

**Report on attending BACCN 37th Annual Conference & 1st Joint BACCN/IACCN Conference
as a Veterinary Nurse
Katie Gray**

I was delighted to be able to attend the very first in person BACCN since joining as a member and forming part of the new Veterinary Critical Care Nurse (VCCN) Committee last year.

I attended the virtual conference last year, so I knew to expect lectures of high quality but was happy to be in person this time.

The opening Keynote speakers were inspiring, the crossover between 'human centric' nursing practice and veterinary nursing is vast and this was highlighted beautifully by Helen Ballantyne who is a dual registered nurse and Veterinary nurse. She spoke of the importance of utilising a "One Health" approach to medicine and nursing, and how this might impact us in several ways including touching on the pandemic and the ways in which we can learn from one another. Her anecdotes of experiences whilst nursing in vet practice and human centres were hilarious but impactful, and this had a good result in piquing interest of the delegates to our veterinary stream on Day One.

VCCN were thrilled to have a good attendance to our stream, in which we covered topics such as Leptospirosis, Euthanasia and End of Life Care, Interventional Cardiology, CPR and Comparative Approach to Nasogastric Feeding Tubes.

As a Hospital Counsellor myself (Registered Veterinary Nurse too!), working in a large veterinary referral centre, I was very intrigued by the lectures on Day Two, including the impact of Covid 19 on critical care nurses and the brilliant talk by Nicki Credland on the depiction of critical care nurses as 'Angels and Heroes'.

I found the lectures on Covid 19 to be most inspiring. As Veterinary nurses, we did not have the same pressures that our human centric counterparts did, and it was emotional to be amongst people who had really put themselves in harm's way to do their roles every day in such a worrying time.

The most interesting lecture for me through Day Two was on the experience of embedding clinical psychologists into the critical care unit. As a final year psychotherapist, I have been working in a veterinary hospital now for seven months, and as such there were some fascinating insights into the longer-term impact of having mental health support on site for the staff provided by Nate Shearman. I took away some great information on how they feel the impact has been felt by the teams and the way they structure their days/weeks. It has impacted the way I am thinking about my presence within the veterinary team and how best I can empower the team to find the tools so that they can function to their best ability and advocate for themselves in periods of high stress.

From a nursing perspective, the lecture on National Early Warning Scores in acute care settings by Michelle Treacy was great. I have a keen interest in Sepsis and sepsis bundles and have been working for years to embed them into our critical care unit especially, as bundles are still a relatively new concept to veterinary medicine. To understand the ways in which human centric settings still struggle with implementation of systems such as NEWS-2 was enlightening and gives hope that we are on the right track to doing so within our hospital.

The simulation by SCREAM on Day Two into bleeding tracheostomy care was brilliant, and my takeaway from this was that we do all of the same things if we have this situation in our

canine or feline patients. One thing that I felt might be useful for us to implement from attending this simulation would be to have a 'haemorrhage box' such as used in the demonstration, where everything we need for the situation is ready and waiting in order to save valuable time.

Overall, the opportunity to meet and speak with so many inspiring nurses from all over the UK and Ireland was amazing. I came away with so much information to trickle into our hospital for positive change in patient care, and I also came away with a renewed excitement and outlook into "One Health". The collaboration between BACCN and VCCN is a super exciting one, and I can't wait to see how this evolves over the coming years.