

A new framework for VN careers

***RCVS consulting on
new post-registration
advanced veterinary
nursing courses***



In this issue: qualifications survey, GDPR, CPD audit, Schedule 3 case studies, leadership course, VN Awareness Month, apprenticeships, VN Council changes, VN Futures update, ACOVENE, events and exam dates

Post-registration qualification survey

New courses to recognise advanced VNs

The College is asking the veterinary professions for their views on a new framework for post-registration veterinary nursing qualifications with the aim of enhancing the structure of the veterinary nursing career and, in time, introducing an Advanced Veterinary Nurse status.

The framework has been developed by the VN Futures Post-Registration Development Group in conjunction with the VN Education Committee and VN Council.

It serves two distinct purposes: to provide accessible, flexible and professionally relevant post-registration awards for veterinary nurses from any level of study in order to inform an enhanced level of veterinary nursing practice; and, to provide a series of accessible specialised post-registration modules which can be studied independently for the purposes of continuing professional development (CPD).

The two qualifications which we are asking the professions to comment on are the Graduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing which would be delivered at Level 6 (according to the Quality Assurance Agency's criteria) and the Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing delivered at Level 7. The framework includes details of the courses' structure, candidate assessment criteria, accreditation standards, student support, candidate eligibility rules, the RCVS enrolment process and the procedures for certification.

The document also includes a prospective list of designations for the two courses covering areas such as wellness and preventative health; rehabilitation and physiotherapy; anaesthesia and analgesia; triage, critical care and emergency nursing; pharmacology; animal welfare; education and teaching; management and leadership; research; and, dentistry.

"One of the strongest messages that came out of the research we conducted... was a need for a more structured and rewarding career path for veterinary nurses."

Julie Dugmore, Director of Veterinary Nursing at the College, said: "One of the strongest messages that came out of the research we conducted with the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) prior to the publication of the VN Futures Report was that there was a need for a more structured and rewarding career path for veterinary nurses.

"Throughout the VN Futures roadshow events nurses felt they were entering a career cul-de-sac after a certain amount of time in practice and so the need for further post-registration qualifications which promote excellence and recognise advanced

Data protection information

RCVS publishes guide for practices

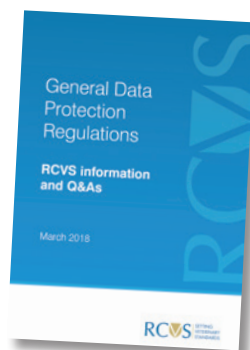
In May this year the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) came into force making significant changes to the UK's data protection regime.

The GDPR is significant for all businesses, organisations and institutions as it increases the regulatory burden and obligations on data holders and strengthens the rights of individuals in regards to controlling their data and privacy. The potential fines for data protection breach and non-compliance with GDPR have also substantially increased.

With this in mind, we have produced a general information document with Q&As to help veterinary practices and other veterinary businesses and institutions understand the law and its implications.

This document is available to download at: www.rcvs.org.uk/gdpr

The RCVS Standards Committee also recently considered the implications of the GDPR in relation to the supporting guidance to the *Codes of Professional Conduct* with changes being approved for 13 out of the 29 chapters. A document detailing all of the changes across all the relevant chapters can also be found via the same link.



knowledge, skills, competency and experience in designated areas was strongly expressed.

"We have taken this feedback and developed it into a comprehensive framework for two defined post-registration qualifications and are very interested in hearing what both veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons have to say about all aspects of what we are putting forward.

"Once we have collated the results we will incorporate the feedback into the framework for further consideration by the relevant committees and VN Council. The eventual aim is that these qualifications will, once sufficiently bedded in, lead to the development of an Advanced Veterinary Nurse status so that members of the profession with the sufficient skills and experience will get the recognition they truly deserve."

"The eventual aim is that these qualifications will... lead to the development of an Advanced Veterinary Nurse status."

