



## A good blend

*“Changes to RCVS guidance on blended learning hours”*

**In this issue:** VN Council election results; RCVS Knowledge VN resources; mental health courses; VN Awareness Month; exam fraud; Golden Jubilee Award; handbooks re-published; apprenticeships update; Schedule 3 consultation; VN Futures update; Brexit principles published; ACOVENE meeting; RCVS Day 2017; pre-registration exams

# VN Council 2017 election results

## Best ever turnout



Susan Howarth (left) and Andrea Jeffery

**T**his year saw the best ever turnout in the Veterinary Nurses Council election since they started in 2002, with 14.5% of the electorate (or 2,092 individuals) casting a vote for their preferred candidates. Last year 10.9% of the profession voted.

Four candidates stood for VN Council this year – two of whom were current members and two of whom were new. Current member Andrea Jeffery was re-elected with 1,293 votes, while new member Susan Howarth was elected with 1,064 votes. Both will take up their four-year terms on VN Council at RCVS Day in July. Liz Cox, Chair of VN Council, said: “Congratulations to both those elected to VN Council and thank you to all those who stood as candidates in the elections. I would especially like to thank Marie Rippingale for her contribution to VN Council over the past few years.

“The fact that both record numbers and proportions of the profession voted this year is testament to our efforts to further increase engagement with veterinary nurses. Conscious efforts were made by the team at the College to make voting easier this year with secure links to the voting websites sent by email and regular email reminders to those who hadn’t yet voted.

**“The fact that both record numbers and proportions of the profession voted this year is testament to our efforts to further increase engagement with veterinary nurses.”**

“The number of people voting in this election has usually been very low and, so while we are glad to see an increase, we recognise that this is still a pretty small proportion of the profession. Projects like VN Futures and our consultation on potential changes to Schedule 3, both of which have heavily involved members of VN Council, demonstrate that discussions and decisions made by Council members are important and do have an impact on daily practice.

“Over the coming months and years we will continue to engage with the profession in a variety of ways to make sure this message is getting out there.”

Six veterinary surgeons were also elected to RCVS Council, on a turnout of 22.8%.

# Higher education experts wanted

## Visitor team members

**W**e are currently looking for RVNs or MsRCVS who have been in the higher education sector for five or more years to join our visitation team which ensures that new and re-validated veterinary nursing courses are compliant with our standards.

Visitors will need to have good knowledge and experience of the delivery of RCVS standards in the context of higher education, good problem-solving skills (including the ability to interpret large amounts of complex information) and good communication skills.

Visitations generally last for a day and visitors will need to be able to devote time both before and afterwards

for reading and preparing reports. The list of visitors will be periodically re-examined by the VN Education Committee, but successful applicants should expect to remain on it for a period of approximately five years before reapplying. Furthermore we also pay loss of earnings plus expenses.

If you are interested in applying you can contact Lily Lipman, Qualifications Manager, for an initial enquiry on [L.lipman@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:L.lipman@rcvs.org.uk). Applications are considered by the VN Education Committee on recommendations from our VN Department.

We are also looking for student visitors – please contact Lily for details.

# Shoring up knowledge

## RCVS Knowledge and resources for VNs

**R**CVS Knowledge, the College's associated charity, is keen to hear from veterinary nurses with a passion for evidence-based veterinary medicine (EBVM) to get involved in its EBVM network and journal, *Veterinary Evidence*, as reviewers.

The journal offers a variety of relevant content including Knowledge Summaries, articles and podcasts. One 'Topic in Focus', for example, titled 'Continuing Professional Development for VNs', provides a useful compilation of relevant resources for CPD, while a podcast describes itself as 'A simple guide for veterinary nurses to conducting evidence-based research in clinical practice'.

If you are interested please get in touch by emailing [info@rcvsknowledge.org](mailto:info@rcvsknowledge.org), or [bridget@veterinaryevidence.org](mailto:bridget@veterinaryevidence.org) for information about Knowledge Summaries.

The charity has many resources which may be of use to veterinary nurses. The Library, for example, only costs

£45 per year for veterinary nurses, and can provide answers for a client's query, papers for a project, or just a way to keep up-to-date with the latest research.

