

## Editorial Board

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# Community spirit in the veterinary profession

**W**ith the UK in lockdown amidst the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the veterinary profession faces very uncertain and worrying times. We are not alone with the vast majority of businesses and professions being affected. There are of very few upbeat things about this pandemic, but one positive thing that has been discussed is the wonderful community spirit and generosity that has become apparent across the country, and this extends to the veterinary profession. With many practices furloughing multiple staff members at the present time, many of us have more time on our hands than usual. The NHS is under a massive strain at present and many staff members are self-isolating, so more support and personnel are desperately needed. Vets and vet nurses have been recruited into various NHS teams to help. Like the many NHS workers that have returned from retirement selflessly back into their profession, members of the veterinary community have committed to work for the NHS in roles such as respiratory assistants. Ventilators are an essential piece of equipment for the sickest COVID-19 patients and these are also now in short supply. The veterinary profession has been donating ventilators wherever possible. Personal protective equipment is in huge demand at present and again veterinary practices have provided hospitals and healthcare workers with their own supplies.

Day-to-day life is very different from normal. With social distancing measures likely to be necessary for long after the lockdown is gradually lifted, it is likely that changes to how we work will continue to some extent. An example that comes to mind is telemedicine. This is used very little in the equine industry but with a need to avoid social contact currently, its use is now becoming widespread. This will perhaps represent a longer-term change and become much more commonly used. With CPD events being cancelled across the world, online learning is currently of critical importance. Many individuals and organisations have been very generous with time and resources, making webinars and opportunities for online learning widely available for free. This will be of particular value to those staff members that have had to be furloughed, to allow their time to be spent productively. Vetlife is a charity that provides emotional, financial and mental health support to the veterinary community. Worryingly, they have noted an increase in the number of calls in recent weeks. This furthers the on-going challenges that veterinary professionals are facing and the need to support each other as a community. The Webinar Vet provides health and wellbeing webinars and these are currently free to access.

In times where online learning and reading is paramount, a further range of articles and CPD questions are provided by UK-Vet Equine. Acute fractures can be a stressful to attend to in the field, especially for an inexperienced vet. Judith Findley provides an excellent summary of diagnosis and management of traumatic equine fractures. The article has plenty of images, which would make it a good reference to have to hand. Marianna Biggi discusses the basics of equine scintigraphy. This is a nice complement to Judith's article as scintigraphy is a useful diagnostic tool for a fracture not visible on radiographic screening. Liver disease is discussed in the second of a two-part article by Rose Tallon, this time focusing on causes and management. Rose discusses some of the newer literature looking at viral causes of liver disease that were previously unknown. Finally James Crabtree and Jonathon Pycocock discuss examination of mares and fillies for breeding purposes. This detailed and interesting article again would make an excellent reference to have to hand, especially for those that may be inexperienced at reproduction work.

We hope you enjoy this issue of UK-Vet Equine, and that you all stay safe in these uncertain times. **EQ**



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