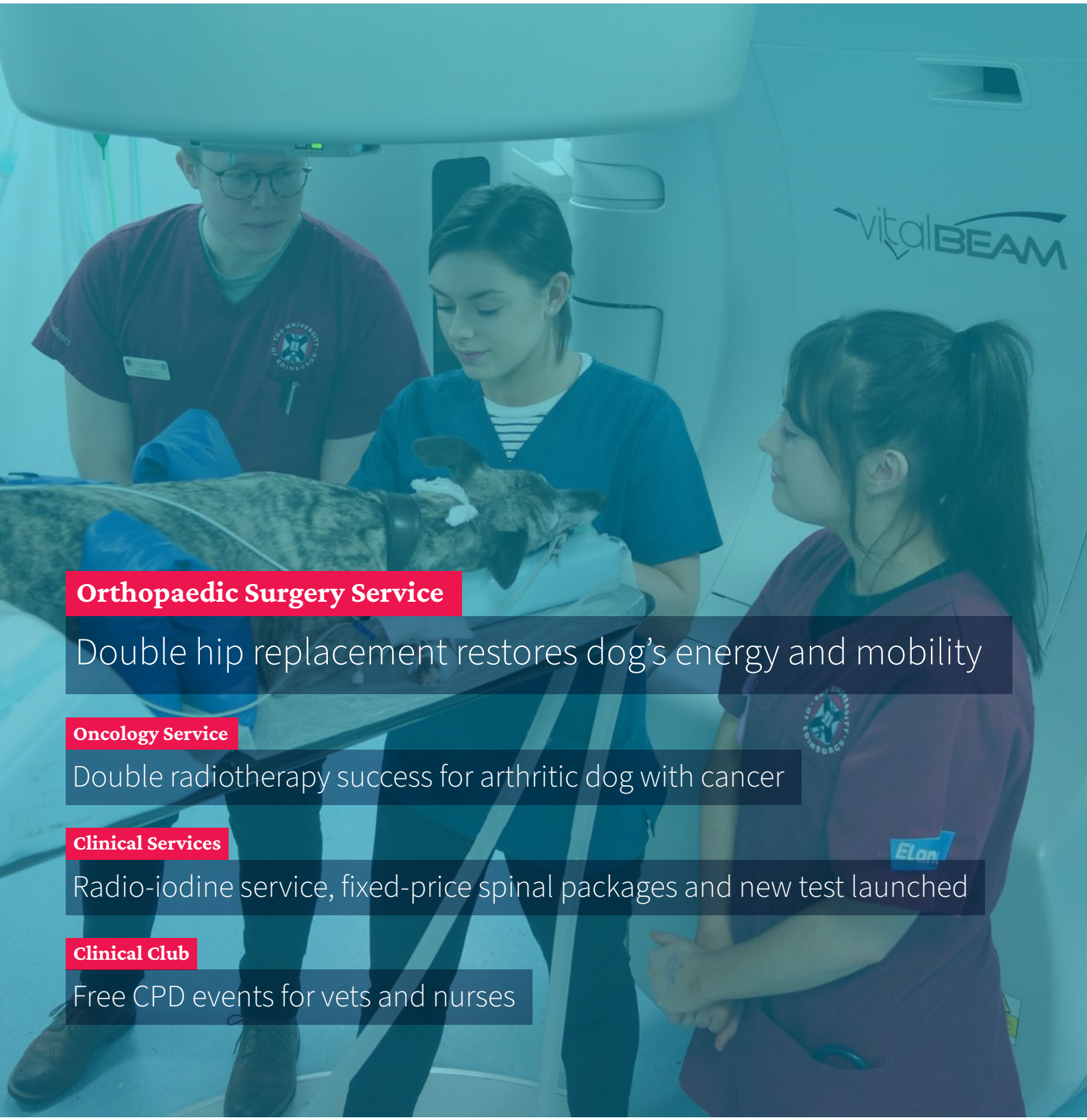
ISSUE
17
Summer 2024

Newsletter for

Referring Vets



Orthopaedic Surgery Service

Double hip replacement restores dog's energy and mobility

Oncology Service

Double radiotherapy success for arthritic dog with cancer

Clinical Services

Radio-iodine service, fixed-price spinal packages and new test launched

Clinical Club

Free CPD events for vets and nurses

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
Hospital for Small Animals

Welcome

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the Summer newsletter from the Hospital for Small Animals at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. The role of the clinical services of the Dick Vet is to provide the best care we can for the animals under our care, whilst educating the vets of the future. We also improve animal welfare for animals we will never see by undertaking research to understand and treat disease better and by disseminating that knowledge.