With just one login from any internet-enabled device, Library membership provides access to a wide range of electronic journals, as well as the key veterinary bibliographic databases and a free subject alert to veterinary nurses.

***"The Library, for example, only costs £45 per year for veterinary nurses."***

Library resources not only support daily clinical practice, they can also help with CPD:

- Reading and reflecting on literature
- Reading around topics of interest can reinforce learning from other CPD activities, making every pound spent on CPD as effective as possible.

For a three-day free trial, visit the Library membership webpage or email [library@rcvsknowledge.org](mailto:library@rcvsknowledge.org).

# Managing the mind

## Mental health courses for managers



**O**ur Mind Matters Initiative (MMI) has joined with the Veterinary Practice Management Association (VPMA) to launch a series of courses designed to help

those in management roles in a veterinary practice or other veterinary workplaces support colleagues with mental health issues.

These day-long courses, each running from 9.30am to 5pm, will cover: basic mental health awareness; HR employment regulations and the legal position; the role of the line manager in supporting someone with poor mental health; making reasonable adjustments; planning 'return to work'; and designing and putting in place wellbeing action plans.

The courses are run by Connecting with People, a social enterprise that develops and delivers high-quality training to employees with healthcare or safeguarding responsibilities.

Lizzie Lockett, Director of Mind Matters, says: "It has been wonderful to see the response from the veterinary

profession to our mental health awareness training sessions, but we know that managers can face particular challenges in supporting their team's mental health. Meanwhile, line managers play a key role in whether or not someone feels comfortable discussing a mental health issue, goes on to seek help, and, ultimately, returns to the workforce.

***"It has been wonderful to see the response from the veterinary profession to our mental health awareness training sessions."***

"We therefore designed these courses to provide very practical information for those in managerial positions, covering legal requirements as well as how to implement wellbeing strategies for colleagues."

Each course costs £80 for VPMA members and £120 for non-members.

To book a place, please visit the Mind Matters Eventbrite page: [www.rcvsmindmatters.eventbrite.com](http://www.rcvsmindmatters.eventbrite.com)

## Latest TP numbers

### Government approval gained

**A**s of the beginning of this year the total number of approved training practices (TPs) offering clinical training and work experience to student veterinary nurses stands at 2,515 compared to 2,372 at the beginning of 2016.

Here is a comparison of TPs and student veterinary nurse numbers on a regional basis as at 14 March 2017.

TP Region	Training practices	Student VNs
Overseas	1	36
South West England	187	403
South England	420	827
Greater London	239	512
Wales and Borders	134	261
Midlands	249	688
Central England	158	319
East England	209	513
North West England	221	454
East Midlands	149	391
Northern England	287	618
Southern Scotland	133	292
Northern Scotland	64	128
Northern Ireland	57	92
Channel Islands	7	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,515</b>	<b>5,449</b>

## Admitted to the zoo

### Venue for new VN ceremonies

**F**or the remainder of this year we will be hosting our regular admissions ceremonies for newly qualified veterinary nurses joining the Register at a brand new venue – ZSL London Zoo.

The ceremonies will take place at 10.30am and 2.30pm on Tuesday 27 June and Tuesday 28 November with space for around 600 people at each ceremony, including the guests of nurses being registered. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available before the ceremony and refreshments and canapés afterwards.



The deadline to apply to attend the June ceremony has now passed but the deadline to attend the November ceremony is Friday 22 September 2017. Nurses being admitted on to the Register are allowed two guests each.

The ceremonies will be held in the Prince Albert Suite at the Zoo and after the ceremony, the nurses and their invited guests will be able to look around the grounds of the zoo until closing time, free of charge.

If you wish to attend the November event or have any further questions then please contact Chloe Baxter, VN Admissions Officer, on [c.baxter@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:c.baxter@rcvs.org.uk)

## Raising VN Awareness

### College activities for VN Awareness Month

**A**s part of VN Awareness Month this May we ran two webinars, aimed both at the veterinary professions and the public, and an Instagram campaign to raise awareness of the veterinary nurse profession.

You can listen again to either of these webinars on the Webinar Vet website; 'Schedule 3 consultation – the Future of Veterinary Nursing' corresponded with our launch of a consultation on Schedule 3, and our public-facing webinar with Wendy Nevins

from the British Veterinary Nursing Association titled 'Veterinary nurses – there for you and your pet' provides practical advice to animal owners on making the most of their practice's veterinary nurses.

