

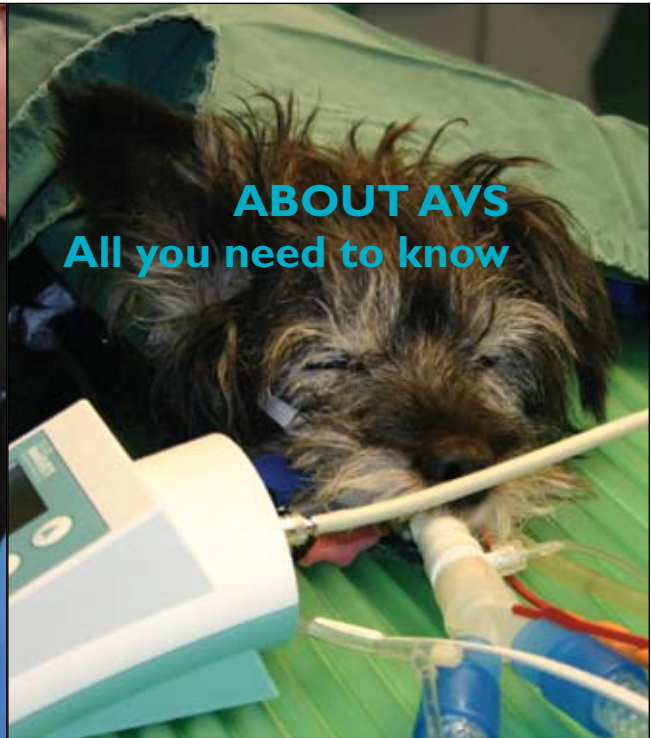
Fresher's edition

JAVS Lite

Autumn 2011



The Journal of the Association
of Veterinary Students



ABOUT AVS
All you need to know



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The voice for veterinary students in Great Britain and Ireland

JAVS is sponsored and published on behalf of the Association of Veterinary Students by the BVA

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From the editor of *JAVS Lite*

By Chloe Hannigan (Final-Year, London – JAVS editor)

Welcome to *JAVS Lite*, a sister magazine to the Journal of the Association of Veterinary Students (JAVS). For those of you wondering what I'm talking about, *JAVS* is a magazine that is written by vet students, for vet students, and features a range of articles from recent EMS experiences, topical issues within the veterinary profession, social shenanigans, and anything else in between that your friends wish you to read about! *JAVS Lite* was established last year, and has been created especially for



you first years as an introduction to the Association of Veterinary Students, and we hope you'll enjoy reading about what we can do for you, not to mention some of the biggest events on the vet social calendar!

We'd love you to get in touch and let us know about your own experiences, both vet and non-vet related. The best fresher article will be published in the next issue of *JAVS* (Autumn, October-November), and to encourage/bribe you to get writing, the winner will receive £20 for their efforts – very handy after an expensive freshers' week. If you're interested, head to the *JAVS* section on the AVS website www.avs-uk.org.uk (which is well worth a look) and stay updated with all things AVS-related. Deadlines will be passed on to you by your AVS reps.

If you've got any questions or comments, or even a cracking idea for an article, do not hesitate to get in contact by emailing: javseditor@hotmail.com, or get hassling your local AVS reps. You can also join us on Facebook/Twitter and let us know your thoughts.

Look forward to hearing from you, and hope to see most of you at AVS Sports in November.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chloe".



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Welcome from the AVS President

Congratulations, you've made it to vet school. I know for many of you stepping through those vet school doors will have been a moment you thought you could only dream of, but this is just the beginning; you've got years of 'vetty' fun and frolics ahead of you!

2011 is World Veterinary Year, so it's an especially exciting time to be starting off on the path to one of the best careers to be had. You've got a lot to look forward to in the years to come, starting with Freshers' Week right through to final-year revues and your graduation ball – and there will be plenty of fun to be had in between.

The Association of Veterinary Students for the UK and Ireland (AVS) is here to support and represent you throughout your time at vet school.

On top of that, the AVS organises some epic social events; our annual Sports Weekend is coming up in November, and will be hosted by Nottingham vet school for the first time. This is one of the biggest social events of the vet student year, so, get ready to don some fancy dress and roll out your competitive streak. In February 2012, AVS holds its annual congress (the event will be the other London 2012 event) where you'll have yet another weekend of inter-vet school socialising.

If I could offer one piece of advice to those of you who are new to vet school, it would be to embrace every opportunity university throws at you. Five or six years might seem like a long time, but I can assure you it will fly by!

Enjoy your first few weeks at vet school, and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at Sports Weekend in November.

