

Newsletter for Referring Vets

Ophthalmology Service

Treating eye disease across all species

Orthopaedic Surgery Service

Offering cutting-edge treatments for joint problems

Emergency and Critical Care

Treatment study for hypercalcaemic patients

Latest News

Case studies, new staff and 2024 Clinical Club dates



Welcome



Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the winter newsletter from the Hospital for Small Animals at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

In this edition we focus on our Ophthalmology (pun intended) and Orthopaedic Surgery Services and also highlight the schedule for the Dick Vet 2024 Clinical Club CPD events.

We are delighted to welcome David Donaldson to the Ophthalmology team. David is a well-regarded, experienced Specialist who will reunite with the team's Claudia, Ben and Josie, who have all worked with David before.

I mentioned in our last newsletter that we work to provide the best care for our patients as a team - which includes you, the referring vets. We have noticed recently an increase in patient 'no-shows' for referral appointments. This can be for a range of reasons, and all we ask is that clients let us know if they can't make it. Can you help us by encouraging them to inform us if they are not attending? Once we have the cancellation, we can offer the slot to another animal in need.

For many years, the Dick Vet has provided a free clinical advice service for veterinary surgeons. Unfortunately, the number of advice requests to the Internal Medicine and Dermatology Services each day has become unsustainable. To ensure that we can continue to support vets in our community with Specialist-led, timely advice, from 1 November both the Dermatology and Internal Medicine Services will be trialling a tiered administration fee for advice requests from veterinary surgeons, chargeable to the referring practice. This will ensure that referring practices continue to get the advice they need to manage cases in-house. If the patient is referred to us for the same problem within a specified time frame, the charge will be deducted from the client's invoice.

Advice requests should be submitted through our advice request website as before. We will endeavour to reply within 24 hours, and more urgent requests can be flagged as a priority. We will review this trial after a few months and we welcome your feedback. For all other admitting disciplines, advice remains free.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and successful 2024, and a stress-free holiday period!

Sue Murphy
Director of Clinical Services

Feline blood donors required

Following Covid-19, we are re-establishing our cat blood donor list and would appreciate your help in passing on this information to any clients you have with suitable potential donors.

To be considered as donors, the cats should be:

- Aged between 1 - 8 years old
- At least 4kg in weight
- Up to date with vaccines and worming
- Healthy and not receiving any medications
- Not travelled outwith the United Kingdom

Clients who are interested in helping would be invited for a consultation at our Hospital. Additional bloodwork and an echocardiogram would also be performed free of charge, to ensure suitability.

We'd pass all the results to yourselves for your records and keep you informed if your client's cat is selected as a donor.



A blood transfusion is often needed to save a cat's life



Further info

please email: hfsablooddonors@ed.ac.uk

Refer a case



0131 650 7651



hfsareception@ed.ac.uk



edin.ac/hfsa-referral-form

Ophthalmology Service: treating eye disease across all species

The Ophthalmology Service is delighted to welcome a fourth senior clinician – David Donaldson – to its team. David is a highly skilled veterinary ophthalmologist, with experience across the whole range of veterinary species.

David has joined Ben Blacklock, Claudia Hartley and Josie Parker on the senior team, and will help mentor our excellent team of residents: Ria Chalder, David Kayes, Kris Houston and Natalia Giannakopoulou.

The caseload of the Ophthalmology Service has grown rapidly in recent years, allowing it to expand to the large team it is today. The team offers a 24/7 service in the Hospital for Small Animals and the Equine Hospital, dealing with all types of routine and emergency cases and working closely with colleagues across all clinical departments to offer exceptional levels of care.



David Donaldson

Supporting education

As well as delivering a comprehensive clinical service, ophthalmology now forms part of our undergraduates' core rotation in their final year. This means that every Dick Vet graduate will have spent a minimum of a week with the Service, gaining invaluable hands-on experience and developing their theoretical knowledge in ophthalmology. For students with a particular interest in this subject, we also offer additional two-week elective blocks, where they can become fully involved in clinical case management.



