



ISSUE 10 – Spring 2017

## Animal Welfare News

### Welcome to our new JMICAWE Centre Director, Professor Cathy Dwyer

I am delighted to have joined the JMICAWE team back in December 2016. I will be dividing my time between leading the Animal Behaviour and Welfare research team at the Scottish Rural College (SRUC) and the Directorship of the Centre. It is quite a daunting task to be taking over from our Inaugural Director, Prof Nat Waran, who has ensured that the Centre has had such a fantastic start, and cemented its amazing global reputation. I am very excited about the challenges ahead, and to be working with such a dedicated and hard-working team. I am also really pleased that Nat will remain involved with JMICAWE as Honorary Professor, and she will continue to support the online Animal Welfare, Clinical Animal Behaviour and MOOC programmes from New Zealand.

My background is as a researcher in animal behaviour and welfare, focusing primarily on farmed livestock, but I have also been involved in animal welfare education having taught on the University of Edinburgh MSc programmes for many years. I am looking forward to exploring the new opportunities to bring my expertise and that of my SRUC team to JMICAWE and to develop new collaborations with others around the world.

You can see some of these activities in this newsletter, as we begin new projects in China on farm animal welfare, and develop new collaborations on dairy cow welfare in India. We are also consolidating our work on veterinary education, and helping to develop a new veterinary nursing programme in India and Sri Lanka, which recognises the vital animal welfare work and support that vet nurses provide. Finally April sees the launch of our second MOOC on behaviour and welfare of cats and dogs – I hope you will be inspired to register for the course, and enjoy learning more about the lives of our favourite pets.



Prof Cathy Dwyer, engaged in some of her research into ways to improve the survival and welfare of newborn lambs

### JMICAWE vet nurse wins BSAVA Bruce Vivash Award



Our veterinary nurse Hayley Walters received the BSAVA Bruce Vivash Award for the advancement of veterinary nursing worldwide at Congress in Birmingham in April. Well done Hayley!

### JMICAWE vet receives BVA Trevor Blackburn Award

Congratulations to Heather Bacon who has been awarded the BVA's Trevor Blackburn Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to improving animal health and welfare in developing countries through education, charity work and research.



The award citation particularly recognised Heather's work with Animals Asia to rehabilitate victims of the bear bile industry; her role as Veterinary Welfare Education and Outreach Manager here at the University of Edinburgh, in encouraging the use of manikins and models in place of live animals in veterinary teaching; her research and clinical practice to raise animal welfare and veterinary skills standards within the global zoo community; and her work with street dogs involved in Trap-Neuter-Return programmes.

### MOOC2: 'The Truth about Cats and Dogs'

After the success of our first MOOC (Massive Open-access Online Course), we have now completed a new MOOC to provide an insight into the world of cats and dogs worldwide. The aim is to help clarify misunderstandings about pet behaviour and discover the truth about their needs. This free course is available on <https://www.coursera.org/>



### Training in Farm Animal Welfare in China

JMICAWE is beginning a new project, funded by the Open Philanthropy Project, to develop training materials in farm animal welfare for farmers, veterinarians and technicians in China. The project aims to develop effective and practical methods to deliver education on animal welfare and to overcome barriers to the implementation of animal welfare improvements. This project will be delivered in collaboration with farm animal welfare specialists from SRUC, and will also support a PhD student to evaluate the effectiveness of different educational methods. This position will be advertised very soon.

## Indian Council for Agricultural Research, Delhi

JMICAWE/SRUC's Cathy Dwyer, Marie Haskell, Fritha Langford and Laura Dixon delivered a workshop on Production Animal Welfare Research at ICAR's Head Office in New Delhi in December 2016. The workshop covered animal welfare concepts, and behavioural science, as well as practical sessions on the different methods used to evaluate animal behaviour and animal welfare.



We followed this with a visit to the Dairy Research Centre, where projects were already underway to develop enrichment for bulls housed singly in the genetics unit, and a PhD student was working on cognitive development in buffalo calves. Opportunities to develop strong collaborative links on animal welfare are being explored, with the exchange of students and faculty planned, and joint research projects in development.

