

**CENTRE FOR EVIDENCE-BASED  
VETERINARY MEDICINE**  
Putting research into practice

### Centre for Evidence-based Veterinary Medicine Newsletter



*The CEVM team at the 1<sup>st</sup> International Evidence-Based Veterinary Medicine Network Conference organised by RCVS Knowledge on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> October 2014*

Welcome to the latest Newsletter from the Centre for Evidence-based Veterinary Medicine (CEVM), [www.nottingham.ac.uk/cevm](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cevm), which updates you on the CEVM's current activities. We are producing regular newsletters 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 (<http://lists.nottingham.ac.uk/mailman/listinfo/cevm-mailing-list>).

## **New publications**

### [Capturing the complexity of first opinion small animal consultations using direct observation](#)

Robinson NJ, Brennan ML, Cobb M, Dean RS.  
*Vet Rec.* 2014 Sep 26. [Epub ahead of print]

### [Consultation length in first opinion small animal practice](#)

Robinson NJ, Dean RS, Cobb M, Brennan ML.  
*Vet Rec.* 2014 Sep 26. [Epub ahead of print]

These two open-access papers come from Natalie Robinson's PhD project. The study used direct observation to collect detailed data from first opinion small animal consultations. The research is also the subject of an article on the [Vet Record's blog](#).

### [A questionnaire-based survey on the uptake and use of cattle vaccines in the UK](#)

Cresswell E, Brennan ML, Barkema HW, Wapenaar W.  
*Vet Rec Open.* 2014;1:e000042

This paper presents the results of a questionnaire-based survey looking at the current uptake and usage of cattle vaccines by farmers in the UK. It has been published in the very first issue of the new open-access journal *Veterinary Record Open*.

## **BestBETs for Vets**

Three new BETs have been added to our online database **BestBETs for Vets** (<http://bestbetsforvets.org>):

- Best approach for surgical aural haematoma repair <http://bestbetsforvets.org/bet/239>
- Buprenorphine versus butorphanol in cat spays <http://bestbetsforvets.org/bet/188>
- Effect of ventral versus flank approach in caesareans on ewe mortality <http://bestbetsforvets.org/bet/169>


BETs (best evidence topics) 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—the aim is to give an unbiased view of the evidence found.

## VetSRev database

**VetSRev** ([www.nottingham.ac.uk/cevm/vetsrev](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cevm/vetsrev)), our database of systematic reviews relevant to veterinary medicine and science, continues to grow as we search for newly published reviews each month. More than 30 records have been added to the database over the last three months, taking the total number to 434 at the time of writing.

Examples of recently added reviews in VetSRev include:

- A systematic review and meta-analysis of the efficacy of furosemide for exercise induced pulmonary haemorrhage in Thoroughbred and Standardbred racehorses
- Systematic review of surveillance systems and methods for early detection of exotic, new and re-emerging diseases in animal populations
- Systematic review of feline diabetic remission: Separating fact from opinion
- Treatment in canine epilepsy – a systematic review
- Antibiotic treatment of metritis in dairy cows: A systematic approach
- Energy requirements of adult dogs: a meta-analysis
- Veterinary homeopathy: systematic review of medical conditions studied by randomised placebo-controlled trials
- Risk factors for MRSA in fattening pig herds – A meta-analysis using pooled data
- Pain management in the neonatal piglet during routine management procedures. Part 1: a systematic review of randomized and non-randomized intervention studies
- A systematic review characterizing on-farm sources of *Campylobacter* spp. for broiler chickens

You can keep up to date with newly published systematic reviews using our **RSS feed**. From the [VetSRev website](#) just click on the Feeds button  in your web browser. The RSS feed shows the most recently added reviews. If you subscribe to the RSS feed via your Feeds button, you will be alerted automatically every time a review is added.

To learn more about VetSRev take a look at our introductory guides [About VetSRev](#) and [Getting started with VetSRev](#).

## People

We say hello to **Hannah Doit** and **Selene Huntley**, who started with us on the 11th August 2014. Hannah is Research Assistant in practice-based research and Selene is a Post-doctoral Research Fellow in evidence-based veterinary medicine.

**Rachel Dean** has now returned to full time working as Director of the CEVM after her maternity leave.

Congratulations to **Marnie Brennan** who, after a lot of hard work fitted around her full time job in the CEVM, has passed her exams and is now a Diplomat of the European College of Veterinary Public Health in Population Medicine. Marnie attended their [Annual Conference](#) held in Copenhagen in October to be officially welcomed into the College.

## Presentations by CEVM members

### BEVA Congress 2014

**Laila Curtis** gave an oral presentation on a systematic review of risk factors for equine colic at the [British Equine Veterinary Association \(BEVA\) Congress](#), which was held on 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> September 2014 in Birmingham. This review is currently being submitted for publication.

