

SKILLS DAY 2017

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QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN PRACTICE



Event Report

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SKILLS DAY 2017

Quality Improvement in Practice

Wednesday 15th November 2017, Mary Sumner House, Westminster



Following on from the highly successful inaugural Skills Day in 2015, this year's event focused on quality improvement (QI) and its potential impact within the veterinary profession.

Combining informative and exciting plenary sessions with engaging workshops, Skills Day 2017: Quality Improvement in Practice intended to outline the concept of QI and its various facets, while providing delegates with the technical skills to implement it in their practices.

Talks looked at the inception of QI in the National Health Service, the need for a learning culture in the veterinary profession and the history and usefulness of checklists. Workshops delved into clinical audits, guidelines and significant event audits.

The start of the day saw the official launch of RCVS Knowledge's Quality Improvement Project. The headline video, Quality Improvement in Veterinary Practice, was premiered, alongside the announcement of Knowledge's new dedicated e-learning site, onCOURSE, and the launch of its preliminary beta version.

We are grateful for the many organisations that sponsored Skills Day 2017.

A big thank you goes to our special sponsors the **Horserace Betting Levy Board** (Silver Sponsor), **CVS Group Plc** (Bronze Sponsor), **Medivet** (Bursary Sponsor), **Vets4Pets** (Refreshments Sponsor) as well as to all our other sponsors: Goddard Veterinary Group, Natural Instinct, Thewlis Graham Associates, VBS Direct, Vetruus and Vets Now.

Dr William Taylor

Royal College of General Practitioners



How the NHS Has Embraced Quality Improvement

Bill Taylor gave a captivating plenary on 'Quality Improvement and the NHS', outlining some of the basics of quality improvement and its history.

A number of the challenges that are faced in the NHS are the same as those faced by the veterinary profession; such as recruitment and ever-increasing workloads.

Bill highlighted some examples where the NHS has used QI to improve outcomes and efficiencies. One example was NHS Scotland looking at quality improvement initiatives to reduce surgical mortality by 23% over four years; the other focused on an audit of telephone calls at a GP practice. The telephone call audit highlighted the practice's approach to handling the calls, the management of patients, test reports and optimising phone capacity. A marked reduction in abandoned calls and overall telephone traffic was seen as a result of the initiative.

Bill described the steps that the NHS has taken to support the development of quality improvement, including the engagement of all the national bodies, including NHS England, Health Improvement Scotland and national charities such as the Health Foundation and The King's Fund.

Bill also highlighted some key challenges to generating a cultural shift towards QI, such as convincing people that there is a problem and that this is the correct solution, getting data collection systems right and being careful about excess ambitions.

The development of QI in the NHS provides a roadmap for further adoption into the veterinary profession, which requires continued championing by the national bodies, consideration to be included into training and a system-wide commitment to QI.

Bill finished with a thought provoking quote from Batalden and Davidoff, opinion leaders in healthcare:

QI is "an intrinsic part of everyone's job, every day".

Dr Bill Taylor is a clinical lead for building quality improvement capability at the Royal College of General Practitioners.

He has had an interest in improving quality for many years and recently has been delivering training to general practice in various quality improvement methods and tools.

Lizzie Lockett

Royal College of veterinary Surgeons, CEO



What Person Doesn't Make a Mistake?

Lizzie Lockett, the newly appointed CEO of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), took time out of her busy schedule to present a plenary session entitled, 'What Person Doesn't Make a Mistake?' Lizzie, speaking also as Director of the Mind Matters Initiative, described how many in the veterinary profession perceive the RCVS: with fear.

She highlighted that it is a tendency within the industry to hide and shy away from failures, but we must remember that "learning is a process, not a series of qualifications".

Lizzie spoke about the strategic plan of the RCVS, one that focuses on leadership, innovation, and culture change.

In closing, Lizzie asked that we consider the importance of adopting a learning culture, to explore mistakes, so that we can better understand them and ensure that they do not happen again.

Lizzie joined the RCVS in February 2005 bringing with her 13 years' experience working in marketing, public relations, communications and public affairs.