The consultation will be launched this summer and will run for six weeks. All veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons will be sent an email containing a link to the survey. However, the survey can also be completed by visiting www.rcvs.org.uk/consultations

Awarding organisation

Provisional approval granted

The Veterinary Nursing Education Committee granted UK awarding organisation VetSkill conditional provisional accreditation for their Level 3 Diploma in veterinary nursing at its meeting on Friday 25 May.

The decision by the Committee means that VetSkill is now accredited to award a new licence to practise Level 3 Diploma, which can be delivered by further education and private training providers in the UK.

All new awarding institutions are first given provisional accreditation, with full accreditation being awarded after the institution demonstrates the suitability of their end-point assessment, which must be completed and passed for individuals to be able to join the Register of Veterinary Nurses.

Listen up!

VN Awareness Month podcast

As part of #VNAwarenessMonth in May we published a podcast episode 'Inspecting VN careers' where we interviewed some of the veterinary nurses who work at the College: Julie Dugmore, Director of Veterinary Nursing; Victoria Hedges, Examinations Manager; and Lily Lipman, Qualifications Manager. In the episode we discussed where a veterinary nursing qualification can take you, and how veterinary nursing skills can be applied across many different careers.

We also further publicised all the VN-themed webinars we have run with Webinar Vet over the past year, including those that help the public to understand the role of the veterinary nurse and two which discuss Schedule 3 and overseas veterinary nurses working in the UK respectively.

To listen to the podcast episode please visit our Podbean page, www.rcvs.podbean.com, or find us on the Apple podcast app. You can also catch up on all our webinars through our website by visiting www.rcvs.org.uk/news-and-views/webinars.



A grand welcome

Admission ceremony dates

We will be holding a day of admission ceremonies later this year to welcome recently qualified veterinary nurses to the Register.

The event will take place at the Prince Albert Suite at ZSL London Zoo on Tuesday 20 November 2018 with some 250 new veterinary nurses plus guests expected to attend.

On the occasion the veterinary nurses will make their declaration of professional regulation after which they will be formally welcomed to the Register.

New informed consent guidance

Further advice provided

In March of this year we published updated guidance for veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses on informed consent, with more advice on discussing informed consent with clients and who is responsible for seeking consent.

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

At its January meeting our Standards Committee approved changes to Chapter 11 ('Communication and consent') of the supporting guidance to the

Codes to provide further advice to the professions on matters that should be discussed with clients to ensure informed consent is gained. This includes clarifications around who can gain consent for a procedure and gave some additional guidance on consent forms.

The *Code of Professional Conduct* and its supporting guidance can also be downloaded as an app for smartphones and tablets at www.rcvs.org.uk/codeapp

Members of the profession seeking confidential advice on matters relating to professional conduct can contact the Standards and Advice Team on 020 7202 0789 or advice@rcvs.org.uk

Navigating Schedule 3

Practical case studies published

We have recently published a set of case studies on our website to help both veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses better navigate how Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act, which allows veterinary surgeons to delegate certain minor surgical procedures and minor medical treatments to veterinary nurses, applies to modern clinical practice.

The case studies have grown out of both the VN Futures project and the results of a consultation exercise the College undertook last year that, in part, aimed to gauge levels of understanding about Schedule 3 amongst both veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses.

The results of the consultation – which more than 11,000 people responded to – demonstrated that both vets and VNs lacked confidence in their understanding of Schedule 3 and that, when asked what prevented full utilisation of veterinary nurses, the majority of both vets and VNs cited a lack of understanding about what can – and can't – be delegated under Schedule 3.

Following the consultation, our Schedule 3 Working Party was tasked with producing materials to help veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses and student veterinary nurses feel more confident that they are working legally and safely and that their skills and experience are being fully utilised in practice.

A series of case studies – developed collaboratively with the College's Standards and Advice Team – gives practical examples of how Schedule 3 and delegation



relates to a number of commonly encountered situations in clinical practice. The case studies cover areas such as the supervision of student veterinary nurses, who can give first and second vaccinations, microchipping, veterinary nursing and dentistry and decisions about prescribing medicines.