With those themes in mind, included in the newsletter is the relaunch of our radio-iodine service, and information about a fixed-price spinal package as well as the introduction of a new test offered by our clinical pathology department.

We welcome six new Diplomates, five of whom did their residency training with us, say goodbye to the BVM&S 2024 final year cohort and welcome the 2025 final year students into the hospital. We would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who look after our students so well when they undertake EMS with you.

In these pages you will find details of a new study conducted by the Internal Medicine service, and information of future CPD events for both vets and nurses.

We recently had our Practice standards inspection and that made us reflect on our impact on the world. Working within a University with ambitious sustainability initiatives might mean it feels easier to do our bit for the environment and ourselves, because someone else is doing it, however, we decided that sustainability should be embedded in all the decisions we make within the clinic and cannot be a separate issue on its own. We wondered if it was useful to share some of the ideas we have adopted, so have put them in the newsletter.

Finally, I would like to introduce you to my 'job share' - Laura Blackwood. I am dropping my hours, which means that Laura is stepping into the role when I am away. Laura is an old hand at this level of management from her days at Liverpool, and I am sure you will extend a warm welcome to her.

Best wishes,

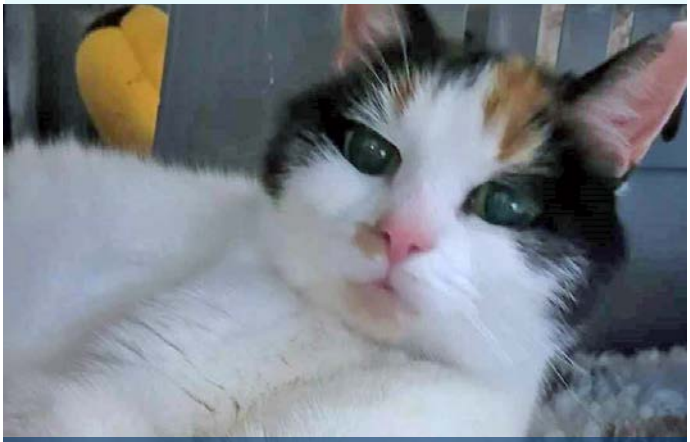
Sue Murphy
Director of Clinical Services

Radioactive Iodine Service relaunch

We are pleased to announce that our radioactive iodine (I131) service for hyperthyroid cats is running at full capacity.

We are proud to be one of only two places in Scotland able to offer this definitive treatment option for hyperthyroid cats. Our dedicated treatment facility, feline ward and feline nurses offer a calm and comfortable stay for our patients during their treatment.

Radioactive iodine treatment is given as single dose either by subcutaneous injection or oral capsule. The iodine concentrates in the thyroid gland where it emits beta-radiation, killing the hyper-functioning cells. This treatment is extremely effective as all thyroid tissue, even ectopic tissue, is treated. The usual stay in the radioactive iodine unit is around seven to ten days.



Felicity, a 14 year old domestic shorthair is thriving following i131 treatment for her hyperthyroidism.

Further info

If you have a cat with hyperthyroidism you would like to refer for I131 therapy, please contact us at **HfSareception@ed.ac.uk**

Refer a case

0131 650 7651

hfsareception@ed.ac.uk

edin.ac/hfsa-referral-form

Fixed-price spinal package introduced

The Neurology and Neurosurgery Service is excited to introduce a new initiative aimed at simplifying the treatment process for dogs with thoracolumbar intervertebral disc extrusion (IVDE). The Service's fixed-price 'spinal package' is designed to make care more accessible and transparent for pet owners, while also providing clarity for the referring vets.