Further info visit

Ophthalmology Service
edin.ac/3Bm3VO7

Seeing clearly: surgery improves dogs' vision and confidence

When Ernesto, a two-year-old Italian Spinone, was referred to the Ophthalmology Service with recurrent conjunctivitis and suspected entropion, he was in a lot of discomfort and very head shy. He was so uncomfortable, he had to be sedated to allow a thorough ocular examination.

He was found to have bilateral entropion, and macroblepharon – excessive eyelid length. Ernesto also had a lot of heavy facial skin that was pulling on his eyelids, compounding the entropion.

Typically, lower eyelid entropion can be corrected via a relatively simple Hotz-Celsus procedure that involves excising a crescent-shaped piece of skin adjacent to the lower eyelid margin. This can be combined with an eyelid wedge excision to shorten eyelids that are too long.

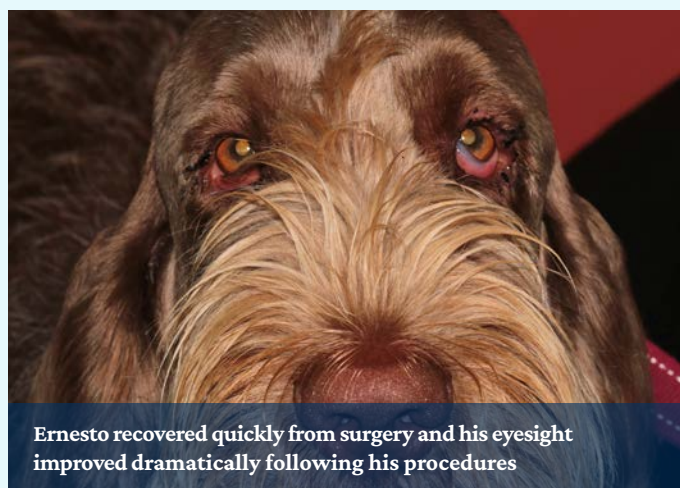
However, the severity of Ernesto's condition meant that he needed a more complex surgery.

A coronal rhytidectomy was required to excise skin from the top of his head and decrease the drag from his heavy skin, and all four eyelids were shortened. We also performed a Khunt-Szymonowski procedure on his lower eyelids to correct the entropion and provide a degree of lateral canthal support.

The surgery, which lasted two and a half hours, was successful and Ernesto recovered quickly from the anaesthetic. Apart from a slightly silly haircut due to a wide surgical clip site during surgery, his eyes are now open and comfortable, and he's far less head shy.



Ernesto was in a lot of discomfort when first referred



Ernesto recovered quickly from surgery and his eyesight improved dramatically following his procedures

Faecal microbiota transplantation helps emergency referral case

Poppy, an eight-year-old Labrador, was referred urgently to our Internal Medicine Service following acute and severe onset of haemorrhagic gastroenteritis, accompanied by vomiting, anorexia and abdominal pain.

She had been hospitalised by her vet for a week before being referred and had shown some improvement, but continued to have haemorrhagic diarrhoea with a concerning drop in serum proteins. Common infectious causes, or systemic diseases such as hypoadrenocorticism had already been ruled out at this point.

On arrival, treatment with analgesia and intravenous fluids was continued. An abdominal ultrasound was unremarkable apart from generalised intestinal wall thickening. Hypoalbuminaemia (serum albumin of 19.5g/l, reference range) was confirmed.

The presumptive diagnosis of acute haemorrhagic diarrhoea syndrome (AHDS) was made. In addition to the usual supportive and symptomatic treatment, the team decided to perform a faecal microbiota transplantation (FMT) in the hope of speeding up her recovery. The FMT, which is a filtered blend of the faecal microbiota from a healthy donor and is available in frozen aliquots from the Hospital's own faecal donor bank, was administered via enema.

The simple procedure was conducted under mild sedation, took less than 10 minutes and was completed without complications. Poppy received a second FMT the following day, and then discharged back into the care of her referring vet with an easy-to-digest prescription food and probiotics. Her serum albumin levels quickly returned to normal, and her owners reported that her appetite soon returned to normal and she was back to enjoying her walks.