Myfanwy
AVS President 2011/2012



Apart from having intercalated in London last year, Myfanwy is a not-so-secret thespian. Last summer she went to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival to strut her stuff, and 'abandon my dignity, in front of several thousand tourists'

Who do you think we are?

The AVS is a specialist division of the British Veterinary Association (BVA) run for and by veterinary students in Great Britain and Ireland to represent your interests in various areas of the profession. We make sure that the student voice is heard on matters ranging from mental health to student debt, and we organise some of the best socials you'll ever go to.

What can AVS do for you?

AVS represents almost all UK and Dublin veterinary students, and aims to improve undergraduate education through student liaison, mainly by bringing together UK veterinary students on a regular basis. We do this largely through our uni reps; each university has two AVS reps that also belong to their student Vet Soc. The reps act as a link with the other universities and are able to take any issues back to the main committee, and seek opinion from their own student body on matters that concern AVS. This is particularly important when we do the AVS survey. The AVS survey aims to identify trends in the student population, and highlight emerging or declining problems such as student debt, and funding for EMS. We use this information



Students introduce themselves at the AVS AGM in the hopes of securing an AVS role

to guide our activities and focus our efforts on improving life for all vet students.

In addition to the uni reps, the committee has a welfare rep and the executive committee, which acts as a bridge between the students and other areas of the profession. They frequently attend meetings with the British Veterinary Association (BVA), and occasionally with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), with the explicit aim of ensuring that our opinion is considered when creating policies that concern us.

Help us to help you!

How can you get involved? First, make sure you join AVS! Most vet societies sign you up automatically when you join them, but not all of them do, so check with your vet soc reps. Once that's sorted all you need to do is have fun and join in; come along to our socials, get to know your AVS reps, take part in the surveys and events we run and maybe even stand for a committee position. Who knows, you may find yourself writing this column for *JAVS Lite* in a few years time.

Contact us

If you want your opinions on political, educational, welfare or financial issues to be heard, then you need to get in touch with us. You can do that in a number of different ways: via your AVS rep (look out for their details on the AVS noticeboard, they will probably be around to talk to you in the next few weeks) or via our website, www.avs-uk.org.uk where members' login allows you to access questionnaires seeking your personal opinion on current issues. You can also raise issues and seek help from fellow veterinary students on our Facebook page, and follow us on Twitter.



AVS 'sports' in Edinbaaaa

The AVS committee: the voice of veterinary students in the UK and Ireland

Over the past year the AVS committee structure has changed to include new subcommittees. This was done to make the structure of AVS more representative of its members, and to enable the committee to function more efficiently and productively. There are now four subcommittees: welfare, education, finance and marketing.

Each member of the AVS committee belongs to one of these subcommittees and works together within the team to discuss relevant issues in detail. They develop ideas and suggestions, which drive AVS policy. For example, any issues or questions related to EMS would fall to the education subcommittee to gather information from the veterinary student community. The improvement in communication between the committee and you, the members, should enhance

your ability to contribute and allow us to maintain accurate information to feedback to the appropriate organisation. More information on them will be available in Autumn JAVS, but here is a peak at what they are for and what they have been up to . . .

Education

The Education Subcommittee deals with issues concerning veterinary student training and the veterinary school curriculum, extramural studies (EMS) and, where appropriate, works alongside the welfare subcommittee regarding education of students about animal welfare.

Representatives from each vet school can feed back any concerns that their students have regarding their course, teaching standards and facilities.

EMS is another important area that the AVS is heavily involved in.

Recently, members of the committee worked together with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) and the British Veterinary Association (BVA) to review the EMS system by carrying out surveys of both student and practice member opinions. The results of these were used to produce the new EMS guidelines (for students and practices) to help ensure that the student and the practice benefit from EMS placements, and that they are a worthwhile and pleasurable experience.

Further details on EMS guidance can be found on the RCVS website: www.rcvs.org.uk and the BVA student guide to EMS on the BVA's website: www.bva.co.uk.

Welfare

The Welfare Subcommittee encompasses animal and student welfare and discusses issues with the aim of promoting vet student opinion. We currently aim to put on a welfare event at each vet school to educate students about the services that are available to them, so watch out for a welfare event coming your way, or let us know about the success of existing events.

This year's BVA Animal Welfare Foundation (BVA AWF) forum was attended by a number of AVS committee members. We produced a survey prior to the forum on the topics being discussed, to allow vet students to give their opinions. We had over 600 responses, so were able to provide students' views during discussion at the event. More information about the forum will be included in the Autumn JAVS.