This package covers the essentials of managing thoracolumbar IVDE, including the initial consultation, routine pre-anaesthetic bloods if required and advanced diagnostic imaging by CT or MRI, surgical intervention (hemilaminectomy over one or multiple intervertebral disc spaces, as required), anaesthesia, post-operative hospital care including in-house physiotherapy with our trained nurses, analgesic drugs at home, and one follow-up consultation.

While the package is extensive and covers all sizes of dogs, please note that it is limited to IVDE and does not cover some costs such as ICU care (e.g. oxygen therapy in severe brachycephalic dogs), costs related to comorbidities (e.g. urinary tract infection) or extended hospitalisation beyond the standard post-operative period of five days. However, we will work closely with pet owners to provide clear estimates and tailor treatment plans to their needs.

By consolidating these services into one transparent package, we hope to ease the financial burden and cost uncertainty often associated with spinal treatments. The package is currently limited to thoracolumbar IVDE, but we may consider it for cervical intervertebral disc disease in the near future. We welcome any feedback about this initiative.

Current fees: Spinal package within working hours: £4900. Out-of-hours: £5800.

Enquiries
For more information or to enquire about referring a dog with IVDE, please contact **hfsareception@ed.ac.uk**

Sustainability and the Hospital for Small Animals

We have just had our Practice Standards inspection which made us reflect on our impact on the world. We feel that sustainability should be embedded in all the decisions we make within the clinic and cannot be a separate issue on its own.

We thought it might be useful to share some ideas that we are exploring and some that are already working for us, which might work for you. We are continuing to build on these ideas, and welcome new ones.

We:

- Use paper towels instead of swabs and incontinence pads where appropriate, as they take much less energy to make and dispose of.
- Use electronic consent forms, discharge forms and off-license consent forms wherever possible, and send our welcome packs to clients digitally. If paper is required, we use recycled paper and have recycling bins throughout the Hospital for waste paper.
- Offer rechargeable batteries.
- Replace thermometers' batteries rather than buying new thermometers.
- Collect bubble wrap and send it for reuse to package IT products for shipping. Anaesthesia also like using it for patient insulation/warming!
- Encourage clients to return any unused medication for us to dispose of. This minimises clients using out-of-date medicines or disposing of medicines incorrectly into the waterways.
- Use reusable cotton surgical hats and provide theatre shoes instead of shoe covers.
- Recycle unsoiled drapes, pouches, saline bags, suture packets and cardboard boxes by keeping separate from clinical waste.
- Swap wherever possible to cardboard bins for waste from heavy duty plastic bins.
- Use paper bags for medications rather than plastic bags to go home with the client.
- Have a wildlife-friendly area outside. We have a community maintained wildlife friendly garden behind the hospital.

3D printing technology used to help treat spinal condition

Veterinary neurology specialists from the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies have utilised a unique 3D-printed spinal guide to allow them to surgically stabilise dogs' vertebrae.

Geralt, a one-year-old pug, was referred to the Neurology Service with several neurological problems including paraparesis, pelvic limb ataxia and faecal and urinary incontinence. Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) confirmed a spinal arachnoid diverticulum (SAD). Computed tomography (CT) also identified that the caudal thoracic vertebrae had some anomalies (absence of some articulating joints) that could either contribute to instability or lead to instability if the SAD was addressed surgically.

Uncommon condition

A SAD is an abnormal accumulation of spinal fluid within the meninges surrounding the spinal cord. This accumulation of fluid subsequently compresses the spinal cord and has the potential to severely compromise neurological function.

After discussion with the clients, it was agreed that surgery to release the fluid and correct the malformation in Geralt's vertebrae would give the best improvement to his long-term neurological function.

The Hospital supplied Fusion Implants Ltd with CT scan images and commissioned the production of an individualised 3D-printed guide to fix around the dog's vertebrae during surgery. The guide provided corridors to enable the surgeons to drill and apply screws to the affected vertebrae with extreme precision. Bone cement was then used to help stabilise the vertebrae to prevent the condition from reoccurring.

Geralt recovered quickly from surgery and was quickly back to full health.