In autumn 2014 Lizzie set up the Mind Matters Initiative (MMI), alongside its then Chair, Neil Smith. MMI aims to make a difference to the mental health and wellbeing of members of the veterinary team and Lizzie runs the programme on a day to day basis.

Lizzie took up the role of Deputy CEO in September 2016 and became CEO in November 2017. She is responsible for the development and implementation of the College's strategic plan, as well ensuring delivery of the RCVS powered activities of the Vet Futures Action Plan.



Matt McMillan MRCVS

Queen's Veterinary School Hospital



Check, 1, 2. Making a Safer Patient Experience

Matt McMillan, Principal Clinical Anaesthetist and Critical Care Co-ordinator at Queen's Veterinary School Hospital, delivered his talk 'Check, 1, 2. Making a Safer Patient Experience'.

Matt spoke on the successes, possible pitfalls and history of checklists, a safety tool designed to circumnavigate the imperfections of human memory. With a particular focus on their importance to patient safety, he engaged the afternoon audience with a multimedia presentation explaining what a checklist should and should not contain, when to apply one and the practical steps to take to implement one in practice.

He introduced the concept by revealing the underlying reason why checklists are necessary: to minimise preventable harm to patients caused by forgetting to carry out a simple task before a procedure.

"However talented, caring and conscientious you are, you have the potential to make an error," stated Matt, emphasising that, instead of taking the blame and being responsible merely for an error itself, everyone in the veterinary profession should take the responsibility to correct their mistakes.

Checklists, he enthused, are one of the main ways to convert that subtle shift in mindset from a possibility into a reality.

By outlining the critical steps that ensure safety – just as aerospace company Boeing did when introducing checklists to the world during WWII – any and every member of the veterinary team can minimise the occurrence of errors that otherwise would be inevitable.

Matt has been working in veterinary anaesthesia for the last ten years becoming a European and RCVS recognised specialist in Veterinary Anaesthesia and Analgesia in 2012. Matt currently runs the clinical anaesthesia service at the Queen's Veterinary School Hospital.



Workshops

Dr Bradley Viner FRCVS

Quality Improvement Advisory Board, Chair



Clinical Audit

Dr Bradley Viner, Chair of the Quality Improvement Advisory Board (QIAB), led a workshop on the principle of clinical audit and its application in veterinary practice.

Bradley explained that clinical audit, at its simplest, is the collecting and recording of clinical information, with the aim of monitoring the quality of care.

He outlined that clinical audit is most effective to ensure compliance with specific clinical standards and for driving improvements in clinical care, complementing other quality improvement processes. A clinical audit may be needed because other processes point to areas of concern that require more detailed investigation.

Bradley went on to describe the clinical audit cycle, including: choosing the topic, a clear selection of criteria, target setting (against standard), data collection and analysis. Bradley noted that a key part of the audit cycle is to check against a local standard if no national standard exists and then develop an action plan to make a change to meet the standard e.g. what has to be done, how and by when?

Bradley highlighted the benefits that can be seen in practice with this QI tool and explained the differences between research and audit: "Research is about establishing best practice... Audit is about embedding best practice into our work."

Bradley is an advocate for the recognition of the skills required to become an advanced general practitioner, having completed a MSc and Professional Doctorate with Middlesex University, concentrating on the application of clinical auditing to the veterinary profession. He was President of the RCVS from 2015 - 2016.



Katie Waine MRCVS

Centre for Evidence-based
Veterinary Medicine



Karlien Heyrman MRCVS

Vets4Pets and Companion Care



Guidelines

The morning and afternoon guidelines workshop, led by Katie Waine from the Centre of Evidence-based Veterinary Medicine and Karlien Heyrman of Vets4Pets and Companion Care, shed light on the distinction between guidelines and protocols in veterinary practice.

Guidelines, engaged attendees learned, help in making evidence-based decisions in practice, but they do not replace clinical expertise or knowledge; they provide guidance without inhibiting clinical freedom. Conversely, protocols are very rigid.