The series of case studies is available to view on website at www.rcvs.org.uk/schedule3cases. Further materials will be produced in due course.

Please note that these case studies should be read in conjunction with both the *Code of Professional Conduct* and Chapter 18 of the Code's supporting guidance ('Delegation to veterinary nurses') available to view at www.rcvs.org.uk/delegation

Leading by example

Project and course launched

Our new RCVS Leadership initiative is now well under way, with the pilot version of the free Massive Open Online Course (or MOOC) opening in late June.

The initiative, inspired by the VN Futures and Vet Futures projects and launched on Thursday 5 April at the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) Congress in Birmingham, is part of the RCVS Strategic Plan 2017–2019 which has as one of its ambitions 'to become a Royal College with leadership and innovation at its heart, and support this creatively and with determination.' We are running it in parallel with our innovation project, ViVet, which was itself launched in September 2017.

The initiative's goals include integrating leadership into veterinary professionals' continuing education, in part by creating the MOOC, leading by example in the College by developing Council and staff members' leadership skills, and highlighting more diverse leadership opportunities.

The MOOC, called the Edward Jenner Veterinary Leadership Programme, was developed in conjunction with the NHS Leadership Academy and also includes an audio drama featuring veterinary professionals living in the fictional county of Glenvern, which provides a substrate for reflection and learning about the diverse leadership challenges veterinary professionals face on a daily basis.

Already almost 550 people have signed up to the pilot, around a fifth of whom are veterinary nurses. Feedback from the pilot MOOC will help us refine the course prior to its official launch in the autumn.

To listen to the first two episodes of the audio drama and preview content, please visit www.rcvs.org.uk/leadership or contact Anthony Roberts, Director of Leadership and Innovation, for more information at a.roberts@rcvs.org.uk.

Latest TP numbers

Increase on 2017

As of January 2018 there were 2,620 approved training practices (TPs), up from 2,514 in January 2017.

This follows a pattern of steady increase over the past five years, and includes four TPs that have been approved outside the UK over the last two years.

VN CPD audit results

One in four non-compliant

Our latest audit regarding rates of compliance amongst veterinary nurses for our continuing professional development (CPD) requirements show that more than one in four of those audited are still not meeting the minimum CPD hours.

Under the *Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses* all veterinary nurses are required to carry out at least 45 hours of CPD over a rolling three-year period in order to ensure that their skills, knowledge and areas of competence stay up-to-date and improve.

However, the most recent audit, carried out in the latter half of 2017, found that of the 784 veterinary nurses who were audited and who responded to the College's request, 209 did not meet the minimum requirements.

Of those 209 a further 25% gave no reason for being non-compliant. However, out of those who did give an explanation, 37% said they did not do sufficient CPD because they were on maternity leave, 12% because they had family commitments, 8% because of illness, 7% because they did not have the time or opportunity and 5% because they had lost or did not have a record.

"It's disappointing that a relatively high proportion of veterinary nurses still don't meet the requirement set out in the Code."

Furthermore, 69 veterinary nurses who were contacted to share their records as part of the audit did not respond to any communication from the College. Ten of these individuals had been included in two previous audits but had not responded to any requests then, meaning that the cases have been sent to the CPD Referral Group which may then, in turn, refer them to the Preliminary Investigation Committee.

Julie Dugmore, RCVS Director of Veterinary Nursing, commented: "It's disappointing that a relatively high proportion of veterinary nurses still don't meet the requirement set out in the *Code* and we would reiterate that CPD doesn't necessarily entail large amounts of money or time – it can include mentoring, free webinars and reading as well as courses and congresses.

"The most important thing is that it is relevant to the individual's role and so can also include non-clinical CPD such as communication, management and HR if it relates to the individuals' job."

Kitting out the profession

VN Ambassador programme

The VN Futures Sustainable Workforce Development Group has teamed up with educational consultancy STEM Learning to train an initial pool of Veterinary Nursing Ambassadors.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Learning is the largest provider of education and careers support in STEM subjects, working with schools and colleges throughout the UK. Once trained, Veterinary Nursing Ambassadors will volunteer to deliver career talks and activities at schools and other educational institutions to highlight the profession and encourage students to consider veterinary nursing as a career choice.