Poppy's health improved quickly following FMT

FMT treatment for acute haemorrhagic diarrhoea syndrome

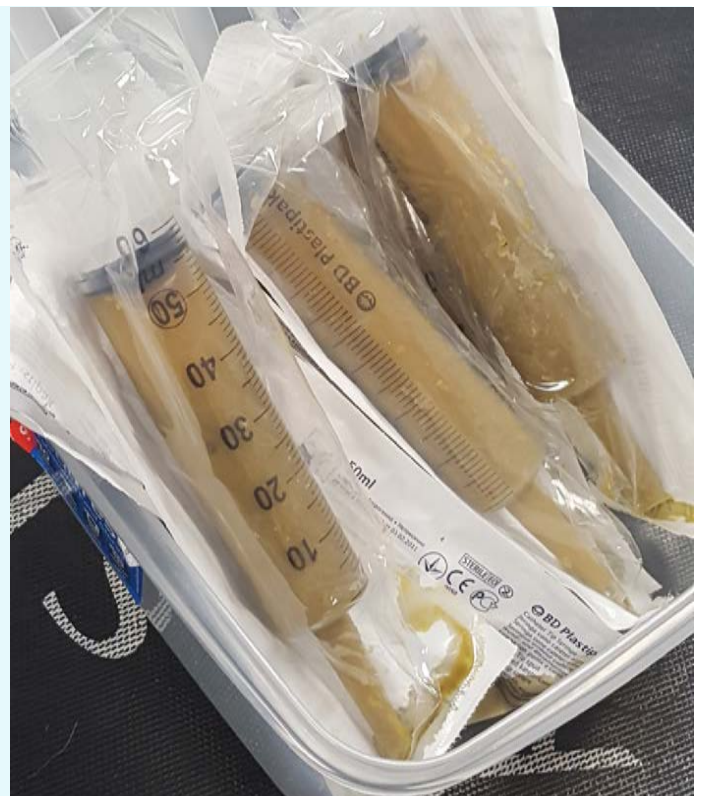
Led by two of our gastroenterology Specialists, the Hospital's FMT service has shown to be very successful in treating canine patients with acute haemorrhagic diarrhoea syndrome (AHDS), as well as other infectious conditions (parvovirus) or chronic enteropathy. Particularly in AHDS, FMT has been shown to be clinically as effective as metronidazole, but without the associated disruption of the intestinal microbiota.

We are frequently seeing severe cases of AHDS, (previously haemorrhagic gastroenteritis). These can be some of the most critical cases that we manage and can require several days of hospitalisation with a need for blood products and intensive care.

One of our Internal Medicine residents, Ivan Montanes Sancho, is – under the supervision of Professor Silke Salavati – leading a study evaluating whether an intensive FMT protocol is beneficial in these dogs. There is already some evidence that a single FMT can help, but this study will administer FMTs every 12 hours until there is clinical improvement.



If you have a patient that you feel could benefit from FMT please email fmt@ed.ac.uk



Our study is looking at whether administering multiple FMTs can help patients with AHDS

Orthopaedic Surgery Service: offering cutting-edge treatments for joint diseases, fractures and lameness investigations.

The Orthopaedic Surgery Service offers elective and emergency referral consultations for the investigation and management of lameness and gait abnormalities. Our team sees a broad range of presentations, from developmental orthopaedic diseases such as hip dysplasia, to progressive degenerative geriatric conditions and acute traumatic fractures.

Working in close collaboration with colleagues in Anaesthesia, Diagnostic Imaging and Clinical Pathology, we aim to characterise disease processes efficiently to allow an informed discussion with clients regarding the options available to improve the quality of life of their animal.

Dedicated team

The service is staffed by five senior surgeons who, with over 25 years of Specialist surgical experience between them, guide, support and mentor a further five residents and interns, ensuring the future of access to Specialist veterinary care for pets. We are supported by our dedicated surgical theatre staff who

provide the environment required to carry out complex surgical procedures with confidence. We are also reliant on our experienced nursing team, who ensure the wellbeing and welfare of the animals we care for, prioritising a comfortable, relaxed stay with us.