On Instagram we saw daily photos from the professional lives of Kathy Kissick, Racheal Marshall, and Louise O'Dwyer, demonstrating the varied careers open to veterinary nurses. To view them please visit our Instagram account, [@thercvs](https://www.instagram.com/thercvs).

# Examining fraud

## Advice on avoiding cheating at exams

**In March of this year medical students at the University of Glasgow were asked to retake an end-of-course practical assessment after online “collusion” between students was discovered. We would therefore like to remind tutors that the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) provides relevant guidelines which may be useful in avoiding assessment fraud, as well as reminding students of the dangers of providing fraudulent signatures on documents to the College.**

The QAA particularly recommends that lecturers be vigilant when marking, and be alert to changes in style or structure. This can be facilitated by close marking of draft or formative assessments throughout the students' training, which provides familiarity with each student's style.

Additionally, we are still receiving a handful of fraudulently-completed documents each year, even in such important documents as applications to join the

Register. A verified forgery could lead to applicants being prevented from joining the Register, and even where this sanction is not taken, the potential registrant will be called for an interview with the Chair of VN Council and the Registrar and will be asked to explain their actions.

***“The QAA particularly recommends that lecturers be vigilant when marking, and be alert to changes in style or structure.”***

We will also inform the student's further or higher education institution as well as their training practice, where applicable. If a student veterinary nurse is having trouble getting a signature or other details needed to complete their registration application, then they should, in the first instance, contact the Veterinary Nursing Department for help on 020 7202 0788 or [vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk).

# A legend of VN education

## Kathy Kissick wins Golden Jubilee Award



**We were pleased to announce Kathy Kissick as the winner of this year's Golden Jubilee Award, the highest honour we can bestow upon a veterinary nurse.**

Kathy Kissick is a trustee of the Alderney Animal Welfare Society and has previously acted as the Head of School for Veterinary Nursing and

Fariery Science at Myerscough College in Lancashire.

She qualified as a veterinary nurse in 1983 and, since then, has acted as an external examiner and adviser for a number of veterinary nursing course providers over the years and is currently on the editorial board for *The Veterinary Nurse*.

She has also been very active within the College, initially as a nursing examiner and then as both a Member and then Chair of the RCVS Veterinary Nurses Council.

Regarding the Award, Ms Kissick said: "I am delighted, honoured and humbled to accept the Golden Jubilee

Award and hope that I can continue to inspire veterinary nurses, throughout their careers, to always do the very best for their patients, clients and colleagues, and not to forget to follow their dreams."

***“I am delighted, honoured and humbled to accept the Golden Jubilee award and hope that I can continue to inspire veterinary nurses, throughout their careers.”***

She was nominated by Lynne Kerrigan, a colleague and former student of Kathy's. In her nomination Mrs Kerrigan said: "Kathy has become a role model for both aspiring and qualified veterinary nurses through her relentless passion and tenacity to raise the profile of veterinary nursing and her continuous drive to achieve improved recognition and protection of the title veterinary nurse."

Kathy will receive the accolade at this year's RCVS Day, our Annual General Meeting and Awards Day, which takes place on Friday 7 July at the Royal Institute of British Architects (see page 11).

# New approach to learning hours

## Recognition of 'blended learning'

**The College has changed its policy towards the amount of 'learning hours' that student veterinary nurses are expected to undertake on a face-to-face basis and instead focus on an outcomes-based approach to learning.**

Under our previous policy veterinary nursing training courses were expected to feature at least 700 hours of face-to-face learning for student veterinary nurses. However, it has been recognised for some time that this policy was too prescriptive and didn't recognise the fact that an increasing amount of learning is done remotely, for example, via webinar, Skype and through online assessment tools.

Research conducted by Lily Lipman, our Qualifications Manager, looked at 'blended learning' approaches on various licence to practise qualifications (medical nursing) and found that many aspects of such courses were delivered online, for example, through webinars, virtual classrooms and live virtual tutorial sessions, interactive PowerPoints and electronic assessment methods.

