

## **So you want to become a Small Animal Veterinary Nurse?**

At Donnington Grove Veterinary Group, we pride ourselves in supporting many colleagues in achieving their dream to become a Qualified Veterinary Nurse.

If this is the career for you, we hope that the following will answer any questions you might have.

### **What is Veterinary Nursing?**

Veterinary Nurses support the care of animals receiving treatment for illness or injury at the vets. Our nurses here at Donnington Grove are a key part of the veterinary team. As well as supporting unwell patients they also play a role in educating owners in the best ways to maintain their pets health.

Some responsibilities for veterinary nurses may be:

- Preparing patients for surgical procedures
- Providing support to animals and their owners before and after operations
- Assisting the Vets in the operating theatre
- Carrying out veterinary nurse consultations
- Administering medications and fluid therapy to patients
- Observing and recording patients' vital signs (temperature, pulse, respiration and pain)
- Applying bandages to wounds and fractures
- Educating animal owners on nutrition and preventative care and providing basic behavioural advice
- Assisting during emergency procedures
- Carrying out a range of diagnostic tests in the practice laboratory (e.g. blood samples, urine samples)
- Dispensing medication and demonstrate to owners how to use them

### **How do I apply to become a Trainee?**

All our vacancies are advertised on our website or via our Facebook page with information on how to apply.

### **What qualifications do I need?**

To be entered in to a veterinary nursing course you must have achieved 5 GCSE's grade A-C (4 and above) to include Maths and English language or equivalent such as Level 2 Functional Skills. Student nurses must be 16 years old or above.

### **Is there any experience I should gain that would help my application?**

Student nursing positions are very popular and there are often a large number of applications when a position becomes available. To make your application more successful we would always suggest doing voluntary work at an animal rescue centre, or work experience at a vets or dog groomers.

Also, an excellent pathway into nursing is to become an Animal Nursing Assistant (ANA). ANAs provide essential care to patients, including feeding, walking, bathing. This role gives aspiring veterinary nurses a window in to the job and provides them with excellent work experience.

### **Do I start my training straight away?**

All trainees will be employed for up to a year before formal training commences. Within this waiting period, you will still have on the job training, which will help you once your formal training at college begins.

### **What is the course structure?**

Currently, the diploma is a mixture of written exams, practical exams, assignments and a working skills log. Student nurses attend college one day a week during term times. A clinical coach is assigned to each student; they will mentor their student throughout the whole course and carry out one-to-one training.

The RCVS (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons) do constantly review course structures so it is worth checking on the RCVS website for current course requirements.

### **How long will it take before I am qualified?**

If all goes well and all assignments and exams are passed, it will take approximately two and a half years to complete your training.

### **What qualifications do I come out with?**

Currently, after completing the course, nurses will have achieved a Level 3 Advanced Diploma in Veterinary Nursing. Please check RCVS website for up to date qualifications.

Once qualified, nurses will then join the RCVS register of veterinary nurses and they can use the post-nominal RVN.

### **Do I get paid as a Trainee?**

You will be employed on a fixed term contract with a basic starting salary, which increases as you progress through your training.

### **What hours would I be expected to work?**

As a 24-hour Practice that provides all of our out of hours care on site, all our nurses work on a shift pattern to ensure that we can provide sufficient care for our inpatients. As a trainee, you will be required to work varying shifts to include nights, weekends and bank holidays on a shared rota.

If you have any other questions or would like further information, please contact:

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