Welfare cards have been produced, and will be available to you in the first few weeks of term; they have really handy information on them such as heart rates, gestation

International Veterinary Students' Association



Support from the BVA helps all students to be a part of the International Veterinary Students' Association (IVSA), which currently has over 35,000 student members in 50 countries. The aim of the IVSA is to raise the overall standard of veterinary education worldwide by increasing international and intercultural exchange of ideas and knowledge. Along with holding an annual international congress, the IVSA is also actively involved in organising student exchange programmes (see page 8)

periods etc, of the most common species, as well as the telephone numbers of supportive organisations – we hope you find them useful!

Finance

With the recent changes to tuition fees, financial issues are high on the agenda for current and prospective students in every field, yet those faced by vet students are quite different to the average student, and Finance Subcommittee has been looking at the specific pressures that vet students face. In particular are the costs of equipment and the cost of undertaking EMS placements. These have the double effect of incurring travel and accommodation expenses and

preventing vet students from taking on vacation jobs.

The Finance Subcommittee is working on an information pack of bursaries and grants specific to vet students to help buffer these costs. This will be available in the coming academic year.

Marketing

The Marketing Subcommittee is dedicated to making sure that you and our associated bodies know what is happening within AVS. We work together to ensure the AVS is best represented by our branding/ image and media outlets.

The past year has seen some exciting changes to our marketing strategy including a new logo, the introduction of 'fresher' packs, and

making sure we are accessible via various stands, at events like AVS Congress.

The JAVS Editor produces two editions of JAVS per year, (one in the autumn term, one in spring term), and last year we introduced the first ever edition of JAVS Lite to ensure every vet student knows about us from the very start of first year.

The web editor keeps our website and social media pages up to date, and also set up our Facebook and Twitter pages.

Get involved by signing up to our website: www.avs-uk.org.uk, joining us on Facebook: Association of Veterinary Students - AVS - UK and Ireland, and following us on Twitter: @AVS_UK_Ireland.

What is AVS 'sports'?



AVS Sports is an age-old annual tradition, during which the vet schools of the UK and Ireland meet up for a weekend in November for sporting fun, socialising and (ahem) refreshments, with added lashings of fancy dress! Each vet school takes its turn to host it, and it is one of the most memorable events on the vet student social calendar. Following the huge success of this event in Edinburgh last year, the AVS Sports 2011 Committee tells us that Nottingham promises to deliver yet another unforgettable weekend of inter-vet school sports, laughs and debauchery!

How will Nottingham deliver?

To celebrate its recent accreditation, Nottingham says it plans to put on a weekend that will be bigger and better than ever before. With two exclusive club nights (featuring international DJs), the legendary AVS bar crawl, plus much, much more. The weekend, it is said, will give a taste of the best of Nottingham's city life.

The highlight of the weekend will



be Saturday's festival-themed AVS Sports Series – a day packed with entertainment. Showcase sports matches will see the vet schools battle it out, and are guaranteed to draw in the crowds. Less competitive 'turn-up-and-play' matches will give everyone the chance to represent their vet school at a variety of sports, from rugby to rodeo-sow riding.

Two stages featuring live music, a farmers market and an on-site bar means there is sure to be something to appeal to everyone.

With the cost of accommodation and food included in the ticket, the weekend is a brilliant opportunity to meet students from other years and other vet schools. It is definitely a weekend not to be missed. Join us on Facebook: AVS Sports 2011 – Nottingham

Each vet school has its own fancy dress theme for Sports Weekend. At last year's event, one of the fancy dress themes was clowns, London students dressed as sheep, Nottingham was 'Avatar', Cambridge was Zorro ... you get the picture

AVS Congress

AVS Congress is another amazing weekend, with a mix of academia, social networking and, of course, epic nights out.

What is AVS congress?

Congress is a weekend event, at which students from across the eight UK and Irish vet schools get together to participate in a series of practicals and seminars, socialise and vote at the AVS AGM.

It begins on the Friday night with a traditional AVS bar crawl through the host city. At the end of the night, the delegates return home with a host student with whom they stay for the weekend.

The main event kicks off on Saturday morning for a day of lectures, practical classes and seminars based around a central theme. Delegates usually get to pick their main choices of practical sessions prior to arrival, and the congress committee try to accommodate as many of the delegates' top choices as possible. There are lots of opportunities for questions and discussions throughout the day, as well as the chance to form lasting friendships with peers from other vet schools.

On the Saturday evening, all delegates, lecturers and guests speakers get together for a black-tie ball – a perfect end to a busy day. During the ball, the outgoing President of the AVS and the President of the BVA speak about their time as president before the partying resumes until the early hours.

