Appendix Table 3.9: VS and VN views on the work of VNs in practice, percentage**

|  | Every day |      | Several times per week |      | Once per week or less |      | Rarely |      | Never |      |
|--|-----------|------|------------------------|------|-----------------------|------|--------|------|-------|------|
|  | VS        | VN   | VS                     | VN   | VS                    | VN   | VS     | VN   | VS    | VN   |
| Caring for hospitalised animals              | 86.1      | 56.2 | 10                     | 28.8 | 2                     | 9.2  | 0.9    | 5.0  | 1     | 0.8  |
| Nursing clinics/counselling                  | 40.4      | 18.7 | 24.8                   | 30.0 | 10.9                  | 19.6 | 11.9   | 17.0 | 11.9  | 14.6 |
| Nutritional advice/counselling               | 33        | 12.4 | 33                     | 30.0 | 15.2                  | 26.1 | 11.1   | 20.4 | 7.7   | 11.0 |
| Administration of medicines by injection     | 77.2      | 74.4 | 15.9                   | 18.4 | 2.4                   | 3.7  | 2.7    | 2.7  | 1.9   | 0.9  |
| Setting up intravenous fluids                | 55.2      | 38.0 | 27.8                   | 38.9 | 9.4                   | 16.3 | 4.2    | 5.2  | 3.3   | 1.6  |
| Dispensing of medications to clients         | 71.7      | 59.9 | 16.5                   | 27.8 | 2.9                   | 6.2  | 4.4    | 4.0  | 4.4   | 2.1  |
| Administration of anaesthetic pre-medication | 61.5      | 48.1 | 16.3                   | 31.0 | 5.2                   | 8.5  | 10     | 7.7  | 7     | 4.7  |
| Monitoring of anaesthesia                    | 84        | 51.5 | 9.7                    | 35.2 | 1.1                   | 6.2  | 1.5    | 4.3  | 3.7   | 2.7  |
| Assisting during surgical procedures         | 24        | 27.7 | 17.7                   | 27.0 | 29                    | 19.1 | 25.6   | 22.2 | 3.7   | 4.0  |
| Performing minor surgical procedures         | 4.2       | 2.5  | 6.9                    | 5.7  | 15.9                  | 12.1 | 36.9   | 33.2 | 36.1  | 46.6 |
| Dental hygiene work                          | 11.5      | 3.3  | 29.6                   | 18.4 | 21.9                  | 29.8 | 20.1   | 26.9 | 17    | 21.6 |
| Assisting with dental extractions            | 5.6       | 2.4  | 11.2                   | 12.3 | 11                    | 18.7 | 22.6   | 22.5 | 49.6  | 44.0 |
| Clinical cleaning                            | 88        | 76.3 | 8.5                    | 14.9 | 1.4                   | 4.5  | 1      | 3.1  | 1     | 1.2  |
| Taking radiographs                           | 28        | 13.4 | 34.7                   | 42.0 | 19.4                  | 24.9 | 10.9   | 12.5 | 7     | 7.2  |
| Processing radiographs                       | 45.7      | 15.9 | 41.8                   | 49.7 | 6.4                   | 21.7 | 2.1    | 6.5  | 4     | 6.3  |
| Assisting with ultrasound                    | 20.5      | 6.6  | 36.2                   | 28.2 | 22.7                  | 35.0 | 9      | 17.5 | 11.6  | 12.7 |
| Performing in-house laboratory tests         | 66.7      | 40.7 | 21.5                   | 38.6 | 4.8                   | 11.9 | 2.8    | 5.8  | 4.1   | 3.0  |
| Taking blood samples                         | 46.8      | 38.1 | 29.1                   | 35.1 | 11.2                  | 13.4 | 6.9    | 8.0  | 6     | 5.4  |
| Teaching/supervising student VNs             | 42.7      | 27.0 | 20.2                   | 16.7 | 7.7                   | 10.9 | 7.8    | 12.8 | 21.6  | 32.6 |
| Reception work                               | 41.3      | 39.0 | 24.7                   | 25.9 | 14.4                  | 16.3 | 14.2   | 13.0 | 5.3   | 5.8  |
| Practice administration                      | 21.2      | 28.9 | 21.9                   | 19.5 | 17.7                  | 16.1 | 23.9   | 17.1 | 15.4  | 18.4 |
| General domestic cleaning                    | 54.3      | 52.6 | 16.5                   | 20.0 | 8.7                   | 13.3 | 13.7   | 9.8  | 6.8   | 4.4  |