## Project Updates

### Improving Veterinary skills, knowledge and attitudes towards dogs in South Asia

The role of the veterinary profession is changing rapidly across Asia, and South Asia (as in other parts of the region) has seen a tremendous upsurge in the ownership of pet dogs, alongside an increase in the population of free-roaming dogs. This is a huge challenge for a veterinary population primarily trained in livestock species.

Funded by the Dogs Trust, and working in collaboration with Sri Lankan NGO Dogstar Foundation, Heather is leading a project to improve veterinary knowledge and skills about dogs in both Kerala and Sri Lanka. Last November saw the delivery of training in canine medicine, surgery and behaviour to over 80 staff and students at the University of Peradeniya, as well as staff from the Sri Lankan Armed Forces, and to over 30 veterinary staff from the Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (KVASU), and the Kerala Animal Husbandry department.



As a result of the meetings, a strategy has been drafted to prioritise the main issues created by dog overpopulation in Kerala, and a children's educational leaflet has been developed by KVASU for schools in the area, to educate children about what they can do to minimise the risks of dog bite injuries.

Additionally training on inhalational anaesthesia was delivered to Dogstar Foundation staff in Sri Lanka, allowing them to optimise their Catch-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return services to include older and very young patients, who may not be suitable candidates for injectable anaesthesia.

Further CPD will be delivered later this year to clinical staff in both Kerala and Sri Lanka.

## Implementing a veterinary nurse training programme in India & Sri Lanka

JMICAWE's Hayley Walters and Heather Bacon returned to both countries in March to evaluate progress. Hayley explains the project:-

"Veterinary nursing is a recognised profession in many countries around the world. Like human nurses, veterinary nurses are trained professionals who contribute to an excellence in the clinical environment, focussing on patient care and minor procedures and freeing veterinary doctors to concentrate on more in-depth clinical work, research and teaching.

JMICAWE is partnering with KVASU in India and the University of Peradeniya's FVMAS (Sri Lanka's only vet school) to create Asia's first 12 month veterinary nurse training programme.

The 'Send A Vet Nurse...' trips in 2015 & 2016 involved taking student or newly qualified veterinary nurses to India and Sri Lanka and integrating them into the veterinary teaching hospitals of these universities for a week at a time. In doing this, it showcased the skills and knowledge a well-trained VN has and highlighted just how useful they are, not only in improving patient welfare but in also reducing the workload for the vets thus improving their welfare!

Both of these trips have already resulted in measurable changes in the management of animals at both hospitals. Inpatient dogs are now being given walks every day to toilet; access to water is available 24 hours a day; a separate cat ward has been instigated with spacious cages for feline patients; and cleaning protocols are now in place in inpatient and outpatient areas. These small but significant changes make a huge difference to the experience of the animal when it is hospitalised and the introduction of a veterinary nurse training course would further improve patient care.

A 12-stage plan is now in place to ensure that the implementation of the training programme goes smoothly and all parties (teaching staff, students, vets in practice, veterinary councils) are happy with the curriculum and final outcome."



## News in Brief

- ❖ Our online and on campus MSc courses continue to be popular with a wide range of participants.
- ❖ The past few months have seen visits to the Vet School from Temple Grandin, Chirag Patel and Kendal Shepherd.
- ❖ This August, the Royal (Dick) Vet School will welcome its first cohort of China Agricultural University students into 1<sup>st</sup> year entry of the GEP, as a direct result of the collaborative educational framework instigated by JMICAWE.
- ❖ Dr Ralph Thompson recently joined the team as Programme Co-ordinator for the online MSc in Applied Animal Behaviour & Animal Welfare. Dr Tamsin Coombs was promoted to become the Programme's Director as Dr Susan Jarvis promoted to Dean of Postgraduate Studies at SRUC.
- ❖ Our two PhD students are working hard – one on a Horse Trust-funded PhD on assessing equine stress in the clinical setting (Gemma Pearson); the other on a Malaysian Government scholarship-funded PhD looking at attitudes of Malaysian veterinarians to the management of pain in cats (Syamira Zaini).