

The seventh annual IVNA Congress 2016

The IVNA committee is in the process of finalising Congress 2016. This year, we are heading west, with the event taking place in the Galway Bay Hotel on May 21-22, writes Lorraine McDonnell RVN

IVNA Congress 2016

Hotel: Galway Bay Hotel

Date: May 21-22, 2016

Web: www.ivna.ie



The Galway Bay Hotel is the venue for IVNA Congress 2016.

This year's Irish Veterinary Nursing Association (IVNA) Congress incorporates elements for the more experienced nurse in practice with lectures covering oncology, advanced dentistry, anaesthesia case studies, and personal safety. Sunday's practicals will include wound management and physiotherapy. Information supplied on evaluation forms, filled out by delegates at last year's IVNA Congress, provide the basis for our topics this year.

In keeping with tradition, Saturday will consist of a full day of lectures. This will be followed by our social evening where the presentation of the awards for Veterinary Nurse of the Year, Student Nurse of the Year and Support Staff of the Year (this includes receptionist and animal care assistance) will take place.

On Sunday morning, the popular practical sessions will take place. Please visit www.ivna.ie and our Facebook and Twitter pages for the most up-to-date version of the programme.

The Congress schedule and registration details will be distributed in the *Veterinary Ireland Journal*. As usual, we will have early bird rates, which run to the end of March. Places are limited, especially on the Sunday sessions, so book early to avoid disappointment.

Last month saw the launch of the Veterinary Nurse, Student

Nurse and Support Staff of the Year Awards. These awards are designed to promote the amazing work of individuals who excel in their field and go above and beyond the call of duty. If you think of someone who would be worthy of this award, please nominate them.

There is a specific protocol in place for selecting the winners. Once nominations are submitted, a shortlist of six is decided, which is then passed on to the sponsoring company. The company makes a shortlist of three nominees and it will decide the winner. The IVNA has no influence in the decision-making process. Each winner receives a trophy and a hotel voucher.

Posters for the awards will be sent out to practices in the coming weeks, so why not place a poster in your waiting room and give your colleagues and clients the opportunity to nominate someone and show how much they appreciate all you do for their pets? Nomination forms can also be filled out on www.ivna.ie. Our sponsors this year are Royal Canin and Allianz.

VETERINARY NURSE OF THE YEAR 2015

Last year's deserving winner was Kirsten Cole RVN from Cara Vet Group, who received the winning nomination from one



Winner of the Veterinary Nurse of the Year Award in 2015, Kirsten Cole (centre), pictured with Eilis Nichol, IVNA chairperson, and Damien Ivory, Royal Canin. Photo: Eithne O'Brien.

of her clients. Kirsten's nomination reads as follows:

"The veterinary nurse that I would like to nominate for the Irish Veterinary Nurse Awards for 2015 is Kirsten Cole. Kirsten works at the Cara Veterinary Hospital. What makes Kirsten special, and an excellent candidate for this award, is not only the exceptional level of expertise she shows when it comes to the care of any animal in her care, but it's the fact that she does it in a manner that automatically puts you and your pet at ease.

"My beautiful dog, Benji, took ill in August 2012 and, after weeks of highs and lows, and the excellent care of the Cara Veterinary Hospital staff, my beautiful boy was diagnosed with pancreatitis and a liver tumour. It broke my heart. However, I have to say, with the help of the staff, and in particular Tracey (vet) and Kirsten, who always greeted us with a smile and a cuddle for Benji, our regular visits were not as painful or upsetting as they could have been. With their help my beautiful boy lasted for another two years until the day came for our goodbyes.

"I went to the hospital that day, with the help of Tracey and Kirsten, who made one of the toughest tasks I had to make a little more bearable. Their help and understanding was just outstanding and something I will always treasure and never ever forget.

"Behind Kirsten's happy relaxed exterior there is also a very intelligent, well trained, level-headed veterinary nurse who knows what to do. Kirsten is such a lovely, happy and bubbly person, who just adores every animal in her care, that the words 'thank you' just never seem to be enough. This is now my chance to tell Kirsten how eternally grateful I am for all her help in the lowest points of my poor Benji's illness and also for the great memories we made with her and the staff. "I feel privileged to have had her as a veterinary nurse looking after my Benji, and really hope she wins the award as she truly deserves it."

Our Student Nurse of the Year was Majella McCafferty Carmody, a student from Dundalk IT, and our Support Staff of the Year was Helen Brennan from Sunbeam.

CHARITY OF THE YEAR 2015

Last year, we teamed up with Homes for Unwanted

Greyhounds (HUG) as our Charity of the Year. Together with committee members and IVNA members, we managed to raise €2,586 from various fundraising events like mini-marathons, and raffles from the IVNA Congress. Thanks to everyone who helped in raising these much needed funds for a great charity.

CHARITY OF THE YEAR 2016

This year is the second year in which our Charity of the Year was picked by members voting online, via email and Facebook. We are pleased to announce that Mutts Anonymous Dog Rescue and Adoption (MADRA) was chosen as our Charity of the Year. MADRA, a non-profit organisation, is a volunteer dog rescue and adoption group run by qualified dog trainers. They are committed to improving the welfare of dogs in Ireland through training and education in the local community, in Connemara and Galway.

If you wish to donate to this worthy charity there is a donate button on the IVNA website and all money donated goes straight to MADRA. Once again, we will be participating in the Women's Mini Marathon in Dublin in June, and in Cork this September, so anyone who is interested in joining members of the IVNA committee in these events please monitor our website, Twitter and Facebook pages for details.



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