The University of Nottingham

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Centre for Evidence-based Veterinary Medicine Newsletter

Welcome to the first Newsletter from the Centre for Evidence-based Veterinary Medicine (CEVM), which will update you on the CEVM's current activities. From now on there will be regular newsletters (3-4 times per year) to keep you informed of the work of the CEVM.

Please forward this e-mail on to any colleagues who you think may be interested—they can sign up for future Newsletters using our mailing list.

The CEVM team

New CEVM website

The **Centre for Evidence-based Veterinary Medicine (CEVM)** was founded in 2009 at the School of Veterinary Medicine and Science, at the University of Nottingham.

The aim of the CEVM is to increase the awareness and use of evidence-based principles in the veterinary profession.
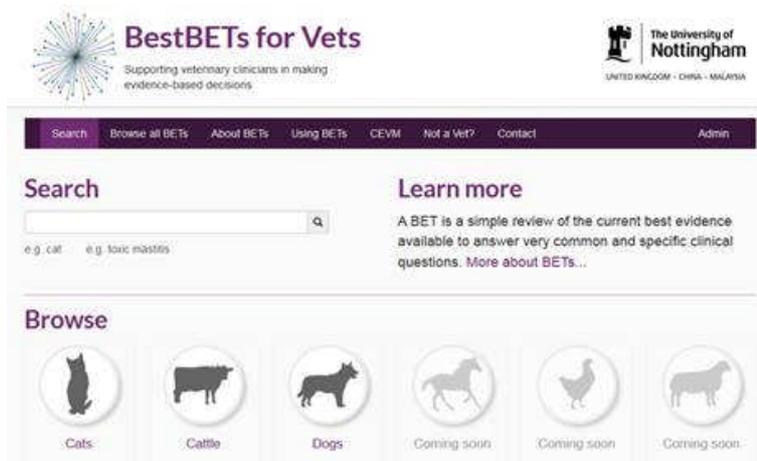
The Centre has grown to be a multidisciplinary team of veterinary and non-veterinary, clinical and non-clinical researchers working in a number of areas.

This month in the CEVM we have launched our **new website** (http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cevm).

The website has details of the research projects we have been conducting and the evidence-based resources we have developed since the CEVM was established. It also contains useful information and other resources on many aspects of evidence-based veterinary medicine.

Do visit our website, and add us to your bookmarks and links.

BestBETs for Vets

Our new database **BestBETs for Vets** (http://bestbetsforvets.org) is now available online.

"BET" stands for Best Evidence Topic. The BestBETs concept was first developed for doctors working in emergency medicine (http://www.bestbets.org/). In collaboration with our medical colleagues, we have developed a freely accessible database of BestBETs for vets, BestBETs for Vets.
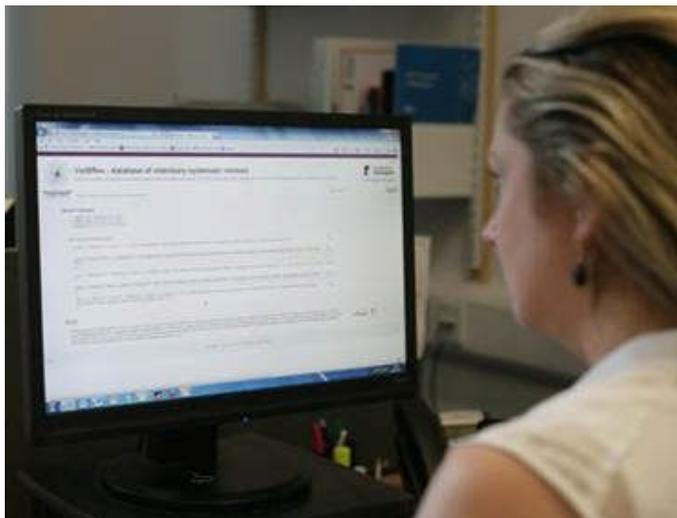
BETs are simple reviews of the current best evidence available to answer simple, common and specific clinical questions. They are designed to be a quick and achievable method of enabling the incorporation of evidence into clinical practice.
BETs start with a very specific clinical question. A systematic literature search is then done to find available evidence. The relevant literature is critically appraised for quality and a "bottom line" (the answer to the question) is reached based on this evidence. BETs do not tell you what to do, they tell you about the evidence on a certain topic—we aim to give an unbiased view of the evidence found.

