What we do; What we should do; What we want to do.

Veterinary Nurses in New Zealand

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Introduction

- Unregulated profession
- No protection of title
- Three qualifications
  - Certificate (1 year of study)
  - Diploma (2 years of study)
  - Bachelor (3 years of study)
Introduction

• Lack of a guaranteed and standardised skill-based learning,

• Capabilities of veterinary nurses in practice may not be being fully utilised.

We conducted a nation-wide study of veterinary nurses in New Zealand to investigate current clinical veterinary nursing practices.
Introduction

• Government mandated review

• New qualifications in 2016
  • Except BVetTech

• Voluntary registration from 2016

• Survey prior to qualification change/registration enables differences to be investigated
Methods

• Web-based questionnaire (SurveyMonkey)
• 288 responses (March 2015)
• Response rate: 19% of the New Zealand veterinary nursing population (n=288/1479)
• Distribution:
  • New Zealand Veterinary Nursing Association members via email
  • New Zealand Veterinary Association e-newsletter
  • Social media (Facebook)
97% of respondents held a minimum of a one-year vet nursing qualification
52% held a two or three year vet nursing qualification
Monitoring anaesthetics – 100% VN
Microscopy – 50% VN
Performance of 'veterinary only' tasks in practice

- Cat Neuters: 14% VN
- Dental Extractions: 10%
Conclusions

• Wide variation in roles of veterinary nurses

• The number of veterinary nurses performing these tasks on a regular basis was lower than expected, based on qualification

• A number of tasks are being performed only by veterinarians in some practices

• Job satisfaction/economic implications
  • Vets doing vet nurse tasks

• Reduces improvement of clinical practice

• Impact on statutory regulation
References