The research was discussed at the March meeting of VN Education Committee. Committee members considered that different students had different learning needs and preferences – for example, Lily's research found that some students felt they learnt more through distance learning rather than having to attend lectures.

Lily commented: "Ultimately the decision was that we should be focusing on the outcomes achieved by veterinary nursing students attending the courses rather than specifying what percentage of the course should be delivered face-to-face or online and so on.

"In order to support this outcomes-based approach we will be placing more of an emphasis on student feedback and the quality of the clinical skills training and preparation that is essential for workplace-based learning.

"Online provision will be subject to the same quality measures checked for face-to-face teaching, and it is imperative that standards of veterinary nurse education remain high. Centres and universities are therefore advised to monitor student learning, feedback and attendance with online learning elements, and ensure these measures are equally as auditable as traditional classroom teaching.

"However, we will also be advising further and higher education institutions that the blended learning approach means they have to remain flexible. Different students have different learning processes and so they need to ensure, as far as possible, that their students are comfortable with the way that the courses are being delivered.

"On a similar note it is also vital that support is made available for students in both their training centre and training practice. Some students doing distance learning reported that they found it difficult to seek advice and guidance from tutors at evenings and weekends and that some practices did not allocate specific learning time during the working day. It is important that, during the allotted hours of online teaching, tutors are readily available for students to ask questions and seek support, as would be the case with face-to-face teaching."

If you have any questions about the change in requirements, please contact Lily on [L.lipman@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:L.lipman@rcvs.org.uk) or 020 7202 0756.

# Revised handbooks published

## Info for educators and training practices

**Our series of handbooks about veterinary nursing education have been republished and are available to download from our website.**

There are three handbooks currently available: one for awarding organisations and higher education institutions; one for centres/ colleges delivering veterinary nurse qualifications; and one for training practices.

Each handbook sets out accreditation criteria and how we quality assure levels of education and training as well as giving other useful information such as the Day-one Competences and Day-one Skills documents and what Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act means in practice.



# Apprenticeships update

## Government approval gained

**T**he Veterinary Nursing Apprenticeship Group's new apprenticeship standard for veterinary nursing has received sign off from Robert Halfon, the Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills, and the group is now working on an assessment plan.

The Group, which comprises the College, veterinary nursing educators and a number of major employers, was set up to design a new standard for veterinary nursing apprenticeships under the Government's Trailblazer agenda. The standard demonstrates what an apprentice veterinary nurse would be doing in day-to-day practice and the skills required of them and was approved subject to some minor changes.

**“The standard demonstrates what an apprentice veterinary nurse would be doing in day-to-day practice.”**

While the standard has been approved the Group is currently working on developing an assessment plan which would set out how those employing apprentice veterinary nurses would assess the progress of apprentices to ensure that they achieve the College's Day-one Skills and Competences and are therefore fit to enter practice as registered veterinary nurses.

Apprenticeships, along with higher education and further education, are one of the three routes to entry to veterinary nursing available to prospective members of the profession.

# Enrol up, enrol up!

## New process hitting targets

**O**ur Veterinary Nursing Department has recently been hitting its four-week targets for processing enrolments thanks to new administration procedures.

For example, rather than receiving individual photocopies of prospective student veterinary nurses by post or email, the Department has been sending secure USB drives to the centres for them to upload pictures of the whole cohort.

The Department is also using a flowchart that sets out what actions need to be undertaken, and when, in terms of student enrolments.

All this means that enrolments have been processed within four weeks of receiving the correctly completed enrolment form and the enrolment fee being paid.

# Consulting on future of veterinary nursing

## Your views on Schedule 3 needed

**A**t the beginning of May we launched a consultation on Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act, which provides that veterinary surgeons may direct registered or student veterinary nurses to carry out limited veterinary surgery, to ask how it could be clarified and reformed to bolster the role of VNs in practice.

The consultation came out of our research for our joint VN Futures project with the British Veterinary Nursing Association (pages 8 and 9) which found that there was some uncertainty around the interpretation of Schedule 3 in clinical practice, including the fact that many nurses do not undertake Schedule 3 work (or are uncertain if they do), while some veterinary surgeons are reluctant to delegate such tasks.

