



## Irish Veterinary Nurses Association: 2018 update

### Lorraine McDonnell, vice chairperson, Irish Veterinary Nurses Association, reviews the year so far

Once again this year, your responses to the Irish Veterinary Nurses Association (IVNA) awards have been great. It is incredible to read so many fantastic nominations for nurses, student nurses and practice managers, which is our new category this year.

We are extremely grateful to our sponsors in each category Royal Canin for Veterinary Nurse of the Year; Allianz for Student Veterinary Nurse of the Year; and Bayer for Practice Manager of the Year.

The process involved in choosing and culminating in the awarding the winner is as follows:

- The committee reads all of the nominations, creates a shortlist for each category and presents it to the respective sponsors, who will then select the overall winner from their chosen category.
- The winners in each category will receive a hotel-break gift voucher and a trophy.
- The nominator of the winner in each category will also receive a voucher for €50.

The awards are presented at the Social Event & Awards Ceremony on the evening of the IVNA Annual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Congress.

#### NEW OFFICER APPOINTED TO THE COMMITTEE

The IVNA committee are delighted to welcome Jane Tyrrell, registered veterinary nurse (RVN), as our new student-liaison officer.

Jane has been working in small animal practice exclusively since qualifying as a veterinary nurse in 2010 and has a keen interest in surgical nursing and wound management. She graduated from St John's Central College and in 2013 she returned to education to complete a postgraduate course in veterinary physiotherapy.

Jane works part-time as a veterinary nurse and as a small and large animal veterinary physiotherapist and is hoping to return to complete her thesis in physiotherapy and education at Nottingham Vet School in the near future. In the past, Jane bred sport horses and competed in show jumping.

Nowadays, she focuses her time at home on her three dogs and breeding the rare breed, Kerry Bog Ponies. Jane is excited to be on the IVNA committee and to take on the role of student liaison officer.

Please contact Jane at [student-liaison@ivna.ie](mailto:student-liaison@ivna.ie).

meetings that usually take place on the weekend, at least every quarter or more often depending on what is being planned or what issues arise.

The IVNA organise all the CPD events, such as roadshows and the annual congress. If anyone is interested or would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact us at [vicechairperson@ivna.ie](mailto:vicechairperson@ivna.ie).

### NOTICE TO NURSES

It is common knowledge among the veterinary industry and in particular, among the veterinary nursing profession, that life as a veterinary nurse has many challenges and many registrants face difficulties within employment. These issues were also highlighted in the National Veterinary Nurse Profession Survey conducted by the Veterinary Council of Ireland in 2016.

It is accepted that the profession has come some way since its inclusion in the Veterinary Practice Act 2005 as a legally recognised and regulated profession with a greater number of veterinary nurses being employed throughout the country and the advancement of veterinary nursing education. However, despite these developments the profession continues to face significant problems. Problems which are resulting in an exorbitant loss of professionals leaving the register each year with over 33% of eligible VNs choosing not to work in the industry as of 2017.

In light of this, a working group was formed and adopted as a subcommittee to the IVNA with its sole purpose to explore and implement initiatives to further develop a sustainable and healthy profession for the future.

The first task assigned to the committee is to launch an up to date professional survey which can be compared to that completed in 2016 to establish trends and highlight ongoing issues. This survey will be promoted to IVNA members and followers via social media, CVE events and through the website, [ivna.ie](http://ivna.ie).

We urge all veterinary nurses to join us in contributing to this latest survey and help influence your profession today.

### IVNA CHARITY OF THE YEAR

The IVNA's charity of the year this year is a Cork-based cat charity called Community Cats Network (CCN).

CCN is a registered charity promoting the welfare of community cats and the benefits of Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). It was formed in April 2012 by a group of cat lovers dedicated to improving the living conditions of feral and stray cats in Ireland. Their primary activity is TNR, which they believe is the only humane solution to control the cat population. They maintain that unless there is an obvious danger to the welfare of the cat, ferals should remain in their home environment.

CCN believe that everyone should take responsibility for stray and feral cats/kittens living in their community. They are not a rescue and cannot take them in, however they can offer support to the public and help them to solve their own problem either by organising a TNR project, facilitating the reunion of lost cats with their owners or helping with adoption of socialised kittens and friendly strays via their 'private rehoming' section (see [communitycatsnetwork.wordpress.com](http://communitycatsnetwork.wordpress.com)).

### COMMITTEE APPEAL

We need your help! Are you passionate about the veterinary nursing profession? Are there things you would like to see happen? Do you have a few hours a week to spare? If you can answer yes to these questions why not seek a nomination to the IVNA committee? The current committee at Congress 2017-2018 are:

- Lisa Joyce (chairperson);
- Lorraine McDonnell (vice chairperson and temporary secretary);
- Eilis Nichol (treasurer);
- Jane Tyrrell (student-liaison officer);
- Ciara O'Kelly (committee); and
- Orlaith Farrelly (committee).

Some committee members have served for many years, and some may decide to step down. The committee needs members in order to keep the level of activity going. If you, or someone you know, has been a full member of the IVNA for at least one year, you are eligible to become a committee member. The IVNA committee is comprised of voluntary members, who also hold full-time jobs.

We act as the voice of our members and aim to promote the veterinary nursing profession within Ireland. We are the only representative organisation for veterinary nurses in the Republic of Ireland. We promote animal health, care and welfare, and foster a need to cultivate the highest standard of veterinary nursing through the continuing advancement of professional development and ongoing education.

### ROLE OF COMMITTEE MEMBER

Being a committee member involves attending scheduled