### BCVA Congress 2014

Three CEVM members presented at the [British Cattle Veterinary Association \(BCVA\) Congress](#) held on 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> October 2014 at Hinckley. **Imogen Richens** spoke on her study of the role of the veterinary surgeon in the implementation of vaccination strategies on British dairy farms, as perceived by farmers. **Katie Waine** spoke about conducting priority setting meetings with practitioners, as the initial step in a wider PhD programme looking at how clinical audit can be used in farm animal practice. **Selene Huntley** presented as part of the Paraban project, describing a knowledge exchange initiative with vets and farmers for the control of Johne's Disease in cattle in Scotland.

### RCVS Knowledge

A large contingent from the CEVM attended [EBVM 2014](#), the 1<sup>st</sup> International Evidence-Based Veterinary Medicine Network Conference organised by RCVS Knowledge and held in Windsor on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> October 2014. **Rachel Dean** spoke in the first Plenary Session on "Evidence-based veterinary medicine: Experiences, progress and new horizons". Rachel described how work carried out in the CEVM and elsewhere has focused on the five steps of the evidence-based medicine cycle: Ask, Acquire, Appraise, Apply and Assess. Several other members of the CEVM team spoke in the Parallel Sessions or presented posters, as listed [here](#).

## Spotlight on our research



This month Dr Rachel Dean, Director of the CEVM, writes about identifying research priorities in the treatment of chronic kidney disease in cats...



*Katherine Cowan from the James Lind Alliance facilitates the discussion in one of the small groups during the workshop*

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) has significant morbidity and mortality in older cats, and is frustrating to treat. Currently there is some evidence about the interventions that are available, but many questions remain about the efficacy of treatments. It has been shown in medicine that if patients and doctors are involved in identifying which research questions are the most important, the subsequent research has a greater impact on human health.

I am currently undertaking an MSc in Evidence-based Healthcare at the University of Oxford. I have adapted the research prioritisation methods used by the James Lind Alliance (or JLA, [www.lindalliance.org](http://www.lindalliance.org)) to the veterinary profession, and have applied them to CKD in cats. This involved an initial survey of cat owners and veterinary surgeons earlier in the year to identify questions about treatment efficacy in CKD in cats, which was carried out in collaboration with Vet Professionals ([www.vetprofessionals.com](http://www.vetprofessionals.com)) and International Cat Care ([www.icatcare.org](http://www.icatcare.org)). Three hundred responses were received: 54% from veterinary surgeons, some of whom also owned cats with CKD, and 46% from cat owners with experience of CKD. The responses yielded 380 questions about the treatment of CKD. These were then reduced to a list of 28 questions suitable for prioritisation.

The questions identified were taken forward to a prioritisation workshop held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014 and chaired by Katherine Cowan, Senior Advisor to the JLA. There were 13 workshop participants—ten veterinary surgeons (two of whom owned cats with CKD) and three owners. By the end of the day, after much debate and discussion, a top ten list of prioritised research questions regarding treatment uncertainties of CKD in cats was achieved!

Katherine Cowan said: “It was fascinating to be part of a recognisable process in a rather different setting. Nevertheless, many of the discussion points which characterise our human health research prioritisation workshops were familiar. For example, owners/carers wanting a greater involvement in the delivery of care, and vets/clinicians being surprised about the lack of evidence around standard treatments. It was impressive and exciting to see how easily the JLA process could be adapted to a different area of medicine, even though it wasn’t practical for the ‘patients’ themselves to be there.”

Claire Stephens, an owner who had previously owned a cat with CKD, said: “I feel the day was extremely positive, as the method used allowed everyone to have an input and so the wealth of experience at the meeting was utilised. Vets and cat owners all had their opinions taken into account and I feel everyone was listened to. A very fair and intelligent way of determining the questions that need to be asked in this important area of veterinary medicine.”

Dr Natalie Finch, one of the attending veterinary surgeons and currently a Wellcome Trust Clinical Postdoctoral Fellow within the Academic Renal Unit at the University of Bristol, added: “It was so good to hear perspectives from owners and vets in general practice, as sometimes I think you lose track of important questions when you are in referral work and research, and become too focused on your own area of interest”.

I was delighted that the research prioritisation methodology worked in the veterinary setting, and hopefully we can use it to help improve the evidence base for treating cats with CKD. The final top ten research priorities will be published on the CEVM website. The next steps would be to publicise the need for more research in the prioritised areas, and to plan the research to answer some of the important questions.

## **Find out more about the CEVM**

To find out more, take a look at the CEVM website (<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cevm/index.aspx>).

You can also join our mailing list to keep you informed of future developments (<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cevm/contact-us/mailling-list.aspx>).

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](mailto:cevm@nottingham.ac.uk).

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