

Veterinary Nurse Rehabilitation Therapist

2012

Course Handbook

(Diploma and Certificate in Veterinary Rehabilitation Therapy)

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Course introduction

Physiotherapy and rehabilitation is an exciting, rapidly growing area of small animal practice that offers tremendous potential for the veterinary nurse. To use physiotherapy and rehabilitation effectively requires high levels of knowledge and practical skills, as well as the ability to solve problems and make correct decisions.

The Veterinary Nurse Rehabilitation Therapist courses have been designed to provide the qualified veterinary nurse with the essential skills to provide effective rehabilitation. Whilst they do not provide formal physiotherapy qualifications, they will allow nurses to extend their role in small animal rehabilitation and work more effectively with other professionals involved in rehabilitation, such as veterinary physiotherapists, veterinary surgeons, rehabilitation practitioners, hydrotherapists etc.

The course comprises 8 modules:

- Level 1
 - Introduction to canine physiotherapy and rehabilitation

- Level 2
 - Canine and feline anatomy
 - Neurological rehabilitation
 - Physiotherapy: assessment and treatment
 - Orthopaedic rehabilitation
 - Exercise and rehabilitation
 - Critical care and pain management

- Level 3
 - Electrotherapy and End-of-course assessment

Course requirements

Level 1 modules are available to qualified and non-qualified veterinary nurses, and provide a basic introduction to canine physiotherapy. There is no assessment on this module.

Level 2 modules are available only to qualified veterinary nurses working in small animal practice. A pre-requisite for starting any Level 2 module is prior attendance on a Level 1 introductory course. Level 2 modules can be studied in any order and timeframe that suits the individual nurse, although it is recommended that Anatomy is studied first when possible. All Level 2 and Level 3 modules must be completed within 5 years. There is a coursework requirement for each Level 2 module attended.

Level 3 modules are available only to nurses who are following the Diploma pathway and have successfully completed all Level 2 modules. There is a coursework requirement for the Level 3 module, which also includes theory and practical examinations.

Overall aim and objectives of the course

Overall aims:

- To equip qualified veterinary nurses with advanced skills and knowledge in small animal rehabilitation.
- To provide accredited rehabilitation qualifications – the first developed specifically for veterinary nurses working with small animals.

Overall learning objectives:

On successful completion of the course, nurses will be able to:

- Extend their role and responsibilities in respect of small animal rehabilitation.
- Examine animals, analyse their findings and identify treatment goals.
- Plan and execute appropriate rehabilitation programmes for their patients to ensure better outcomes.
- Explain the theoretical basis underpinning rehabilitation techniques.
- Ensure all rehabilitation interventions are underpinned by evidence-based guidelines/protocols.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills in rehabilitation as it relates to orthopaedic, neurological and critical care patients.
- Analyse posture and gait to identify specific musculoskeletal problems.
- Develop problem solving and decision making skills in rehabilitation planning.
- Set goals, measure outcomes and evaluate the effectiveness of treatments
- Provide electrotherapy in a safe and effective way.
- Recognise their own levels of competence & know when to refer to specialist practitioners.
- Understand the legal implications of performing rehabilitation on animals.
- Be a more effective and enlightened member of the veterinary rehabilitation team.

Module specification

Outline content

Every module has a specific focus relating to rehabilitation.

Teaching and learning methods

A two-day teaching programme covers the major areas of interest for each subject area. These will be led by Brian Sharp (Veterinary Physiotherapist), and supported by Ben Keeley (Veterinary Surgeon) on the Neurological and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation modules. Each programme will comprise lead lectures, practical sessions, discussion and group work.

A comprehensive manual will be provided for every module. This will include course notes, diagrams, guidelines for practical work, and a reading list.

Online learning facilities will also be available to every student following attendance on the two-day teaching programme. These will be updated regularly, and will include information about coursework, articles/notes of relevance to the module, revision notes, questions and answers, case studies, video clips of techniques/cases etc.

Study hours

It is recommended that students allocate approximately 5 hours study per week for independent learning and to complete allocated coursework. It remains the student's responsibility to plan their own study schedule.

Diploma and Certificate course pathways

The Veterinary Nurse Rehabilitation Therapist course offers 2 pathways of study:

- **Diploma in Veterinary Rehabilitation Therapy (Dip VNRT)**
 - Nurses following this pathway need to complete Level 1, Level 2 (all six modules) and Level 3.
 - Assessment (and final grading) will be based on 7 pieces of coursework, a written and a practical examination.
 - Final grading may be Fail, Pass, Merit or Distinction (see pages 8-10).

- **Certificate in Veterinary Rehabilitation Therapy (Cert VNRT)**
 - Nurses following this pathway need to complete Level 1 and Level 2 (four modules selected by the nurse, one of which must be Anatomy).
 - Assessment will be based on 4 pieces of coursework.
 - Final grading may be Fail or Pass (see pages 11-12).
 - It is possible for nurses to progress to Diploma level at a later date if they so wish, upon attendance on the remaining Level 2 and Level 3 modules and completion of the remaining assessed work.

All nurses passing either the Diploma or Certificate course will be permitted to use the title:

Veterinary Nurse Rehabilitation Therapist

Assessment - Diploma

Students attending the course for interest only have no requirement to complete the assessment process.

Students who are attending the course in order to achieve the qualification of Veterinary Nurse Rehabilitation Therapist at **Diploma** level are assessed by examination and coursework. The assessment is designed to assess various aspects of knowledge and comprehension, and comprises the following:

Coursework 40% of the total marks

Students are required to submit coursework in order to complete every Level 2 and Level 3 module (7 pieces of coursework in total). The format of each piece of coursework will be variable, and may comprise a case study, planning a rehabilitation protocol, essay etc.

