

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	22 May 2024
Title	RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Annual Report to VN Council
Summary	This report sets out the work of the Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC)
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
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Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

²Classification rationales

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

Annual Report to VN Council

Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Veterinary Nurses Council, there have been two meetings of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee which took place on 5 March and 16 April 2024. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 28 May.

RVN Concerns received / registered

2. Between 10 February and 9 May 2024, there were 9 new concerns relating to RVNs. Of these 9 new concerns:
 - One case was closed by the Stage 1 PIC.
 - Seven are currently under investigation by a Case Manager, Veterinary Nurse, Veterinary surgeon, and a lay member (Stage 1 PIC).
 - One case was referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee following referral to Stage 2 PIC.

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. There have been five new cases considered by the RVN PIC between 10 February and 9 May 2024. Four cases were referred to external solicitors for formal statements to be taken and one case was referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. At the meeting on 5 March, the Committee considered one ongoing case which it referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee.

Ongoing Investigations

4. Ten concerns involving six veterinary nurses are currently under investigation, and these will be returned to the RVN PIC for a decision in due course.

Health Concerns

5. There are currently no RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Health Protocol.

Performance Concerns

6. There are currently no RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Performance Protocol.

Referral to Disciplinary Committee

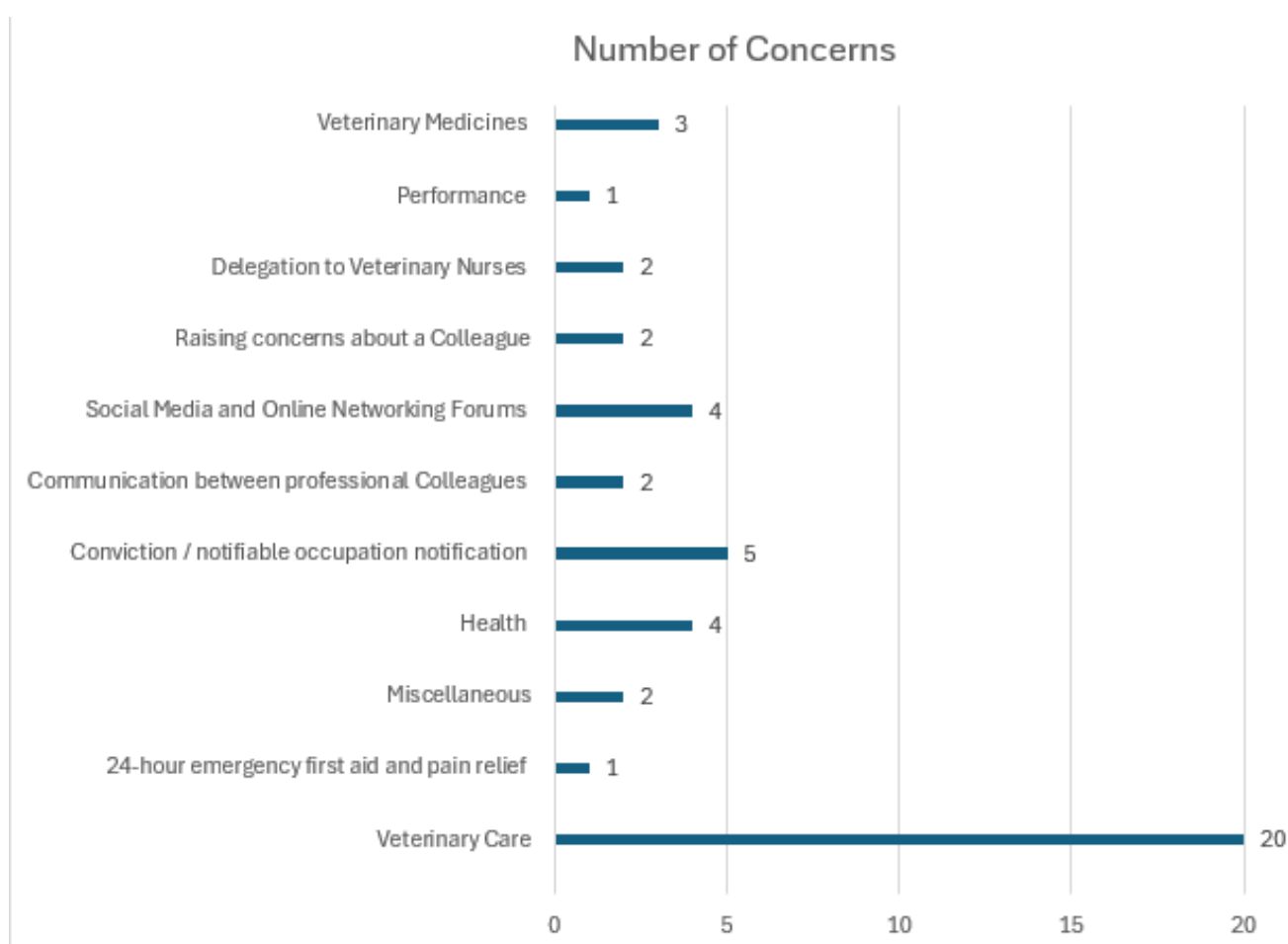
7. Since the last report, two cases have been referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. The hearing dates will be confirmed in due course.