As a result of this research one of the key ambitions of the *VN Futures Report and Action Plan* was to create a 'clarified and bolstered VN role via a reformed Schedule 3'. This consultation aims to establish on a firmer footing how Schedule 3 is interpreted in practice and we are particularly keen to hear from student veterinary nurses as well as those registered veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons involved in training VNs.

Liz Cox, Chair of VN Council and the Schedule 3 Working Party that drew up the consultation, said: "With this survey we hope to get a better steer on how Schedule 3 is used and interpreted in practice on a day-to-day basis and gather views on where both veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses feel the current legislation could be clarified. Furthermore, we also want to know if there are areas of practice that are currently prohibited to nurses under current Schedule 3 arrangements that the professions believe could be opened up to veterinary nurses as a means of bolstering the profession."

The consultation is being conducted by the Institute for Employment Studies, an independent not-for-profit centre of research and consultancy in public employment policy and HR management, and was sent by email to all veterinary nurses, student veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons in May. The deadline for responding to the consultation is **Wednesday 7 June 2017**. All responses will be handled confidentially.

If you haven't received the email or have deleted or lost it, please contact Ben Myring, RCVS Senior Policy and Public Affairs Officer, on [b.myring@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:b.myring@rcvs.org.uk)

# Ambitions into action

## An update on VN Futures

VN Futures, a joint project between the College and the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) that created a blueprint for the future of the veterinary nursing profession, isolated six ambitions to achieve by 2020 (see listed below). The VN Futures Action Group then created a number of development groups focusing on each of these ambitions and creating specific actions to ensure their completion (also listed below).

### Ambitions

#### Creating a sustainable workforce

**Workforce Chair** – Fiona Andrew, former President of the BVNA

- Improve careers materials for schools
- Encourage more males into the profession via targeted marketing
- Develop VN Careers Ambassadors
- Explore social media (and TV) campaign to promote the role of the veterinary nurse
- Provide material for practices to use on their website to promote VNs within their practice
- Provide opportunities for overseas VNs and vets registering with the RCVS to be educated on the role of VNs in the UK
- Develop support for overseas graduated veterinary nurses

**VN Schools Council Chair** – Mary Fraser, Managing Director Girling & Fraser Ltd

- Develop peer support and/or mentoring mechanisms in all UK VN schools and improve support for VNs post-registration
- Review the syllabus
- Develop a VN Schools Council
- Establish inter-professional education and training for veterinary students and VNs along with inter-professional CPD
- Review the approach to recruiting and selecting VN students

### Working parties

#### Structured and rewarding career paths

**Post-registration Chair** – Dot Creighton, former President of the BVNA

- Establish a working party to further canvass opinion on post-qualifications awards
- Develop advanced practitioner qualifications or status
- Develop an evidence-based resource

**Leadership Chair** – Renay Rickard, President of the VPMA

- Develop lifelong learning in leadership
- Explore ways to develop the next generations of VN leaders

#### Confident, resilient, healthy and well-supported workforce

**Mind Matters Initiative Director** – Lizzie Lockett, Deputy CEO of RCVS

This project, launched in 2015 and funded by the RCVS, aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of those in the veterinary team including students, veterinary nurses, veterinary surgeons and practice managers.



# VNFUTURES



## Proactive role in One Health

**One Health**  
Chair – Helen Ballantyne,  
veterinary nurse and medical nurse

- Develop links with human-centred nurses in practice
- Explore the development of a cross-profession committee
- Empower VNs to become more involved with, and lead on, public health campaigns
- Research and develop the district nurse role

## Maximising nurses' potential

**Career Progression Development**  
Chair – Renay Rickard,  
President of the VPMA

- Encourage maximising individuals nurses' strengths
- Actively promote performance review
- Encourage charging for nurse time and skills
- Encourage flexible working

**Training practices**  
Chair – Liz Cox,  
Chair of VN Council

- Increase the number of training practices

## A clarified and bolstered VN role via reformed Schedule 3

**Schedule 3 Working Party**  
Chair – Liz Cox,  
Chair of VN Council

- Establish a formal working party that will review the evidence assembled by the VN Futures project, and consider possible reform to Schedule 3 and related guidance
- The working party may also consider proposals to separate the delegation rights of VNs from those of farmers
- The working party will aim to report its recommendations to RCVS Council by March 2017

Some of these groups have already sprung into action, such as the One Health Working Party which has collaborated with the Royal College of Nursing on smoking cessation. The Careers Progression Group has also already met twice, and is planning four regional events, the first of which will take place at Hartpury College in Gloucester on 11 July and will focus on veterinary nurses as managers. For details about how to attend this event, please contact Claire O'Leary from the RCVS Veterinary Nursing Department on [c.oleary@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:c.oleary@rcvs.org.uk).