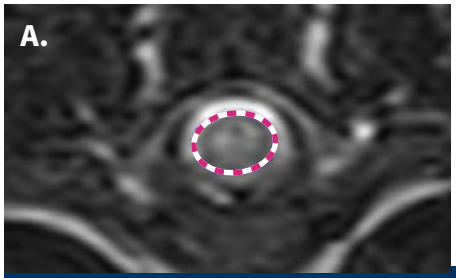
Neurology Specialists

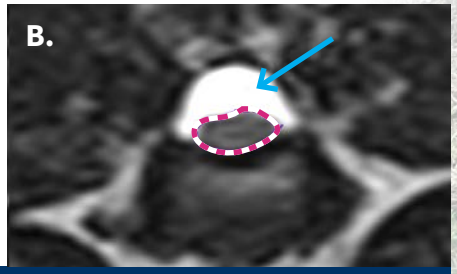
The Neurology Service at the Hospital for Small Animals is one of the largest veterinary neurology referral services in Europe, with five European Diplomates, four residents and two dedicated neurology nurses.

The team has successfully operated on five dogs with SAD in the last 12 months, with each animal affected at different points in their neck and spine.

"We are delighted to offer surgical solutions for animals with SAD and are keen to see how we can adopt the technology of using 3D models for other neurological uses."

- Aran Nagendran, Co-Head of Neurology Service, Hospital for Small Animals.





A comparison of normal [A] and compressed [B] spinal cord [circled] indicates the degree of compression due to the build-up of cerebrospinal fluid.

Magnetic resonance image showing the spinal arachnoid diverticulum (blue arrow) as a tear-dropped appearance.

Faecal calprotectin test launched

We are delighted to announce the launch of a new test to help veterinary surgeons diagnose and monitor chronic inflammatory enteropathy (CIE) in their feline and canine patients.

The test measures the levels of the protein calprotectin, the most reliable biomarker for inflammation in a patient's intestines.

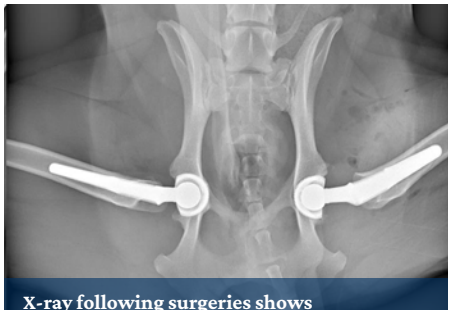
Developed and validated by clinical pathologists from Easter Bush Pathology and Specialists in Internal Medicine, we are the first centre in Scotland to offer this test to veterinary practices.

Results are available in less than a week and supplied with interpretation notes to give vets additional confidence in their diagnosis and treatment of CIE.

Enquiries
For more information and to submit a test visit **www.edin.ac./ebp-resources**

Double hip replacement restores dog's energy and mobility

X-ray before surgeries shows Theo's misshaped femoral heads and hip sockets.



X-ray following surgeries shows two prosthetic femoral heads sitting correctly in prosthetic 'cup' implants.

Theo, a one-year-old Samoyed, was referred to the Hospital for Small Animals' Orthopaedic Surgery Service with severe hip osteoarthritis associated with hip dysplasia. This resulted in a reduced exercise tolerance and Theo became lame after playing with other dogs. While conservative management was helping, his quality of life was affected, as was that of his owners.

After referral to our service, we confirmed radiographically that Theo was a suitable candidate for a total hip replacement and he was scheduled to have the procedure on his right hip joint, which was the worst affected of the two.

Thanks to the expertise of the Hospital's Anaesthesia team, Theo was walking comfortably on his operated hip three hours after surgery. His recovery was supervised in the Hospital's Intermediate Care ward, which allowed for close monitoring and active support of his initial recuperation by the Hospital's nursing team, before he was discharged to continue his convalescence at home.

Second surgery

A year after surgery on his right hip joint, Theo's newfound comfort on the operated leg highlighted that he was now struggling more on the left hind leg. Theo therefore returned to the Hospital for a second total hip replacement, this time on his left hip.

Theo's second surgery went well, and, following a brief period of recuperation at home, he regained a comfortable range of hip motion in both legs.

Theo is now living pain-free and no longer requires non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. His owners report that his activity levels have markedly improved since surgery, as have his general mobility and energy levels.