The AGM

The Congress culminates with the AVS AGM. As a society, the AGM is an important way of communicating to our members about our activities over the past 12 months, as well as what the committee is planning for the future. It marks the end of the committee year, with the official presidential hand-over and

(From left) Senior Vice-President, Jen Hall; AVS President, Myfanwy Hill and AVS Secretary, Nicola Reynolds



the chance to elect new members on to the central committee.

Positions within the committee generally come up either annually or biannually (depending on their term length) and any member of AVS can run for most of them. The positions available, and the 'job specifications', are usually posted by the committee before you arrive at congress, giving everyone a chance to see if their ideal role is up for grabs. If you feel you'd like to make a difference as our next Welfare rep or would love to try your hand as the next JAVS Editor, why not give it a go?

As a member of AVS, you're entitled to vote for who you'd like to see fulfil a given role. So, even if you don't fancy running for the position yourself, you can still vote for the candidate you'd most like to see in action – a bit like a local election. The AGM relies heavily on the support of its members, so if you feel passionate about the AVS and what we do, please come along and make your vote count. Who knows – you could be our next president-in-the-making.

AVS Congress 2012

Like AVS Sports, Congress is hosted by a different vet school each year. Next year, AVS Congress is coming to London, and promises to be yet another packed programme.

Congress 2012 is being organised to be as interactive as possible. The theme will be 'Vets on Top', and will showcase the roles of vets not only within the profession, but outside in the non-vet world too. We will

have a variety of speakers from various disciplines, and seminars and practical sessions to boost your knowledge in skills in your areas of interest. There really will be something for everyone.

It will also see the return of the very successful 'Careers Fayre', giving you the opportunity to speak to representatives from the majority of the major veterinary bodies, such as: the BVA, the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA), the British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA), the British Cattle Veterinary Association (BCVA), and many more.

If the prospect of increasing your veterinary skills and meeting students from all the other vet schools doesn't quite grab you, perhaps the social side of the event will tempt you.

The Friday night will see a stream of vet students snaking their way through the vibrant streets of Camden Town for the traditional pub crawl (just ask survivors from the last one at AVS Sports Weekend London 2009 to get a feel for the atmosphere, which only Camden can offer). Saturday night sees the sophistication scale going up a few bars with the annual black-tie ball, and a chance to don your DJs and dancing shoes, enjoy a three-course meal, wine a-plenty, and celebrate being a vet student in style.

When is it?

Look out for the details of AVS Congress London 2012 in Autumn JAVS, but in the meantime keep February 3 to 5 free..

Student membership of the British Veterinary Association (BVA)

Keeping up to date

BVA membership is free for all first year students of veterinary medicine. Joining not only extends your support network at a time when you most need it, but also provides tangible services and benefits. As a member you will:

- Get access to highly regarded professional publications, *Veterinary Record* and *In Practice* – both excellent sources of extended learning, which will keep you up-to-date with latest developments in veterinary practice and policy;
- Receive a free personal accident, liability and hospital cash insurance package while involved in curricular activities (including EMS);
- Enhance your knowledge through a range of many other free and discounted professional resources, including EMS and veterinary medicines guides.
- Obtain member-only access to www.bva.co.uk and www.bvapublications.com. This includes an online community platform for members to network, debate and influence BVA's position on veterinary matters;
- Benefit from a wide-range of other services, such as a free legal-advice line and significant discounts with insurance providers such as Bupa and Lloyd & Whyte.

Saving money

Even in your subsequent years at university, the BVA membership fee is greatly reduced for student members. The rate for a graduate member is £270, while student members pay £36. With the facility to pay monthly by direct debit, peace of mind costs just £3 per month.

Help with student life

Every three years, the BVA and the Association of Veterinary Students (AVS) conduct a student survey to

gain an insight and feedback into the financial, social and educational factors that affect veterinary students. The survey will be conducted again at the end of 2011 and your participation will be crucial in setting the agenda for future AVS and BVA policy. The BVA/AVS student survey shows it is not always easy being a part of the veterinary student population. Results from 2008 show that:

- One in three students considered themselves as being in a difficult or severe financial situation;
- More than half had suffered from stress, and over a fifth from depression. One way to cope with stress is to interact with peers who can provide support. The AVS provide students the opportunity to do this with student events and the opportunity to share knowledge and experiences through mediums such as this magazine.