Complex caseload

We pride ourselves on the clinical service we provide, and manage a busy caseload of scheduled elective patients as well as accommodating emergencies and traumatic injuries. A typical week may include a total hip replacement, surgical management of a cruciate rupture, fusion of a hock, keyhole examination of an elbow and repair of a fractured radius. While mostly treating dogs and cats, we occasionally operate on rabbits, ferrets and birds. Many cases benefit from surgical intervention, but we also

treat animals with lameness that cannot be improved surgically, often in collaboration with our physiotherapists in the REPAIR centre and our nutrition nurse.

Sharing knowledge

Fundamental to the service is our ongoing commitment to promote the welfare of animals. Key to this is the education of the next generation of veterinary surgeons, who will carry this mantle into the future. We contribute to the training and development of almost 200 new vets annually, ensuring their ability to identify and treat painful orthopaedic conditions. In addition, we present and publish our research, sharing our knowledge and experience and contributing to the collective progress of knowledge of orthopaedic disease to the benefit of animals and their owners.



Further info visit

Orthopaedic Surgery Service
edin.ac/3L1xGYo



Multiple Specialist services collaborate to help a challenging case

Gingy, an 11-year-old cat, was referred to the Hospital's Neurology Service with a suspected vertebral fracture with spinal cord injury following a dog attack. On exam, there were several penetrating puncture wounds affecting the abdomen and dorsum, as well as pelvic limb paresis with marked lumbar pain.

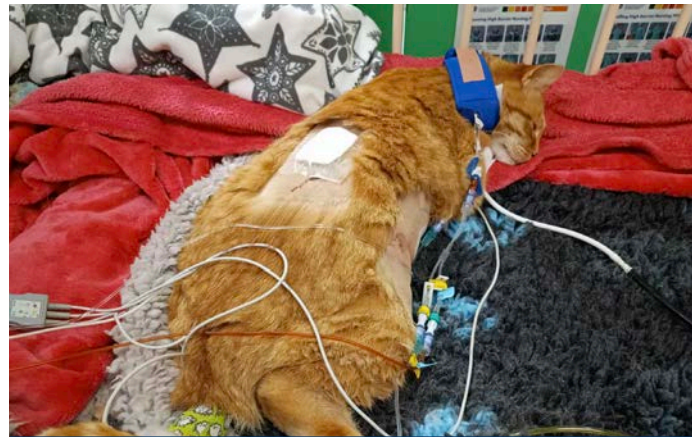
Our Neurology and Emergency and Critical Care (ECC) teams worked together to assess the severity of Gingy's injuries. Our Diagnostic Imaging team conducted an emergency trauma CT, which identified a dorsally displaced fracture of L4 with subsequent cord compression. There was also loss of integrity of the abdominal wall in the location of the bite wounds. Given the concern for organ trauma, and presence of puncture wounds communicating with the abdomen, along with the need to repair the abdominal wall, an exploratory coeliotomy was advised; conservative management of the L4 fracture was deemed to be the most appropriate in light of the concurrent findings.

Our Soft Tissue Surgery team identified that the right kidney had been completely avulsed from the dorsal abdominal wall. As the vasculature to this kidney was still intact, the right kidney was successfully sutured back into place. The penetrating wounds and traumatised tissues were also addressed.

Gingy recovered from surgery in our intensive care unit under the supervision of the ECC Service, with a multimodal analgesia plan developed by our Anaesthesia team. Secondary to the trauma, Gingy developed severe hypotension requiring the addition of vasopressors to maintain an adequate blood pressure. Owing to the widespread muscle damage, he became markedly hypoalbuminaemic and developed peripheral oedema, necessitating blood product administration. In addition to the trauma, severe hypotension and myoglobinuria, Gingy went on to develop an acute kidney injury, which made managing his fluid and medication needs challenging.

Gingy received around-the-clock care from our ECC nurses, who delivered ongoing assessments of his comfort levels and provided nutrition, medications and physiotherapy when suitable.

With this multi-disciplinary, Specialist approach and attentive nursing, Gingy made a steady recovery and was discharged 10 days later. We are delighted to report that Gingy is doing well and has recovered his kidney function and mobility.