# College stance on Brexit

## Three principles published

**I**n March this year, ahead of the triggering of Article 50 by the Prime Minister, we published our 'Brexit Principles' setting out how we, as a regulator, would seek to mitigate the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities offered by the UK leaving the European Union.

The three principles are: that vital veterinary work continues to get done; that high standards of animal health and welfare remain and improve; and that the RCVS continues to be a global force for good. These principles will inform our relationship with the Government and our European counterparts during the ongoing Brexit negotiations.

The individual policies under these three headings include looking at upskilling and extending the role of veterinary nurses to enable a multi-skilled workforce, employed in roles that better suit their skills and are sufficiently adaptable to changes in employment patterns. We will also be looking developing measures to support VNs to have thriving and successful careers and, therefore, boost rates of retention, and to ensure that EU VNs working in the UK are allowed to stay indefinitely.

The full text of the College's Brexit principles can be found here: [www.rcvs.org.uk/brexit](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/brexit)

# 2017 Vetnnet conference

## Punters heading to Cambridge

**T**he Veterinary European Transnational Network for Nursing Education and Training (Vetnnet) will be holding its next conference in the UK in Cambridge.

The meeting will take place between Wednesday 20 and Friday 22 September 2017 at Downing College. Vetnnet is a European Network for everyone involved in veterinary nurse training and brings together colleges, veterinary associations, accreditation bodies and veterinary nurse associations and the conference will feature workshops aimed at teachers, managers and facilitating organisations.

The theme of this year's conference is the transition to clinical practice. Speakers will include our President for 2017–18, Professor Stephen May, who will be talking about reflective learning, as well as VN Council members Andrea Jeffery and Hilary Orpet on professional behaviours in practice for students.

There will also be access to Pan-European Practical Assessment System (PEPAS) tasks, which will give delegates an insight into the system as a potential resource to use in their training programmes.

# ACOVENE board meeting

## New website and VN Futures Europe

**T**he most recent board meeting of the Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education (ACOVENE) took place at Porto in Portugal in March 2017 and was chaired by Julie Dugmore, our Director of Veterinary Nursing.

ACOVENE is a voluntary organisation founded in 2007 to accredit veterinary nurse education programmes in Europe and the RCVS, as regulator of veterinary nursing education, has been a member from the outset. The organisation currently accredits 70 veterinary nurse training programmes including in Belgium, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and the Republic of Ireland.

Among the issues discussed at the board meeting was the imminent launch of a revamped website for ACOVENE ([www.acovene.org](http://www.acovene.org)) and the fact that ACOVENE representatives will be joining Lily Lipman, our Qualifications Manager, on several of her quality

assurance visits throughout the course of 2017 in an observational and training capacity.

Delegates also discussed the possibility of launching a VN Futures Europe to look at the issues facing the veterinary nursing profession across the continent and to help it prepare for and set out a blueprint for its future.



# RCVS Day 2017

## DipAVNs to receive awards at ZSL

**This year we will be holding a special ceremony for veterinary nurses receiving a Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (DipAVN) at ZSL London Zoo on Tuesday 27 June 2017 (see page 4).**

Julie Dugmore, Director of Veterinary Nursing, said: "In previous years the DipAVNs have been given out as part of the RCVS Day proceedings but this year we decided to trial a new event concentrating solely on those achieving the diplomas and veterinary nurses more generally.

"We would like to thank London Zoo for hosting this event which will be a great day out for our diploma holders and their friends and family."

Meanwhile this year's RCVS Day – our Annual General Meeting and Awards Day – takes place on Friday 7 July at the Royal Institute of British Architects. Veterinary nurses are still very welcome to attend the occasion which will see the newly elected VN Council members take up their four-year terms (see page 2) and Kathy Kissick, the former Chair of VN Council, receiving a Golden Jubilee Award.