Disciplinary Hearings

8. Since the last report, four disciplinary hearings have taken place in relation to veterinary nurses. The first hearing took place between 19 and 26 February 2024 and the Disciplinary Committee found the veterinary nurse not guilty of serious professional misconduct. The second hearing took place on 18 and 19 March 2024. The Disciplinary Committee directed that the veterinary nurse should be removed from the Register. The third hearing took place on 26 and 27 March 2024 and related to a veterinary nurse's conviction. The Disciplinary Committee did not consider that the conviction rendered the veterinary nurse unfit to practise. The fourth hearing took place between 3 and 5 April 2024 in relation to a veterinary nurse's conviction. The Disciplinary Committee found that the veterinary nurse's behaviour and conviction brings the veterinary nursing profession into disrepute but after taking all the facts and circumstances into consideration, the DC decided that it would be most appropriate to take no further action against the veterinary nurse.

Professional Conduct Department

9. The chart below shows the number and categories of the **46** concerns relating to RVNs registered between **1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024**.



10. Of the 46 concerns registered between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024:

- 24 were closed at Stage 1 (2 with formal advice issued to the RVN).
- 8 were referred to Stage 2 PIC
- 3 were referred to Stage 3 (RVN Disciplinary Committee)
- 11 are currently under investigation at Stage 1.

In the preceding five years, the total number of concerns registered against RVNs for each year is as follows:

- 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 – 34
- 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 – 36
- 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 – 37
- 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020 – 27
- 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019 – 37

Cases considered by RVN PIC (Stage 2)

11. Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, the RVN PIC considered **15 new cases**. Of these:

- 1 case closed.
- 1 case closed with formal advice issued to the RVN.
- 12 cases were referred to external solicitors for formal statements to be taken.
- 1 case was referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

During the same period, the RVN PIC considered **8 ongoing cases**. 2 cases were closed; 1 case closed with formal advice issued to the RVN; 5 cases were referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

Disciplinary Hearings

12. Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, there have been five DC hearings involving RVNs. The Disciplinary Committee concluded that the conduct of the RVNs amounted to serious professional misconduct in three of the cases. In terms of sanction, two RVNs were removed from the Register and one RVN received a period of suspension from the Register for 3 months. For the two remaining cases, the Disciplinary Committee found one veterinary nurse not guilty of serious professional misconduct and in the other case, the Disciplinary Committee did not consider that the conviction rendered the veterinary nurse unfit to practise.

Year overview

13. The majority of the Stage 2 PIC meetings continue to be held remotely. The meetings on 27 June 2023, 31 October 2023 and 5 March 2024 were held in person and two more in person meetings are scheduled to take place on 9 July and 1 October 2024.

An in-person training day for members of the department and Committee members took place on 25 March 2024. The topics included dishonesty, convictions, and common issues/FAQs for S1 PICs.

In July 2023, the RVN PIC welcomed two new members – Kelly Tillett RVN and Jane Downes MRCVS. At the end of June 2024, we will say goodbye to our Chair (Sally Bowden RVN) who has served on the Committee for 8 years. We are very grateful for the contributions Sally has made to the Committee and we will miss her vast experience and knowledge.