Gingy was referred to the Hospital with multiple injuries following a dog attack



Gingy has made a full recovery

Treatment study for hypercalcaemic patients

Marta Garcia Arce, one of our third-year ECC residents, is leading a clinical trial in relation to fluid choice in hypercalcaemic dogs and cats. These animals are at risk of kidney injury, which varies depending on the underlying cause. The aim of the study is to identify whether the fluid type has an impact on the response to treatment and degree of kidney injury using urinary biomarkers. Any hypercalcaemic dog and cat that hasn't received specific treatment yet is eligible for this study and we'd be happy to hear if you have a suitable case.



If you have a patient that could be eligible for this study please email: hfsareception@ed.ac.uk



Our study investigates the impact of different fluid types on hypocalcaemic patients

Celebrating our RCVS Specialists



Dr Julien Dandrieux

Congratulations to Dr Julien Dandrieux, who has been appointed a RCVS Specialist in Small Animal Internal Medicine. Julien is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine and a leading expert on gastrointestinal and immune-mediated diseases in small animals. Together with Dr Silke Salavati, Julien is managing the faecal donor bank service, to help treat acute and chronic gut disease in patients in the Hospital's care.

Julien's new status means that there are now 40 RCVS Specialists working across our hospital's 15 referral services. They, along with the extensive clinical and nursing staff, ensure that the thousands of patients who are referred to us every year receive the very best of veterinary care.

ECC Specialist joins Hospital



Dr Sinziana Radulescu

We welcome Dr Sinziana Radulescu to the Hospital for Small Animals. Sinziana is an RCVS Specialist in Emergency and Critical Care and has joined us as part of the ECAT-V programme, which combines clinical work with research.

Sinziana completed her residency at the Royal Veterinary College and has joined the ECC team on a part-time basis while she completes her PhD at the University of Edinburgh. Her knowledge and experience will help us continue to provide 24/7 availability to our referral cases and emergency admissions, and we're delighted to have her join us.



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2024 Clinical Club Dates

The Dick Vet Clinical Club and Nurses Clinical Club hold monthly online CPD webinars. These free events are hosted by experts who discuss recent advances in their speciality to help vets and vet nurses develop or refresh their clinical knowledge. Details of the 2024 Vet Clinical Club CPD events are below. The 2024 Dick Vet Nurses Clinical Club CPD events can be found on our website.

Dick Vet Clinical Club CPD

JAN
17

Professor Tobias Schwarz
Professor of Veterinary Radiology
Radiography & CT of feline musculoskeletal disorders

JUL
03

Dr Rob Ward
Lecturer in Anaesthesia
Zenalpha? What's that?

FEB
07

Dr Craig Breheny
Senior Lecturer in Emergency and Critical Care
What do I do when a blue brachy arrives?

AUG
07

Dr Josie Parker
Lecturer in Ophthalmology
How to manage entropion

MAR
06

Professor Dylan Clements
Professor of Small Animal Orthopaedics
How to manage a poorly paw - orthopaedic conditions of the distal limb

SEP
04

Dr Julien Dandrieux
Senior Lecturer in Small Animal Internal Medicine
Urinary tract disease: when is interventional radiology indicated?

APR
03

Dr Jenna Richardson
Senior Lecturer in Rabbit and Exotic Animal Medicine
Approach to the head tilt rabbit

OCT
02

Professor Tim Nuttall
Head of Dermatology Service
First do no harm – getting otitis management right from the very first visit

MAY
01

Dr Jennifer Cartwright
Senior Lecturer in Small Animal Internal Medicine
Diagnosing and managing acute liver disease

NOV
06

Professor Danielle Gunn-Moore
Personal Chair of Feline Medicine
Update on FIP: epidemiology, diagnosis and treatment

JUN
05

Dr Alistair Boag and Dr Jennifer Cartwright
Senior Lecturers in Small Animal Internal Medicine
Hyperthyroidism

DEC
04

Dr Joao Miguel De Frias
Lecturer in Veterinary Neurology/Neurosurgery
Diagnostic approach to acute myelopathies in dogs and cats



For details of 2024 events and booking information, visit:

www.ed.ac.uk/vet/BookClinicalClub