International links

Support from the BVA helps all students to be a part of the International Veterinary Students' Association (IVSA), which currently has over 35,000 student members in 50 countries. The aim of the IVSA is to raise the overall standard of veterinary education worldwide by increasing international and intercultural exchange of ideas and knowledge. Along with holding an annual international congress, the IVSA is also actively involved in organising student exchange programmes.

The BVA also has four travel grants that are offered to students each year. The travel grants all have a relevance to research and the improvement of animal welfare, especially in the developing world. Each grant has a different application process and the winner for each will be decided by our

Nominations and Award Group.

Claire Coombe-Jones, a 2010 recipient of a BVA overseas travel grant, undertook a project investigating the challenges faced when establishing a new, high quality dairy herd in the Punjab. Claire said 'I now have a far better understanding of the international dairy industry and some of the challenges involved in establishing a new dairy herd. It has helped me to appreciate the importance of mastering good animal husbandry on farms, keeping relevant and accurate records and both educating and motivating the staff, which are all essential to maintain a high quality herd.'

Claire is keen to return in several years to see how the project has developed. Her full report can be found on the BVA's website, along with information on the 2012 grants available.

Finally

As a member, you will:

- Be part of a national association that represents the voice of the veterinary profession;
- Influence critical decisions and help formulate policy;
- Benefit from a wide range of substantial benefits designed to aid your development as a veterinary professional.

Lastly, all that is left is to welcome you into vet school. The years ahead promise to be challenging and rewarding, so enjoy them. For further information about BVA membership and the services it offers you, contact the membership department on 020 7908 6350 or membership@bva.co.uk.

BVA 
British Veterinary Association

Membership rates

Please note that some universities provide varying levels of subsidy for their students' BVA membership.

FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

■ All veterinary schools Free

SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS AND ABOVE

■ Cambridge and Nottingham Free

■ Liverpool £33.50

■ Bristol, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow and London £36.00

The small print...

Membership of the Association is open to all members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), to those on the Supplementary Veterinary Register, to students studying for a degree entitling them to membership of the RCVS and to holders of EU veterinary qualifications which would entitle the holder to membership of the RCVS under the terms of the EU Professional Directives. I would like to become a member of the British Veterinary Association (BVA) and agree to abide by the rules as set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association (copy available on request). I agree to pay my subscription by the renewal date, and if at any time I wish to resign from membership undertake to send my resignation to the Secretary the year which I wish to resign.

Please complete this form and return it to: Membership office, BVA, 7 Mansfield Street, London W1G 9NQ.

Your details

FULL NAME (INC. TITLE): DATE OF BIRTH:

UNIVERSITY: YEAR OF STUDY:

TERM-TIME ADDRESS: HOME ADDRESS:

.....

.....

POSTCODE: POSTCODE:

SEND JOURNALS TO: TERM-TIME ADDRESS HOME ADDRESS HAVE YOU PREVIOUSLY BEEN A BVA MEMBER? YES NO

TEL: MOBILE:

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SIGNED: DATE:

We occasionally provide members' details to companies screened by BVA. If you would not like your details to be given out please tick here

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Please indicate preferred payment method:

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Please pay the British Veterinary Association Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with BVA and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

SIGNED:

DATE:

BVA membership is **free** for all first-year vet students and is **just £3 per month** for those in the second year and above



Supporting you while you study

Free BVA journals

Personal copies of the BVA's world-renowned journals, *Veterinary Record* and *In Practice*, including access to the online versions via the **BVA Publications website**—an invaluable scientific resource.

Free EMS insurance

Going out on EMS each year can be stressful enough, without having to worry about what will happen if you have an accident while on your placement. This is why the **BVA provides free insurance cover to all BVA student members**. So you can be confident you have the right cover when you need it most.

EMS guide

Making the most of EMS—this student guide is a practical resource to help you get the most out of your EMS experience.

Online student centre

A dedicated section on the BVA's website (www.bva.co.uk) designed to be a quick access point for all of your **veterinary-related queries**.

Discounted travel insurance

Through Lloyd & Whyte, the BVA's insurance and financial affinity partner, you can get fantastic discounts on **specialist travel insurance**, which includes cover for working and EMS abroad.

Travel grants

The BVA offers **four annual student travel grants**, which all have a relevance to research and the improvement of animal welfare, especially in the developing world.

Free legal advice

24 hours a day, 365 days a year, a team of specialist legal advisors are there to help you with any problem and to give advice on any subject.

Bupacare

Discounted **private health insurance** through Bupa.

Professional guidance

Once qualified, you will continue to enjoy a wide range of **guidance and support for your professional life** from the BVA. See www.bva.co.uk for more details.

Join online at **www.bva.co.uk** or complete the application form on the back of this advert