Going into further detail, it was explained that consensus guidelines and protocols are developed and published by expert teams for use on national or international scales. Practice guidelines and protocols are those that can be developed and used within a specific practice.

Upon learning of the differences, participants in the workshop were quizzed to identify if a guideline or a protocol would be most appropriate for various activities in practice.

Katie brings to the QIAB the knowledge and experience of clinical audit that she has acquired during her PhD. She believes clinical audit can play a very important part in improving the care that is provided to veterinary patients, but above all it must be relevant, and achievable. Although her PhD has focused on the use of clinical audit in farm animal practice, the underlying principles are applicable to all types of practice.



Liz Cox RVN

Independent Vetcare



Pam Mosedale MRCVS

Lead Assessor PSS



Significant Event Audit

Liz Cox of Independent Vetcare and Pam Mosedale, Lead Assessor PSS, lead groups through significant events and how to respond to them via a significant event audit (SEA).

A significant event audit is an opportunity to learn from events that occur in practice, and take steps to ensure best practice is followed in the future.

Participants were tasked with conducting their own SEA based on the case of a canine undergoing surgery to remove a tumour and experiencing a drop in blood pressure and stopping breathing. It was up to delegates to request resources, such as patient charts and key witness accounts.

A truly engaging workshop, it allowed participants to see that, while a significant event can be daunting, the review and discussion afforded by a SEA can be a constructive process.

As a practising nurse and a PSS advocate, **Liz** is keen for audits to become more common place in veterinary practice. She believes that the development and understanding of the importance and relevance of clinical governance is long overdue in general practice and that nurse engagement will be the key to its success.

Pam first got involved in clinical governance when on BVHA council when she started to look into whether clinical audit could be applied to veterinary practices. She wrote the first article published in the UK on clinical audit in veterinary practices in 1999. Pam has spoken at BSAVA Congress, BVNA congress, SPVS Congress, BEVA clinical audit workshops, CAW TP conference and on RCVS webinars about clinical governance and clinical audit.





Impact of the day

Feedback from delegates who attended Skills Day 2017 was incredibly positive, both in terms of the quality of the event and its success at increasing people's knowledge of quality improvement and cementing the likelihood of them putting the concept into practice.

The most tangible measure of the day's success came via the 'Understanding of quality improvement' section included on the post-event feedback form. On a scale of one to ten, delegates, on average, rated their understanding of QI at just above five before the day, which, after the event, leapt up to an average of just below eight. In fact, no single attendee left Skills Day with a knowledge of quality improvement below five, while all but two departed with at least a seven. **Every single delegate's understanding improved; an impressive feat for a one-day CPD event.**

Furthermore, the vast majority of delegates rated their likeliness of putting QI into practice after attending the event as 'likely' or 'very likely'. This is a particularly positive result considering the long-term aim of the Quality Improvement Project is to implement QI as the cultural norm within the veterinary profession.

Below are some examples of qualitative feedback regarding the strengths of this year's Skills Day:

- "Timings good, speakers good, nice balance of lecture vs. Workshop vs. Chat time"
- "Great focus on topic, good quality speakers. Good lengths of talk to absorb info but not so long as to be mentally draining"
- "Interactive workshops, good relevant topics and speakers, opportunity for discussion, motivational"
- "Relevance of topics for industry at present. Good size of group - small enough to meet and discuss"
- "Good presenters - presentations a nice length. Interesting workshops."
- "Helped to understand the process and the value"
- "Enthusiasm for a subject that is vital."
- "Excellent discussion, engaged attendees"
- "Variety of speakers and topics, interactive sessions, networking very cohesive, enjoyable program, thank you!"



Thoughts on the day

Mary Kate Farrell, Veterinary Surgeon **Davies Veterinary Specialists**

In setting up an IDing centre there is a lot of safety and protocol involved so I thought it would be quite helpful and useful to learn from the day in order to do things appropriately and as safely as possible.

Mark Turner, Veterinary Surgeon **Medivet**

It's been really useful to get some idea of how to go about writing protocols and setting them up in practice so that the approach to certain clinical syndromes is more standardised.

