

IVNA Roadshow and future CPD events

October provided excellent opportunities for nurses in the area of continuing education, with more great events scheduled, writes Lorraine McDonnell

IVNA ROADSHOW

The annual Irish Veterinary Nursing Association (IVNA) Roadshow took place in October in various locations around the country: Athlone IT, Dundalk IT, Letterkenny IT, the Red Cow Hotel, Dublin, and St John's Central College, Cork. John O'Connor MVB and Lorraine Smith BSc (hons) from Royal Canin delivered the lectures. The topic this year was: 'Ups and downs of diabetes mellitus – diabetic clinics in practice.' It started by giving us a recap on canine and feline metabolism, touching on insulin's role in the body in terms of production and effect. It was highlighted how diabetes mellitus differs in cats and dogs, and how they are treated. Clinical signs and diagnosis of diabetes were discussed, as was the key role diet plays in controlling glucose levels, as patients require a highly palatable low-carbohydrate, high-protein diet, with moderate calorie content and antioxidants.

The diabetic clinic's success depends on how committed the practice and staff are. It is a scary time for clients and there is a lot of information to absorb, so nursing clinics enable owners and nurses to deal with and overcome problems on a one-to-one basis.

Four stages were discussed regarding how to run a successful clinic. These include: initial stabilisation stages 1 and 2, the stabilisation stage and the maintenance stage.

Successful treatment relies on excellent support and communication between clients and the veterinary team. A separate talk, 'The internet, social media and Dr Google – unlock your hidden potential,' touched on a very relevant topic in relation to promoting the practice. It was emphasised that social media is the way to go for basic client communication.

Highlighted were ways of getting owners to read emails that practices are sending out.

Social media groups are essential to promote practice. It was said that while anyone can 'like' your business, anyone can also comment and everyone can see negative comments. To keep clients interested, and in order to attract more clients, a designated person should be responsible for regular online updates.

We were left with this thought: "First impressions last, and the service in the consult room is not the first impression!"

CANINE AND FELINE DENTAL CVE EVENT

Last August, Medray and iM3 Dental held their third canine and feline dental CVE event. It was held in Gormanstown, Co Meath. Held over two days, and split into two stages,

stage 1 catered for both veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons, while stage 2 was specifically tailored for veterinary surgeons.

Both days entailed morning lectures and the afternoon wet labs combined the theory gained in the morning with practice skills, supervised by Suzanne Kelly MVB.

The main aim of this event was to set a foundation in dental anatomy and oral health, to highlight the importance of dental radiographs in small animal practice. Continuing professional development events like this are a crucial opportunity in the development of dentistry in small animal practices in Ireland. The hope is to encourage and enhance clinical specialties in dentistry among our veterinary community.

Morning lectures on the first day consisted of a refresher on oral anatomy, and dental diseases seen in canines and felines. Dental procedures, periodontal treatment and dental charting were discussed and, most importantly, the need for dental radiographs, as 50 per cent of the tooth is hidden below the gum line. One hot topic covered was dental clinics, as these can be carried out by both vets and nurses.

After lunch, the wet labs began. This consisted of scaling and polishing, periodontal probing, charting and dental radiology.

On the second morning, lectures covered the indications for radiology, feline and canine extractions. It illustrated the different techniques used for single and multi-rooted dental extractions.

Great interest was expressed on how to deal with problems and pitfalls when extracting teeth, eg. splitting teeth and how to perform surgical flaps correctly. It then proceeded to techniques in dental radiographs, and Medray highlighted different types of equipment available for use.

After lunch, everyone was very eager to attempt bisecting angles and developing intra-oral radiographs. This was followed by the extraction wet lab, which covered maxillary and mandibular extractions, including first molar and upper carnassials.

Medray and iM3 Dental supplied all equipment used, eg. dental machine, instrument kits and single instruments. This was to encourage the correct usage of appropriate instruments for the tasks at hand, and attendees at this event were offered discounted rates.

The event was a great success and, due to the demand for future dental CVE, Medray and iM3 Dental are hosting another event as described above on November 29-30, 2014, for both veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons.

MRSA CONTINUING EDUCATIONAL EVENT

Staphylococcus aureus is a common commensal bacteria colonising the nasal passages of 30 per cent of healthy people. Methicillin-resistant *S aureus* (MRSA) refers to the acquired resistance of *S aureus* to the antibiotic, methicillin. MRSA first emerged in the form of hospital-acquired infections and has become a serious problematic pathogen since the 1980s. MRSA was first documented in large animals in the 1970s and not in dogs until the 1990s. *Staphylococcus pseudintermedius* is a normal commensal of animals' skin and, with antibiotic use, has seen the emergence of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus pseudintermedius* (MRSP), a potentially serious pathogen in the veterinary setting.

Veterinary personnel are known to be at increased risk of MRSA colonisation compared to the general population (approximately 1 per cent are carriers). In 2013, a study conducted by Gilabbey Veterinary Hospital concluded that 9.8 per cent of veterinary nurses attending the IVNA congress were colonised with MRSA/MRSP, a figure comparable to previous similar studies.

As a follow-up to this study, the IVNA has organised a one-day, continuing education event, where both Irish and international experts in the field will come together and deliver clinical and relevant lectures to take the myths out of MRSA. Diagnosis, treatment and prevention, as well as how to protect yourself, your patients and your practice, will all be discussed. This 6.5 CVE points event is free for all IVNA members and students, and €10.00 for non-members. It will be held on November 21 in Athlone IT. Please visit www.ivna.ie for more information. Places are limited.

PET EXPO

We are delighted to announce that the IVNA will be attending the biggest pet exhibition in Ireland, the Pet Expo. This event is held on the weekend of November 22-23 and is a huge hit with all pet owners. The IVNA committee feels that this is an ideal opportunity to make more pet owners aware of responsible pet ownership and we will be delighted to answer any questions on the day.

We are also excited to be launching the IVNA awards at the Pet Expo. These awards, now in their sixth year, highlight veterinary nurses, student nurses and support staff (kennel assistance, receptionists, groomers) who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to help clients and their pets. A shortlist of six nominees is chosen from each category, and the sponsoring company picks the winner. It is a great honour to be nominated for these awards and we love reading the stories of how our profession really touches the lives of people and pets.

NATIONAL TEACHING AWARD

Congratulations to Sinead Sheerin RVN, ICU nurse in UCD Veterinary Hospital, and Marese McCabe RVN, lecturer in veterinary nursing at Dundalk IT, who were presented with the 'National Teaching Hero Award' on Tuesday, September 30, in Dublin Castle. Fifty-three teachers from 27 higher education institutions across Ireland received this award. This award is unique as they are nominated by the students and it is the first of its kind in higher education in Ireland. This is a remarkable achievement, and highlights the great work nurses do in their profession and the high level of teaching that it involves.



Ms Sinead Sheerin, School of Veterinary Medicine, University College Dublin (centre) received her award in the presence of USI President Laura Harmon (left), Minister for Education and Skills Ms Jan O'Sullivan, Patron of the National Forum Prof Mary McAleese, and Chair of the Forum Prof Sarah Moore (right). Photo: National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.



Ms Marese McCabe, Department of Applied Sciences, Dundalk Institute of Technology (centre), received her award in the presence of USI President Laura Harmon (left), Minister for Education and Skills Ms Jan O'Sullivan, Patron of the National Forum Prof Mary McAleese, and Chair of the Forum Prof Sarah Moore (right). Photo: National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.