Multidisciplinary expertise

The Orthopaedic Surgery Service worked in close partnership with the Diagnostic Imaging, Anaesthesia and Nursing teams to ensure the highest standards of welfare and care for Theo.

Professor Dylan Clements, who managed Theo's case, has more than 20 years of experience performing total hip replacements in dogs and undertaking research into the genetic basis of hip arthritis to develop new strategies to prevent it in future generations.

"Theo's case is a great example of the result that can be achieved when multidisciplinary teams work collaboratively to maximise the outcome for their patients. It also highlights the importance of the Hospital's cutting-edge research into these devastating diseases to improve the health and welfare of dogs.
Every case referred to the Dick Vet helps us in that mission."

- Professor Dylan Clements.

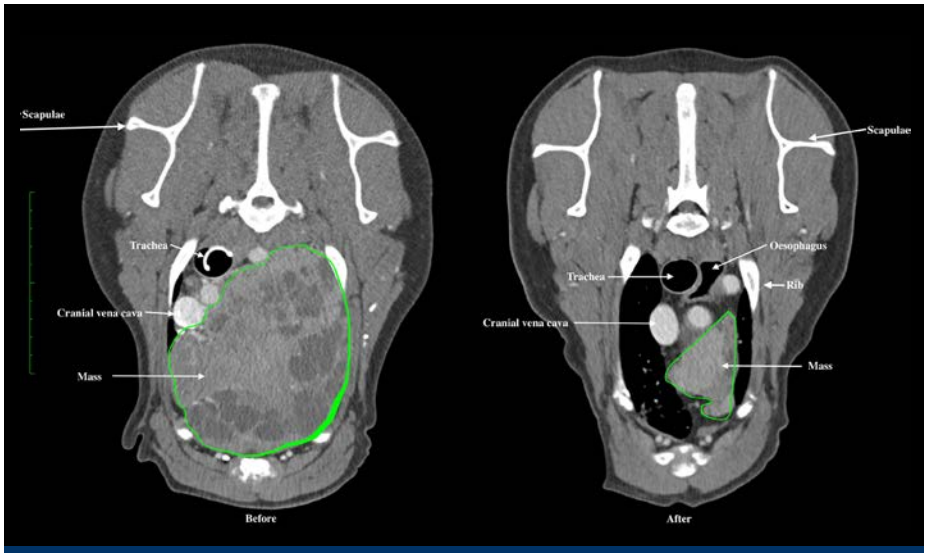
Double radiotherapy success for arthritic dog with cancer

Bailey, an 11-year-old Labrador Retriever has been successfully treated with radiation therapy twice, to treat a rare cancer and arthritis in his elbow joints.

The dog was referred to the Hospital's Riddell-Swann Veterinary Cancer Centre last year after his vet diagnosed a thymoma.

A CT scan showed that Bailey's thymoma was more than 15cm in size and was pressing on his heart, trachea and oesophagus. The tumour also led him to develop paraneoplastic hypercalcaemia which had to be addressed before treatment for the tumour could begin.

Surgery to remove the tumour was not an option as the tumour had invaded the surrounding structures in Bailey's thorax. Radiotherapy was therefore considered to be the best option for him.



Radiotherapy has reduced the size of Bailey's thymoma by more than 50 per cent.

Radiotherapy success

Bailey received 20 fractions of radiotherapy as an out-patient over a four-week period using the Hospital's VitalBeam linear accelerator. Cone beam CT was performed on a daily basis to verify patient position, so that treatment could be applied with millimetre accuracy.

Bailey was discharged back into the care of his owner and own vet after his final radiotherapy session, with checks every three months at the Hospital to monitor the size of the tumour.

Nine months after the final radiotherapy session, Bailey's tumour continues to get smaller and is now less than 50 per cent of its original size. Bailey's calcium levels have also remained normal since treatment.

Severe arthritis

Bailey was referred to the Hospital for a second time earlier this year, due to his severe arthritis that was not responding to traditional medical management. His mobility was limited, and he was in a lot of pain.

Targeted radiation therapy has also been shown to significantly reduce inflammation in the joints and the pain associated with arthritis. Bailey therefore received three sessions of low-dose radiotherapy over the course of a week on both his elbows.