It's been nice to meet likeminded people. I have an interest in patient safety culture so it's quite inspiring to come to a day where everybody's singing from the same hymn sheet.

It feels a bit like [the start of a change] today. It's the very first time there's been a day dedicated to this aspect of our profession so it feels unique.

Laura Playforth, Head of Veterinary Standards **Vets Now**

I've been particularly interested in the session on guidelines today because I'm involved in writing clinical and professional guidelines.

I like that there has been an opportunity to discuss things with other colleagues in the profession. It's been interesting to meet people who do things quite differently and have different opinions. It's been particularly interesting for me personally because I've just started a master's in Advancing Healthcare Practice and I was wondering if what I was doing was a



little bit out of the sphere of where the profession was going. So to come to something like this and see everything that I've learnt be put into practice is hugely rewarding.

Seb Prior, Clinical Compliance Manager
Blue Cross

It's been very thought-provoking. We've talked a lot about the difference between audit and research, and keeping things simple when measuring outcomes. It's been really good.

It's been a good networking opportunity. It's been useful meeting people with lots of different roles and from lots of different types of practice.

Ru Clements, Founding Partner
VetLed

It's really great to be in a group of such likeminded people. Everybody's really on board [with QI] so it's really nice to share that discussion and disseminate that to the wider group. It's really good to learn about the stuff the NHS is doing because a big part of what we do is looking at how other industries have done this work. It's really cool to make it as exciting as possible.

Jolene Lightman, Intern
Davies Veterinary Specialists

It's been inspiring. It's been nice to be in a room of people who also want to improve things.

It sounded like an interesting day; [a topic] I didn't know much about. It's something that might help me in the future if I go into a new practice, now I've got these skills.





Jacqui Molyneux
Chair, RCVS Knowledge Board of Trustees

I've been absolutely delighted with today. The audience has been really engaged; they're very enthusiastic about all the things we're doing and I'm excited about how we can take this forward.

What I also think is very important is that we've got representatives from quite a few of the big corporate groups and so they can go back and disseminate this information. We'll get to a lot more people on the basis of the people that are here.

This is a marathon, not a sprint. We're taking the first steps today by releasing the starting point of the e-learning modules. We have a lot of exciting things coming out over the next few years.

Bradley Viner
Chair, Quality Improvement Advisory Board

I'm massively enthused; it's been a great meeting with great vibes and lots of enthusiasm. I hope people are going away thinking about they can apply it [quality improvement] to help them do their job better.

The clinical audit workshops were very well attended and within the space of an hour I managed to whip through the concept and get people to think about creating an audit. I was amazed with the end products they came up with!

Lizzie Lockett
CEO, Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

I was delighted to speak at Skills Day 2017, a very engaging and thought-provoking event.

The RCVS values the importance of a learning culture and so it was great to be able to join the dots between the College's vision and RCVS Knowledge's practical approach, through its Quality Improvement Project.

Continually learning and improving is vital to ensuring that the level of care the profession provides remains something to be proud of, and it's really exciting that our charity partner is leading the way in making this mindset a reality.

Chris Gush
Executive Director, RCVS Knowledge

What we're trying to do is help the profession embrace a slight cultural change and empower those at the front line of the practice teams to say 'Where are our issues, how can we address them, what tools can we use?'

We've had excellent engagement in the workshops and everyone has seen some benefit out of it. The idea is that this sparks some ambition and some leadership within the practice, but also [provides] skills that are a bit broader.

Eventually we'll have a suite of resources and tools, and a learning site that supports peer engagement. And hopefully we can be that trusted third party to look at some of the data, provide that back to practices and say 'how can we help you improve?'

We're really encouraged by the amount of contact we've had already. We'd love to see contact from large practice groups and small individual practices, and reach into the profession.

As some of the speakers said, context and culture is at the centre of all of this. Get that right and the rest will flow.







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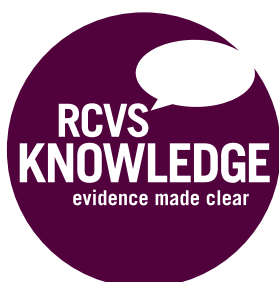
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