If you wish to attend RCVS Day then please contact Emma Lockley, Senior Events Officer, on [e.lockley@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:e.lockley@rcvs.org.uk). Lunch will be included but please note that tickets are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.

## Join us at BVNA Congress

### Schedule 3 update

**Representatives from the College will be attending this year's BVNA Congress in Telford from Friday 6 to Sunday 8 October 2017.**

Among our activities over the course of the event will be a talk by Julie Dugmore, our Director of Veterinary Nursing, and Natalie Heppenstall, Standards and Advisory Officer, on the *Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses* and current developments regarding Schedule 3.

On our stand we will be promoting our current activities and projects including our Mind Matters Initiative, Practice Standards Scheme and VN Futures.

## The College is heading to Countryfile!

### Promoting to the public

**The College will be back exhibiting at BBC Countryfile Live this year, from 3 to 6 August 2017 on the grounds of Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire.**

We will be promoting the various services we offer to the public, including Find a Vet and the Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) while providing information and guidance on starting a career in the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions.

This is the second year we have attended BBC Countryfile Live and last year we handed out around 1,500 canvas bags containing Find a Vet and PSS leaflets and merchandise, and received about 200 submissions to our special 'Find a Vet' and PSS-themed games and competitions.

This year we will be in the pet area opposite the Dog Arena!

## Northern Ireland question time

### All members of practice team invited

**We will be hosting one of our regular Regional Question Times at the Hilton Hotel in Belfast on the evening of Tuesday 13 June 2017 allowing members of the professions to put their questions and concerns directly to the College.**

All members of the practice team are invited to attend the free event, which takes place between 6.30pm and 10pm and includes dinner and drinks.

The evening will be chaired by RCVS President Chris Tufnell with other RCVS Officers and senior staff on hand to answer any queries which arise. Possible topics for discussion could include the local impact of Brexit, the Schedule 3 review, the Practice Standards Scheme, the Mind Matters Initiative and the alternative dispute resolution trial.

To book a place visit [www.rcvs.eventbrite.com](http://www.rcvs.eventbrite.com)

In the afternoon before the event we will be holding a series of free 30-minute Practice Standards Scheme surgeries with our PSS Assessor Anne Lawson for practices that want to find out more about the Scheme or have an upcoming assessment.

To book one of these surgeries visit:

[www.rcvs.org.uk/forms/belfast-pss-surgeries/](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/forms/belfast-pss-surgeries/)

# Pre-registration preparation

## Event held for overseas applicants

**E**arlier in May we held the first ever pre-registration OSCE familiarity day to help overseas-trained veterinary nurses who are applying to join the Register prepare for their practical examinations.

The free event, which took place at the College's offices on 8 May, started with a short presentation explaining how the examination works and how it is assessed with delegates being given the chance to mark the practical performance of a member of RCVS staff.

A range of sample OSCE stations – covering areas such as assisted feeding, medicine administration and wound care and bandaging – were also set up to allow delegates to familiarise themselves with what would be expected during the exam itself.



Victoria Hedges, Examinations Manager, organised the day and commented: "It was a very successful day and those who attended appreciated the opportunity to find out a little bit more about what was expected of them ahead of sitting the pre-registration examinations.

"Although we were unable to teach delegates how to complete the practical tasks, we were on hand to provide advice and guidance about the exams on a general basis and they were very appreciative of the opportunity to understand how the exams are marked.

"As the event was successful it is likely that we will be holding future familiarisation events with future cohorts of overseas trained veterinary nurses wanting to join the Register."

## Pre-registration exam dates

The upcoming dates for the pre-registration examinations for overseas trained veterinary nurses are as follows:

### Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 June 2017:

Hartpury College, Gloucester

### Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 October 2017:

Hartpury College, Gloucester

If you have any questions about the examinations then please contact our Examinations Manager Victoria Hedges on [v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:v.hedges@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*

### Nimrah Syed

*Student enrolments and careers advice*

### Lily Lipman

*Accreditation and quality monitoring for  
VN qualifications*

### Emily Dilworth

*VN pre-registration support, Secretary to ACOVENE*

### Jenny Soreskog-Turp

*Continuing professional development and  
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