

# Practise makes perfect

## **Why did you decide to pursue a career in veterinary nursing?**

I grew up on a farm and have always been surrounded by and enjoyed working with animals. After a detour into the world of business I decided it wasn't for me and was delighted to get accepted into the veterinary nursing programme at UCD. It was one of the most difficult and best decisions I have ever made, but without the support of my family, it would not have been possible: I haven't looked back since.

## **What aspect of your studies have you enjoyed most to date?**

Each year has been different: our first year was spent getting to grips with the basics and it gave us a platform of knowledge to build on. Core subjects included anatomy and physiology and animal nutrition. In second year we covered a variety of subjects such as medical and surgical nursing, anaesthesia and therapeutics but of all the subjects I particularly enjoyed the equine and farm animal modules.

## **What aspect of your practical training have you enjoyed most to date?**

Third year is designed so that we are placed in the working veterinary environment: this gives us the opportunity to put our theory and training into practice. To date, I have completed seven weeks in a small animal and ophthalmology referral practice and an additional three weeks in the large animal surgery department of UCD veterinary hospital. I loved the work in the hospital: it was great to be out in the yard dealing with the larger patients. While I take pleasure working with all species, I enjoy working with horses the most. Staff on both placements were really supportive and patient and they answered my relentless questions and helped me develop many practical skills during my time there.

## **Describe a typical day in the life of a third-year student during term time?**

Towards the later end of the term you would find me



*Sam Feighery is a third-year veterinary nursing student enrolled on the University College Dublin (UCD) BSc (Hons) veterinary nursing programme. Here, Sam explains what attracted her to veterinary nursing and shares some of her student experiences to date*

hunched over a computer with strong coffee completing a portfolio! While I was on my work placement my day started at 8am and finished at 4pm and my role was to shadow and assist the Registered Veterinary Nurses in all their daily duties. Each morning started with in-patient care, preparing patients for surgery, monitoring anaesthesia, and administering medication. Other tasks included assisting with standing treatments in equine patients e.g. bandage changes, clinical examinations and diagnostic procedures. While under supervision, I got to perform many practical tasks including administering medications, taking blood samples and performing laboratory tests. I also got to participate in consultations and this was very beneficial because I got to hear first hand the case history from the client. I found this particularly beneficial when it came to writing up my case reports for my portfolio of learning experience.

### What advice would you give to anyone considering studying veterinary nursing?


If you are looking for a glamorous job where you can swan in and be fabulous 9 to 5 then veterinary nursing is not for you! If you are hard working, prepared to get your hands dirty (literally!) are caring and have

a genuine love for all creatures' great and small then this is your calling. From my experience so far, it's clear that my veterinary nursing career is going to be challenging, hard work and I will be continuously learning but, most importantly, it promises to be a very satisfying career choice.

## Weigh Up What's Important in FLUTD

Great tasting food and weight control: two concepts that would seem to be in conflict. But the twin challenges of ill animals with poor appetites and anxious owners means that compromising on taste just isn't feasible.

The formula with highest levels of Omega-3 fatty acids



### Getting the Taste Right

Last year, Hill's™ Prescription Diet™ c/d™ Multicare Reduced Calorie was launched with a great new taste improvement. The taste of c/d Reduced Calorie is unsurpassed by a competitor product<sup>1</sup> and with the highest levels of omega-3 fatty acids to help break the cycle of inflammation<sup>2,3</sup> and reduce the recurrence of FIC<sup>4,5</sup> there is ongoing benefit to reduce pain and discomfort.

### Sizeable issues

Weight gain, of course, often plays a role in development of FLUTD, so controlling the calorie intake will be front of mind for many clinicians. As one vet based in Ireland put it, "I would say we would see maybe one case of FLUTD per month, and about 90% of those patients are overweight or obese."<sup>6</sup> Indeed, the prevalence of FLUTD in one study was found to be 49% higher in overweight and obese cats.<sup>6</sup>

### Spread the Word

Many practices have already found that using c/d Multicare Reduced Calorie with clinically proven levels of L-carnitine\* (500 mg/kg DM) means that there is a tasty alternative for overweight cats suffering from FLUTD. RVN, Beth Kirwan at Summerfield Lodge vets says, "It's definitely c/d Multicare's most palatable recipe yet. c/d Multicare Reduced Calorie is great – none of our patients have gained weight on it and a few have lost weight and they all eat it really well."

### Trial the Taste

Hill's new Urinary "Cat Pack" starter kit is ideal for new FLUTD patients and contains enough c/d Multicare – both pouches and dry – for 12 days feeding with a transition of up to 10 days.\* Talk to your Hill's Territory Manager about getting urinary starter packs when you purchase any c/d Multicare product, subject to stock availability.

### References

\*Based on 10 day transition period for 4kg cat eating 1 pouch + 25g kibble daily at day 10 of transition

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The prevalence of FLUTD is 49% higher in overweight and obese cats<sup>6</sup>





For more information contact Hill's on  
1-800 626002 or your Hill's Territory Manager.