BETs can be used to help vets stay up to date on what the current evidence suggests on a specific topic. They can also be used as a discussion point for practice meetings and for journal clubs, especially if you want to learn how to read research critically.

If there is a particular topic or question which we have not yet covered, you could submit the question to us via the BestBETs for Vets website.

VetSRev

The second database that we have launched this month is **VetSRev** (www.nottingham.ac.uk/cevm/vetsrev).

VetSRev is a freely-accessible online database of citations for systematic reviews of relevance to veterinary medicine and science. We believe it is the only such database available.

Systematic reviews attempt to identify and evaluate all the evidence that meets pre-specified criteria to answer a given research question. At present VetSRev contains around 330 systematic reviews, but more and more are being published each year.

To find out more about VetSRev and our inclusion and exclusion criteria, please see our document About VetSRev.

Take a look at VetSRev today.

People

Congratulations to **Natalie Robinson** and **Julie Jones-Diette** who have each been successful in their applications for postdoctoral research positions at the CEVM. Natalie will become our Research Fellow in Veterinary Practice-based Research, and Julie will be our Research Fellow in Veterinary Informatics. Natalie has submitted her PhD entitled "Use of sentinel practices to obtain data regarding common clinical conditions and presentations in small animal consultations", and will defend her thesis in a few weeks' time.

Congratulations also to **Jenny Stavisky**, who has been appointed as Clinical Lecturer in Shelter Medicine and is now a permanent member of staff in the Vet School at Nottingham. Jenny will continue to work with the CEVM in the future on some of our on-going projects.

Presentations by CEVM staff

BVNA Congress

Jenny Stavisky is giving a presentation on shelter medicine at the 40th Annual Congress of the BVNA being held at Telford International Centre from 11th to 13th October 2013.

London Vet Show

Two CEVM staff are speaking at the London Vet Show being held at Olympia on 21st and 22nd November 2013. Marnie Brennan is speaking on evidence-based veterinary medicine, while Jenny Stavisky is giving two talks on shelter medicine.

CEVM publications

What is a feral cat? Variation in definitions may be associated with different management strategies.

Gosling L, Stavisky J, Dean RS.
Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery 2013;**15**:759-764.

This study aimed to identify a practical definition of a feral cat and explore management options. A qualitative approach was used, utilising questionnaires and focus groups to collect data from feral cat workers and veterinary surgeons. A feral cat is proposed to be a cat that is unapproachable in its free-roaming environment and is capable of surviving with or without direct human intervention, and may additionally show fearful or defensive behaviour on human contact.

Methods used to estimate the size of the owned cat and dog population: a systematic review.

Downes MJ, Dean RS, Stavisky JH, Adams VJ, Grindlay DJ, Brennan ML.
BMC Veterinary Research 2013;**9**:121.

This open access article is the first systematic review published by the CEVM. The aim was to evaluate the methods that have been used for estimating the size of owned cat and dog populations, and assess the biases associated with those methods.

Demographics and economic burden of un-owned cats and dogs in the UK: results of a 2010 census.

Stavisky J, Brennan ML, Downes M, Dean R.
BMC Veterinary Research 2012;**8**:163.

This paper reports the results of the Postal Un-owned Pets Survey (PUPS), which was carried out to find out some basic information about the numbers and care of the dogs and cats which pass through UK rescues every year. Survey participants cared for 87,571 dogs and 156,826 cats in 2010, with a yearly spend of £340 million. Seventy five per cent of dogs, and just over 77% of cats, were rehomed. Ten per cent of dogs and 13% of cats had to be euthanased.

Searching the veterinary literature: a comparison of the coverage of veterinary journals by nine bibliographic databases.

Grindlay DJ, Brennan ML, Dean RS.
Journal of Veterinary Medical Education 2012;**39**:404-412.

This study compared the coverage of veterinary journals by nine bibliographic databases, to inform future systematic reviews. For a list of 1139 journals with significant veterinary content, coverage was much greater in CAB Abstracts (90.2%) than in any other database, with the next highest coverage being in Scopus (58.3%). It was concluded that it is important to include CAB Abstracts in any search of the veterinary literature to maximize journal coverage and avoid missing potentially relevant evidence.

Find out more

To find out more, take a look at the CEVM website.

You can also join our mailing list to keep you informed of future developments.

If you would like to get involved with any of the CEVM's projects or have any questions about our work, please e-mail us at cevm@nottingham.ac.uk.

Follow us on Twitter: @CEVetM