Source: VS and VN Surveys, 2010

**Appendix Table 3.10: The work of unqualified VNs in practice, percentage**

|  | Everyday | Several times per week | Once per week or less | Rarely | Never |
|--|----------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------|-------|
| Caring for hospitalised animals              | 56.4     | 29.7                   | 7.9                   | 5.9    | 0     |
| Nursing clinics/counselling                  | 13.7     | 11.8                   | 14.7                  | 26.5   | 33.3  |
| Nutritional advice/counselling               | 8.0      | 21.0                   | 28.0                  | 24.0   | 19.0  |
| Administration of medicines by injection     | 52.0     | 19.0                   | 7.0                   | 11.0   | 11.0  |
| Setting up intravenous fluids                | 24.0     | 35.0                   | 20.0                  | 12.0   | 9.0   |
| Dispensing of medications to clients         | 66.7     | 17.6                   | 2.9                   | 6.9    | 5.9   |
| Administration of anaesthetic pre-medication | 37.6     | 24.8                   | 5.0                   | 10.9   | 21.8  |
| Monitoring of anaesthesia                    | 47.6     | 34.0                   | 7.8                   | 5.8    | 4.9   |
| Assisting during surgical procedures         | 25.5     | 28.4                   | 14.7                  | 23.5   | 7.8   |
| Performing minor surgical procedures         | 2.0      | 5.0                    | 4.0                   | 16.8   | 72.3  |
| Dental hygiene work                          | 5.0      | 14.9                   | 21.8                  | 23.8   | 34.7  |
| Assisting with dental extractions            | 3.0      | 14.9                   | 20.8                  | 19.8   | 41.6  |
| Clinical cleaning                            | 78.6     | 17.5                   | 1.0                   | 1.9    | 1.0   |
| Taking radiographs                           | 10.9     | 34.7                   | 23.8                  | 12.9   | 17.8  |
| Processing radiographs                       | 12.0     | 47.0                   | 21.0                  | 9.0    | 11.0  |
| Assisting with ultrasound                    | 5.0      | 24.8                   | 24.8                  | 19.8   | 25.7  |
| Performing in-house laboratory tests         | 39.2     | 33.3                   | 6.9                   | 7.8    | 12.7  |
| Taking blood samples                         | 17.6     | 21.6                   | 13.7                  | 14.7   | 32.4  |
| Teaching/supervising student VNs             | 7.2      | 4.1                    | 2.1                   | 12.4   | 74.2  |
| Reception work                               | 60.6     | 18.3                   | 16.3                  | 3.8    | 1.0   |
| Practice administration                      | 38.8     | 15.5                   | 13.6                  | 10.7   | 21.4  |
| General domestic cleaning                    | 71.2     | 15.4                   | 4.8                   | 7.7    | 1.0   |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

**Appendix Table 3.11: Practice approach to providing 24/7 emergency cover, VS respondents**

|   | Percentage |
|---|------------|
| Practice covers out-of-hours work                                 | 60.5       |
| Practice covers out-of-hours work with locum                      | 1          |
| Use dedicated out-of-hours services provider                      | 25.6       |
| Another local practice does most or all of the out-of-hours work  | 2.4        |
| Co-operates with other local practices to share out-of-hours work | 5.8        |
| Do not provide for 24/7 cover                                     | 0.8        |
| Other   | 3.9        |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

**Appendix Table 3.12: 24/7 emergency cover by country of employment, VS percentage**

|   | UK   | Ireland | Other EU | Europe, outside EU | Australia | New Zealand | Canada | USA  | South Africa | Other |
|---|------|---------|----------|--------------------|-----------|-------------|--------|------|--------------|-------|
| Practice covers out-of-hours work                                 | 61.2 | 64.8    | 53.2     | 50.0               | 49.3      | 52.0        | 40.0   | 38.2 | 50.0         | 63.6  |
| Practice covers out-of-hours work with locum                      | .8   | 1.9     | 4.3      |                    | 2.7       |             | 4.0    | 3.6  | 2.8          |       |
| Use dedicated out-of-hours services provider                      | 26.1 | 9.3     | 8.5      |                    | 32.9      | 20.0        | 36.0   | 41.8 | 22.2         | 12.7  |
| Another local practice does most or all of the out-of-hours work  | 2.1  | 3.7     | 14.9     | 30.0               | 1.4       |             | 8.0    | 3.6  |              | 9.1   |
| Co-operates with other local practices to share out-of-hours work | 5.4  | 14.8    | 17.0     | 20.0               | 4.1       | 20.0        | 4.0    |      | 16.7         | 5.5   |
| Do not provide for 24/7 cover                                     | .5   | 1.9     |          |                    | 4.1       |             | 8.0    | 5.5  | 5.6          | 3.6   |
| Other   | 3.9  | 3.7     | 2.1      |                    | 5.5       | 8.0         |        | 7.3  | 2.8          | 5.5   |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

**Appendix Table 3.13: Impact of the economic climate, VS percentage**

|                                     | Increased | Decreased | Stayed the same |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
| Hours                               | 12.2      | 11.9      | 75.8            |
| Number of VSs                       | 5.9       | 20.4      | 73.7            |
| Number of VNs                       | 4.5       | 18.0      | 77.5            |
| Number of staff in practice overall | 7.4       | 29.3      | 63.3            |
| Bad debts                           | 73.9      | 2.0       | 24.1            |
| Demand for services overall         | 10.7      | 72.8      | 16.5            |
| Demand for high-cost procedures     | 3.7       | 73.7      | 22.6            |
| Client appointments not kept        | 45.4      | 3.3       | 51.3            |
| Charges                             | 38.3      | 7.2       | 54.5            |
| Number of clients insured           | 14.0      | 23.8      | 62.2            |
| Number of specialist referrals      | 4.5       | 41.4      | 54.1            |
| Euthanasia numbers                  | 38.3      | .8        | 60.9            |
| Other                               | 38.2      | 25.9      | 36.0            |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