Since his radiotherapy, Bailey's mobility and quality of life have significantly improved. Closer to his home he also attends hydrotherapy and physiotherapy to help maintain his joint function in the future.

Cancer expertise

The Riddell-Swan Veterinary Cancer Centre is one of the largest oncology centres in Europe, with three boarded radiation oncologists, four boarded medical oncologists, residents and interns.

It offers a full range of diagnostic and therapeutic options including surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, immunotherapy and targeted medical therapy, and it accepts referrals from vets across the UK.

Email us
If you would like to refer a patient for treatment, please contact **HfSAreception@ed.ac.uk**

Bailey with clinicians Charlie Hawkes and Magdalena Parys and student Tanith

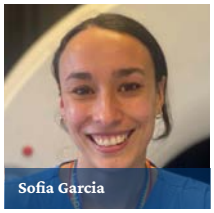
Staff success

Huge congratulations to six of our clinicians who are celebrating recent exam successes!

- Joao Miguel De Frias has become a European Diplomate of Neurology (DipECVN)
- Ana Fernandez Gallego has become a European Diplomate in Small Animal Internal Medicine (DipECVIM-CA (Internal Medicine)).
- Sofia Garcia has become a European Diplomate in Small Animal Surgery (DipECVS)
- Ian Faux has also become a European Diplomate in Small Animal Surgery (DipECVS)
- Josie Parker has become a European Diplomate of Ophthalmology DipECVO
- Isabel del Portillo Miguel has become a European Diplomate in Small Animal Oncology (DipECVIM-CA (Onc))


Joao Miguel De Frias


Ana Fernandez Gallego


Sofia Garcia


Ian Faux


Josie Parker


Isabel del Portillo Miguel

Each completed more than three years of focussed training, exams and research to achieve the highest qualification in a particular veterinary field. Joao, Ana, Sofia, Ian, Josie and Isabel now join an elite community of fellow European Diplomates working around the world.

With more than 40 European and American Diplomates working across our 14 referral services in our hospital, our clients and referring vets can be confident that we can offer the highest standards of clinical care to our patients.

Chronic enteropathy treatment study

Clinicians from our Internal Medicine Service are looking for dogs with suspected or confirmed chronic enteropathy or inflammatory bowel disease to help with a BSAVA PetSavers-funded study.

The study will assess the effect of D-mannose on clinical outcome and microbiota composition. Dogs which have not responded to an elimination diet or food trial are particularly of interest.

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

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 clinical area to help vets and vet nurses develop or refresh their knowledge. Details of the 2024 Vet Clinical Club and Nurses Clinical Club events are below

Dick Vet Clinical Club CPD

AUG 07
Dr Josie Parker
Lecturer in Ophthalmology
How to manage entropion

SEP 04
Dr Julien Dandrieux
Senior Lecturer in Small Animal Internal Medicine
Urinary tract disease: when is interventional radiology indicated?

OCT 02
Professor Tim Nuttall
Head of Dermatology Service
First do no harm – getting otitis management right from the very first visit

NOV 06
Professor Danielle Gunn-Moore
Personal Chair of Feline Medicine
Update on FIP: epidemiology, diagnosis and treatment

DEC 04
Dr Joao Miguel De Frias
Lecturer in Veterinary Neurology/Neurosurgery
Diagnostic approach to acute myelopathies in dogs and cats

Dick Vet Nurses Clinical Club CPD

JUL 31
Jess Randall
Exotics, Rabbit and Wildlife RVN
Nursing the gut stasis rabbit

AUG 31
Sara-Ann Dickson
Cardiology RVN
Cardiac congenital defects and interventional procedures

SEP 29
Lindsey Ashburner
Emergency and Critical Care RVN
Blood transfusion – saving nine lives

OCT 30
Fiona McDowell
Teaching Fellow
The role of chemotherapy in veterinary medicine

NOV 27
Kelly Cadman
Ophthalmology RVN
The 'eyes' and lows of providing 'spectocular' ophthalmology patient care

For details of 2024 events and booking information, visit:
www.ed.ac.uk/vet/BookClinicalClub