Research conducted by the VN Futures project found that while many veterinary nursing schools and career and recruitment agencies provide career materials, they are often tailored to individual organisations and do not always contain the most relevant information. Building on pre-existing resources, therefore, we will also design career materials to provide standardised, up-to-date careers advice for Veterinary Nursing Ambassadors to use and for students or parents wanting to find out more.

If you would like to get involved, please contact Claire O'Leary, Education Officer in the Veterinary Nursing Department, at c.oleary@rcvs.org.uk.

VN apprenticeships

Assessment plan developed

The Veterinary Nursing Apprenticeship Employer Group has developed and submitted the end-point assessment plan to the Institute for Apprenticeships.

This end-point assessment plan is the final step in developing veterinary nursing apprenticeships under the Government's Trailblazer agenda. The Group first had to get a standard approved for the apprenticeships, which would demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to perform effectively as a veterinary nurse in day-to-day practice.

The Group, which comprises the College, veterinary nursing educators and employers, submitted their standard to the Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills in December 2016, which was approved subject to minor changes in the summer of 2017.

The Group was then tasked with developing an assessment plan that would fully test the knowledge, skills and behaviours in a fair and robust way and ensure that apprentice veterinary nurses have achieved the College's Day-one Skills and Competences, and are therefore fit to enter practice as registered veterinary nurses.

It is hoped that the assessment plan will be approved in time for employers to take apprentices from September 2018.

PSP policy change

New rules for returnee VNs

At its May meeting, members of Veterinary Nurses Council approved new rules for the Period of Supervised Practice (PSP) for veterinary nurses returning to the UK Register after time working overseas.

The PSP provides an opportunity for those who have taken a break from the Register (normally five years and over) to work with a named mentor to refresh their knowledge and skills before formally re-joining the Register.

However, it has been recognised that the PSP may not be appropriate for individuals who have left the UK Register to work as a veterinary nurse overseas and then have returned to work in the UK.

It was therefore proposed that these applicants could be made exempt from having to undertake the PSP, provided they could supply evidence that their nursing

experience while off the Register was similar to that they could expect in the UK, that they were employed as a veterinary nurse for at least two of the five years they were off the Register and that they undertook relevant continuing professional development (CPD) during that time.

Victoria Hedges, Examinations Manager at the RCVS, said: "Individuals who are re-joining the Register after working in veterinary nursing abroad are less likely to need to update their knowledge and skills and be mentored to help regain their confidence of working in clinical practice and so this decision by VN Council is a welcome change."

All applications for the PSP exemptions will be reviewed by a small working group comprising representatives from VN Council. The policy will also be reviewed by VN Council after one year.

Farewell to Liz

New Chair taking over

Our most recent VN Council meeting on Tuesday 1 May 2018 was the last in which Liz Cox acted as Council Chair.

Liz took over the reins as Chair of VN Council from Kathy Kissick in 2015 and, in the three years she has spent in the role, she has been a passionate and tireless advocate for the veterinary nursing profession with an interest in encouraging members of the profession to speak up and speak out.

Some of the highlights during her tenure have been the 2015 campaign and petition to protect the veterinary nurse title, the launch of the VN Futures project and the publication of its report and action plan and the Schedule 3 consultation and subsequent work to help members of the professions better understand their responsibilities.

“She has been a passionate and tireless advocate for the veterinary nursing profession with an interest in encouraging members of the profession to speak up and speak out.”

Liz will officially retire as VN Council Chair at RCVS Day 2018 – our Annual General Meeting and Awards Ceremony – in which she will, in turn, hand over the reins to Racheal Marshall (pictured), with Liz moving to Vice-Chair of VN Council for one year, joining current Vice-Chair Matthew Rendle.