## CHAPTER 9: CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FURTHER EDUCATION

**Appendix Table 3.14: Breakdown of VVs that hold Veterinary Masters qualifications by country of qualification**

|              | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|
| UK           | 62.0       |
| Ireland      | 4.9        |
| Other EU     | 16.4       |
| Other Europe | .6         |
| Australia    | 3.4        |
| New Zealand  | .9         |
| Canada       | 1.5        |
| USA          | 3.1        |
| South Africa | 3.4        |
| Other        | 3.7        |

*Source: VS Survey, 2010*

**Appendix Table 3.15: Breakdown of VNs that hold Non-Veterinary Masters qualifications by country of qualification**

|              | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|
| UK           | 76.4       |
| Ireland      | 8.5        |
| Other EU     | 5.5        |
| Other Europe | 1.2        |
| Australia    | 2.4        |
| New Zealand  | .3         |
| Canada       | 1.2        |
| USA          | 1.2        |
| South Africa | 3.3        |
| Other        | 0          |

*Source: VN Survey, 2010*

## CHAPTER 13: WELL-BEING

**Appendix Table 3.16: Self-ratings for statement 'Feeling optimistic about the future' by disability, VS percentage**

|                  | Yes  | No   |
|------------------|------|------|
| None of the time | 5.0  | 2.1  |
| Rarely           | 20.0 | 11.1 |
| Some of the time | 41.3 | 39.8 |
| Often            | 27.4 | 38.9 |
| All of the time  | 6.3  | 8.1  |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

**Appendix Table 3.17: Self-ratings for statement 'Feeling optimistic about the future' by employment status, VS percentage**

|                  | Full-time work | Part-time work | Partially retired | Voluntary work | Unemployed | Taking a career break | Fully retired |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| None of the time | 2.3            | 1.9            | .7                | .0             | 5.1        | 1.0                   | 3.0           |
| Rarely           | 12.1           | 10.4           | 12.2              | 19.2           | 25.6       | 9.8                   | 9.7           |
| Some of the time | 40.3           | 41.6           | 36.3              | 38.5           | 35.0       | 34.7                  | 37.8          |
| Often            | 38.2           | 38.5           | 38.9              | 30.8           | 29.1       | 39.4                  | 37.6          |
| All of the time  | 7.1            | 7.7            | 11.9              | 11.5           | 5.1        | 15.0                  | 11.9          |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

**Appendix Table 3.18: Self-ratings for statement 'Feeling useful' by disability, VS percentage**

|                  | Yes  | No   |
|------------------|------|------|
| None of the time | 2.9  | 0.8  |
| Rarely           | 12.5 | 5.7  |
| Some of the time | 38.8 | 31.8 |
| Often            | 35.9 | 52.5 |
| All of the time  | 9.9  | 9.3  |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

**Appendix Table 3.19: Self-ratings for statement 'Feeling useful' by disability, VN percentage**

|                  | Yes  | No   |
|------------------|------|------|
| None of the time | 3.2  | 1.1  |
| Rarely           | 13.6 | 7.6  |
| Some of the time | 35.7 | 34.5 |
| Often            | 41.6 | 47.6 |
| All of the time  | 5.8  | 9.3  |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

**Appendix Table 3.20: Self-ratings for statement 'Feeling relaxed' by gender, VS percentage**

|                  | Female | Male |
|------------------|--------|------|
| None of the time | 4.3    | 2.3  |
| Rarely           | 25.4   | 20.3 |
| Some of the time | 44.4   | 38.5 |
| Often            | 24.0   | 33.0 |
| All of the time  | 1.9    | 5.9  |

Source: VS Survey, 2010

**Appendix Table 3.21: Self-ratings for statement 'Dealing with problems well' by disability, VN percentage**

|                  | Yes  | No   |
|------------------|------|------|
| None of the time | 5.2  | 1.8  |
| Rarely           | 11.7 | 6.9  |
| Some of the time | 44.8 | 40.7 |
| Often            | 36.4 | 45.2 |
| All of the time  | 1.9  | 5.4  |

Source: VN Survey, 2010

**Appendix Table 3.22: Self-ratings for statement 'Feeling confident' by disability, VN percentage**

|                  | Yes  | No   |
|------------------|------|------|
| None of the time | 7.9  | 2.4  |
| Rarely           | 23.0 | 13.2 |
| Some of the time | 34.2 | 38.7 |
| Often            | 33.6 | 39.4 |
| All of the time  | 1.3  | 6.4  |

Source: VN Survey 2010