C-VCG.1 Clinical Governance in Veterinary Practice

Credits: 10 (100 hours)

Provider: Veterinary Postgraduate Unit – School of Veterinary Science

RCVS Content Covered

Click **here** to view the module content as outlined by the RCVS.

Aim of the Module

This module aims to provide students with the skills required to critically evaluate the concept of clinical governance, how its principles apply in veterinary practice, and what value it has in terms of maintaining and improving the quality of veterinary health care.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the module, candidates should be able to:

1. identify and critically appraise information on clinical governance pertinent to veterinary practice;
2. apply the key concepts, principles and processes of clinical governance, and discuss their relevance to veterinary practice;
3. assess strategies for developing and sustaining clinical governance in veterinary practice, including factors that facilitate and impede implementation;
4. critically evaluate the impact of implementing clinical governance approaches in an area of practice;
5. critically reflect on the effectiveness of clinical governance processes to improve the quality of veterinary care.

Module Structure

The module content will be split into 7 study units in the form of narrated lecture materials, directed readings and resources available via the online library, and signposting to industry legislation and regulations. This material will be supported by interactions with peers and tutors in the form of asynchronous discussions. Skills developed in previous core modules will have prepared students to source suitable and relevant literature to support their studies.

Study Unit 1 - Principles of clinical governance:
Key components of clinical governance framework
Quality improvement
Professional requirements for clinical governance
Role of clinical governance in veterinary practice

Study Unit 2 - Evidence-based care, research and clinical effectiveness:
Aiming to ensure the best possible outcomes
Applying evidence-based veterinary medicine
Conducting research to develop the body of evidence available
Changing practice, developing new protocols, guidelines and standards, and implementing those already developed

Study Unit 3 - Clinical audit and other quality improvement tools:
Utilising patient data in order to measure quality of outcomes
Understanding the principles of clinical audit and how it can be used to improve patient care and outcomes through systematic review of care against explicit criteria and the implementation of change
Understanding the use of other quality improvement tools, such as plan-do-study-act cycles and run charts, to monitor the quality of clinical care and to assess the effectiveness of change
Identifying and addressing under-performance

Study Unit 4 - Risk management:
Assessing what can and does go wrong in patient care
Understanding why things go wrong
Learning from and reporting mistakes, near-misses and significant events
Putting systems and processes in place to reduce risk
Human factors in health care
Promoting a blame-free culture that encourages reporting of problems and learning from them

Study Unit 5 - People management:
Promoting accountability
Encouraging team-working and good professional attitudes and behaviours
Developing effective personal communications skills within veterinary teams and between veterinary professionals
Supporting education, training and continuing professional development, including performance appraisal
Good working conditions and monitoring staff health and wellbeing

Study Unit 6 - Patient and client experience:
Using information technology to ensure that patient data are accurate and up-to-date
Ensuring that veterinary services provided suit the needs of clients
Using patient data to develop services tailored to practice needs
Ensuring that client feedback, including complaints, is used to improve services and that clients are involved in the development of services and the monitoring of outcomes
Using effective communication and feedback tools (such as newsletters, web-pages, questionnaires and staff communication protocols) to improve client involvement and experience

Study Unit 7 - Application and implementation of clinical governance in veterinary practice:
How clinical governance has developed in the veterinary profession
Data sharing in the veterinary profession to develop quality improvement activities
How clinical governance can be used to establish and sustain a learning culture
Advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to clinical governance
Skills needed to implement clinical governance

Assessment Strategy

- **2 x 1500-word reflective essays, with an assessed discussion component, covering the module content (70%)**
  One essay will involve completing a process map for a specific aspect of the student's practice and design of a quality improvement project related to this process. The other will involve completing a significant event or near-miss audit and reporting its findings, together with a critical reflection on this process.
- **1 x 1500-word reflective essay (without discussion) covering the module content (30%)**
  A Practice culture essay covering the module content.

Assessments are submitted sequentially with feedback being given between assessments to aid in the development of writing skills.

PLEASE NOTE: It is your responsibility to ensure that you have access to sufficient appropriate cases where you were the primary decision maker to produce adequate material for the module. This may not be possible with some internship positions. You must also be aware of any limitations of your facilities that may make the accumulation of appropriate cases difficult or impossible.