At the VN Council meeting members also said farewell to Hilary Orpet and Amber Richards. Hilary is a Senior Lecturer and Tutor in Veterinary

Nursing at the Royal Veterinary College who has been a Council member since 2006 and whose educational expertise has been invaluable. Amber was elected to VN Council in 2014 and has been a great ambassador for the profession – taking part in RCVS events such as Regional Question Times and Countryfile Live.



What the working groups are up to

VN Futures updates



Matt Rendle, VN Futures Workforce Group member

This year at BSAVA Congress, held from Thursday 5 April to Sunday 8 April in Birmingham, we held a stream dedicated to updating the professions about the progress being made by some of the six working groups formed to bring some of the key recommendations of the VN Futures report into fruition.

The stream started with a panel discussion entitled 'I'm an RVN: the future's bright, think big!'. On the panel were: Dot Creighton RVN, Chair of the VN Futures Post-registration Working Group which is looking at career and educational development for nurses; Stephanie Writer-Davies MRCVS, a member of the VN Futures Action Group; and Liz Cox RVN, Chair of RCVS VN Council and the VN Futures Action Group.

This was then followed by a presentation from Helen Ballantyne, a veterinary nurse and medical nurse, who chairs the VN Futures One Health Working Group, entitled 'One health: collaboration is the name of the game'. The presentation looked at how veterinary nurses can work with other healthcare professions, particularly medical nurses, to share good practice and ways of working and work together on public health campaigns that affect both humans and their animals, for example, smoking cessation and diet.

Renay Rickard, who chairs the VN Futures Career Progression Group, was next, giving a talk entitled 'Because you're worth it: giving and getting more support training and recognition'. The presentation focused on the group's work around developing a structured and rewarding career path and how nurses can maximise their own potential through personal development and increasing the awareness of what veterinary nurses do amongst the profession and public.

Finally, Matthew Rendle RVN, a member of the VN Futures Workforce Group, gave a presentation entitled 'It's your career, own it!' in which he talked about his career and how it reflects the diversity of options open to veterinary nurses.

VN Futures workforce event

Keeping it flexible

In early May the RCVS hosted a VN Futures-themed evening event to highlight the practicalities and benefits for veterinary nurses of flexible working in practice.

Research from VN Futures highlighted the need to create a more rewarding, sustainable workforce for veterinary nurses, with flexible job shares that can fit around family and personal lives presented as one of the ways to increase retention. VN Futures therefore hosted this event at Dovecote Veterinary Hospital in Castle Donington, Leicestershire, for all veterinary nurses and employers who are considering, or already have, a flexible approach to working arrangements.

“We are grateful to all the speakers who attended the event and spoke to delegates about why flexible working works.”

The event had a series of talks, followed by a panel discussion involving the speakers and members of the VN Futures Action Group and the opportunity to ask questions. First up was Belinda Andrew-Jones RVN, Director of Nursing at CVS with a talk titled ‘Flexible working from a general employer perspective’. She ran through the basics of flexible working, covering both statutory and non-statutory flexible working requests to employers, the importance of having a wish-list of things you would like to get out of flexible working, and how to first bring up flexible working with colleagues. She also demonstrated the ways that employers can efficiently handle their team’s time by using such tools as a skills matrix or ‘heat map’ of busy times in practice – ensuring that there is always sufficient staffing levels during peak times and that the best people for particular tasks are on hand at relevant times.

Rebecca Jones RVN, Head Surgery Nurse, and Emma Opperman RVN, Assistant Nursing Manager, from Langford Vets near Bristol then co-presented a talk titled ‘The practicalities and benefits of job sharing.’ Rebecca and Emma ran through their own experiences of job-sharing and the many benefits it can bring to a practice such as diversity of skill sets, knowledge and experience, potentially lower staffing costs, increased employee loyalty and continuity of staff.

Callum Ladell RVN, a locum with a keen interest in law, ethics and animal welfare, rounded off the session with a talk titled ‘Managing your own time and



being flexible as a locum.’ He talked through his own career transitions, from joining the British Army as a bomb disposal operator to completing his veterinary nursing degree, with a few other degrees in animal welfare, ethics and law in the middle, before discussing the practicalities, along with the pros and cons, of being a locum.

Julie Dugmore, RCVS Director of Veterinary Nursing, commented: “There are massive benefits from a flexible approach to work schedules, for the practice as well as to the individual veterinary nurse. Being open to non-traditional working patterns can allow the team to work around family and other non-work commitments, hopefully leading to higher retention rates and a more confident, cohesive veterinary nursing team.

“We are grateful to all the speakers who attended the event and spoke to delegates about why flexible working works. Through the VN Futures working parties we will continue to look at ways in which we can encourage employers to consider greater provision for flexible working to ensure that veterinary nurses can stay and thrive within the profession.”

The *VN Futures Report and Action Plan*, which contains a full list of the recommendations and actions that grew out of the project, can be downloaded from www.vetfutures.org.uk/vnfutures



European standards

ACOVENE reviews procedures

At its meeting on 21 March, the Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education (ACOVENE), a voluntary organisation founded in 2007 to accredit VN education programmes in Europe that the RCVS provides the secretariat for, agreed to a review of the current Accreditation Policies and Procedures (APP) along with its Dossier of Competence.

The APP sets out the standards of accreditation for veterinary nurse education programmes in the European Union and ensures the quality of the educational experience and assessment of student knowledge and skills. The original policies were developed in 2007 and reviewed in 2011.

“ACOVENE is also looking to widen its pool of visitors for accreditation and quality monitoring audits of ACOVENE-accredited schools.”

The Dossier of Competence, based on the UK National Occupational Standards (NOS), stipulates in detail the clinical skills to be gained during completion of an ACOVENE-accredited veterinary nursing programme. In 2010, the RCVS moved away from using the NOS as a benchmark to set minimum standards and approved, in its place, the RCVS Day-one Competences and Skills for veterinary nurses. The current Dossier of Competence was last reviewed seven years ago.

It is vital that both the standards and the dossier reflect current educational and veterinary practice and



that there is continued synergy between ACOVENE accredited schools and the RCVS Veterinary Nursing requirements. The review of both documents is due to start this autumn.

ACOVENE is also looking to widen its pool of visitors for accreditation and quality monitoring audits of ACOVENE-accredited schools.

Accreditation and re-accreditation audits usually involve around three to four days of preparation along with a two-day visit to the veterinary nursing school and compilation of the site visit report. Quality monitoring consists of a one-day spot check of the school, compilation of the visit report and involves very little preparation time.

ACOVENE provides full training, guidance and mentoring to all new visitors. We also pay loss of earnings along with reasonable travel expenses. If you are a veterinary nurse or veterinary surgeon interested in joining the visitor pool or would just like further information regarding this opportunity please contact ACOVENE secretary Claire O'Leary at c.oleary@rcvs.org.uk

Accrediting the accreditors

Visit by European QA organisation

In April the Veterinary Nursing and Education Departments saw the culmination of 18 months' of work when the RCVS received a visit from a panel from the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) as part of its quality assurance process for the College's accreditation procedures.

The preparatory work prior to the visit included producing a self-assessment report and launching new initiatives for how we accredit veterinary nursing education such as bolstering student and education representatives on our accreditation panels and launching a new accreditation appeals procedure.

During the visit the panel spoke to various stakeholders including senior RCVS staff, university representatives, accreditation visit panel members, committee and RCVS and VN Councils members and other external stakeholder groups.

The initial feedback we have received in the summary of the visit was very positive and we hope to have the panel's official decision in September 2018. If we are approved by ENQA it will demonstrate that the College adheres to high international standards in terms of how we quality assure veterinary and veterinary nurse education. For more information on ENQA and its processes visit www.enqa.eu

ESNO bad thing

Specialist conference in Brussels

Lily Lipman, our Qualifications Manager, attended a summit of the European Specialist Nurses Organisation (ESNO) in Brussels (pictured) this April representing ACOVENE, for which the College is currently the secretariat.

While in Brussels Lily attended discussions on a variety of topics including new elections to the ESNO board and a project ESNO is involved in regarding antimicrobial resistance which is relevant to our role in the VN Futures One Health initiative.

Furthermore, a project encouraging vaccine uptake for both humans and animals was discussed which, from a VN Futures One Health perspective, both ACOVENE and the RCVS would be interested in. A working group will be formed in due course to look at how this issue might be tackled and the College/ACOVENE is hoping to be represented on this.

The RCVS/ ACOVENE is also looking for a potential opportunity to sit on two further working groups: one for the creation of a recognised and structured education framework for specialist nurses and the other for re-hauling the governance of the ESNO.



Brexit survey

EU VN views wanted

Registered veterinary nurses who trained in the EU have been sent a confidential survey by the Institute of Employment Studies on behalf of the RCVS as part of our ongoing research into how the vote to leave the EU in 2016 and the subsequent Brexit negotiations are impacting their lives and careers.

This cohort were previously surveyed last year and asked, among other things, for their views on the future of working in the UK veterinary sector and how they felt the College had handled the issue.

The results of this year's survey will be benchmarked against last year's responses.

A summer of public outreach

Showcasing VN careers



This year the College will be holding a summer of public outreach in which we attend new and different events and festivals to help raise the profile of some of our core public-facing services including our Find a Vet search tool and the Practice Standards Scheme as well as promoting veterinary and veterinary nursing careers.

In May we attended the Devon County Show in Exeter and we will be following this with the Royal Welsh Show near Builth Wells in July and the BBC Countryfile Live event in Oxfordshire in August.

During all of these events we will be promoting our joint #petsneedvets campaign with the British Veterinary Association which was launched in May to promote the benefits of pet owners registering their animal with a veterinary practice.

“We will be promoting our joint #petsneedvets campaign with the British Veterinary Association which was launched in May.”

Also on display will be our ever popular veterinary nursing careers materials including a list of Further Education and Higher Education institutions which run veterinary nursing training courses. Members of our veterinary nursing team (including Julie Dugmore, Director of Veterinary Nursing pictured) and Veterinary Nurses Council will also be on hand to help teach youngsters some critical nursing skills including bandaging and dressing wounds.

Talking to the profession

Festivals and congresses

We are pleased to say that we are increasing our attendance at professional-facing conferences and events throughout the year, increasing our opportunities to engage with the professions. As well as once again attending the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) Congress in April (further information on page 7), and the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) Congress, this year to be held from Friday 12 to Sunday 14 October in Telford International Centre, we also attended VET Fest for the first time in June.

VET Fest, founded by Professor Noel Fitzpatrick of Channel 4 'Supervet' fame, was held on Friday 8 and Saturday 9 June in Loseley Park near Guildford, Surrey. College staff, along with members of RCVS Council and VN Council, were on the stand both days promoting the College's recently launched RCVS

Leadership initiative, its innovation hub, ViVet, and its mental health initiative, Mind Matters.

Lizzie Lockett, RCVS CEO and Mind Matters Director, also gave two talks on the Friday during the 'Wellness & Practice Development' stream: 'RCVS Mind Matters Initiative: Where are we now?', and 'Improved wellbeing in your practice: Some practical steps'. The first talk was an update on the current activities and priorities of the initiative while the second talk gave advice to practices and how to enhance wellbeing while managing workplace stress. The Mind Matters Initiative also recently published a short guide on this subject, available to download at www.vetmindmatters.org

If you're heading to BVNA Congress in October do drop by our stand to hear about our latest projects and initiatives including the RCVS Leadership course.

More medical minds

VN spokespeople needed!

Earlier this year our Mind Matters Initiative (MMI) and the Doctors' Support Network (DSN) marked the first anniversary of their joint '&me' campaign, which aims to tackle mental health stigma in the health professions by encouraging prominent members to speak out about their own experiences.

MMI seeks to address mental health and wellbeing issues within the veterinary professions, while the Doctors' Support Network provides peer support

for doctors and medical students with mental health concerns.

Since the launch of &me last year, 12 ambassadors have volunteered to help the campaign by telling their own stories about mental ill-health, including senior GPs, psychiatrists, psychologists, medical directors and academics.

From the veterinary side Steve Carter, Director at Priory Veterinary Surgeons; David Bartram (pictured), RCVS Council Member; Rob Pettit, a lecturer in Small Animal Orthopaedics at the University of Liverpool, have all contributed their personal stories, available to view at www.vetmindmatters.org/&me

A number of &me ambassadors also took part in an '&me live' session at BSAVA Congress, from 5–8 April 2018 in Birmingham, providing a short overview of their story before taking questions from the audience.

The campaign is interested in hearing from not only veterinary surgeons but also veterinary nurses who want to open up about their experiences of mental ill-health. To participate in the campaign, please email Dr Louise Freeman on vicechair@dsn.org.uk.

On social media tweets about the campaign are being sent from [@vetmindmatters](https://twitter.com/vetmindmatters) and [@DocSupportNet](https://twitter.com/DocSupportNet) using the hashtag **#AndMe**.



Meet the new team member

Michad Wildman, VN pre-registration support



What is your role in the Veterinary Nursing Department and what does it entail?

I am the Pre-Registration Assessment Officer for the Veterinary Nursing Department. Generally, I am the first point of contact for applicants who are

educated as veterinary nurses outside the UK.

I process their applications, which includes preparing their paperwork for the Equivalency Officers who make the decision about qualifications we accept. After the assessment process is complete, I provide applicants with their decision letter outlining the steps to help them become a Registered Veterinary Nurse. In addition to this, I also help to run the Pre-Registration OSCE practical examination. Alongside the examinations manager, I organise the tasks and stationery before the examination and the processing and delivery of the results.

What is your professional background and how does it relate to your role?

I hold a joint honours degree in Events Management & Marketing and was interested in pursuing a career in marketing. However, this changed when I began working for a distance learning company in July 2015. I was introduced to the education sector, which I decided to pursue a career within as I thoroughly enjoy interacting with those furthering their education.

What is your interest in animal health and welfare?

I've never owned any pets but I do understand how important animal health and welfare is since for many people they are companions, friends and even members of the family and so it's vital that they are well treated and looked after.

What have you learnt from working with the veterinary nursing profession?

I haven't been working here too long but I have learnt how important veterinary nurses are in terms of caring for both the animals and their families. Not to mention how hard they work to make sure their education and experience is up to a good standard.

Practical practice

Pre-registration exam dates

This October we will be holding our next round of pre-registration practical examinations at Hartpury in Gloucester.

The exam is for candidates who have completed an overseas qualification in veterinary nursing that has not achieved full approval by the RCVS and must be undertaken and passed before they can join the Register.

The next round takes place on Saturday 27 October and comprises a series of Objectively Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) which each OSCE station being designed to test the practical skills contained within the RCVS Day-one Skills for Veterinary Nurses.

Any candidates for the examinations can contact Michad Wildman, the VN Pre-registration Assessment Officer, on m.wildman@rcvs.org.uk.

Who does what in the VN Department

Julie Dugmore: *Director of Veterinary Nursing*

Annette Amato: *Deputy Head of Veterinary Nursing, Secretary to VN Council*

Victoria Hedges: *Examinations Manager*

Chloe Baxter: *Initial VN registrations*

Claire O'Leary: *Centre approvals and monitoring, Secretary to ACOVENE*

Nimrah Syed: *Student enrolments and careers advice*

Lily Lipman: *Accreditation and quality monitoring for VN qualifications*

Michad Wildman: *VN pre-registration support*

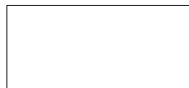
Naila Hassanali: *Continuing professional development and Professional Development Record support*

Alana Hudson: *VN Administration Officer*

Catherine Phillips: *DipAVN External Quality Assurer*

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