Each piece of coursework will be marked out of 100, and this is the mark the student will receive when the coursework is returned. However, in order to achieve an overall mark of 40% for all the coursework combined, each will be proportionately adjusted. The six Level 2 modules will therefore achieve a maximum of 5% each, and the Level 3 module will achieve a maximum of 10%, giving a total of 40% overall.

The pass mark for each piece of coursework is 50 out of 100. Students who fail to achieve the pass mark will be able to resubmit the work until a pass mark is achieved. 10% will be deducted from the mark for the second submission, 20% deducted for the third submission and so on. It is therefore in the student's interest to achieve a pass mark at the first attempt.

There will be no time limit for submission (and successful completion) of the coursework, but **all Level 2 coursework must be successfully completed before the student can sit the Level 3 module and final examinations.**

Final examinations

- **Theory examination (2 hours)** 30% of the total marks
Students must answer a combination of long answers, short answers and multiple choice questions. Students are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key concepts. All topics covered within the Level 2 learning material may be included.
- **Practical skills assessment (15 minutes)** 30% of the total marks
Students must show knowledge and skill when performing a series of short practical demonstrations for the assessor.

Students who fail either the theory or practical examinations will be able to resit them at the next available opportunity. **Both** theory and practical components must be retaken even if only one component failed.

Weighting of assessed work

Assessed work	Total mark
Level 2 Coursework: Canine and feline anatomy	5%
Neurological rehabilitation	5%
Physiotherapy	5%
Orthopaedic rehabilitation	5%
Exercise and Rehabilitation	5%
Critical Care and Pain Management	5%
Level 3 Coursework: Electrotherapy	10%
Theory examination	30%
Practical skills assessment	30%
Total	100%

Requirements for a pass

An overall mark of 50% or more is required to pass the Diploma and gain the VNRT qualification. This is an aggregate of the marks from each part of the assessment according to the weighting shown in the table.

Students who achieve substantially higher marks will receive a higher grading on their certificate:

- 49% or less FAIL
- 50 – 65% PASS
- 66 – 75% MERIT
- 76% or more DISTINCTION

Assessment - Certificate

Students attending the course for interest only have no requirement to complete the assessment process.

Students who are attending the course in order to achieve the qualification of Veterinary Nurse Rehabilitation Therapist at **Certificate** level are assessed by coursework only. The assessment is designed to assess various aspects of knowledge and comprehension, and comprises the following:

Coursework 100% of the total marks

Students are required to submit coursework in order to complete every Level 2 module they attend (4 pieces of coursework in total - Anatomy is mandatory). The format of each piece of coursework will be variable, and may comprise a case study, planning a rehabilitation protocol, essay etc.

Each piece of coursework will be marked out of 100, and this is the mark the student will receive when the coursework is returned. However, in order to achieve an overall mark of 100% for all the coursework combined, each will be proportionately adjusted. The four Level 2 modules will therefore achieve a maximum of 25% each, giving a total of 100% overall.

The pass mark for each piece of coursework is 50 out of 100. Students who fail to achieve the pass mark will be able to resubmit the work until a pass mark is achieved. 10% will be deducted from the mark for the second submission, 20% deducted for the third submission and so on. It is therefore in the student's interest to achieve a pass mark at the first attempt.

There will be no time limit for submission (and successful completion) of the coursework, but **all Level 2 coursework must be successfully completed before a final grade can be awarded.**

Weighting of assessed work

Assessed work	Total mark
Level 2 Coursework Module 1 (Anatomy)	25%
Module 2 (Students own selection)	25%
Module 3 (Students own selection)	25%
Module 4 (Students own selection)	25%
Total	100%

Requirements for a pass

An overall mark of 50% or more is required to pass the Certificate and gain the VNRT qualification. This is an aggregate of the marks from each part of the assessment according to the weighting shown in the table.

- 49% or less FAIL
- 50 or more PASS

Coursework information

Layout

- Have a title page stating the
 - Title of assignment
 - Module (e.g. Level 2 Neurology)
 - Name and address of student (for return of the work)
 - Total word count (if required)
- Your work must be typed using font **Arial 11** and **double spaced**
- Include page numbers and your name on every page
- Staple through the top left hand corner to secure the pages.

Word count

- Please observe the word count if it is specified for any piece of work. A margin of 10% (+/-) only is allowed.

Copying/Plagiarism

- Plagiarism is a particular type of academic dishonesty - passing off someone else's work as your own. If you wish to quote or use ideas/diagrams etc from another author, you must acknowledge the source by giving a proper reference at the end of your work.

Confidentiality

- It is important that neither clients nor workplace locations can be identified in your coursework.

References

- Please use the following style of referencing:
- **In the text**, references should be cited as follows: Smith (1995) described.../...recorded earlier (Brown and Jones 1994, Smith and others 1997). Lists of references should be given in date order in the text, but alphabetically in the reference list.
- **In the reference list**, all authors' names and initials should be given followed by the date, title of the paper, full title of the journal, volume number and full page range, eg: Smith AB, Jones CD and Brown EF (1995) How to list your references. *Veterinary Record* **45**, 71-76.
- **Book references** should include the chapter title if appropriate, the full title of the book, the edition, the editors, the town of publication, publisher and page numbers of material referred to, eg: Smith AB, Jones CD and Brown EF. (1993) How to list your references. In *Getting It Right*. 3rd edn. Eds S. Adams, J. Alexander. London, Society of Reference Publishers. pp 23-37.
- **Proceedings** should include the title of the paper given at the meeting, proceedings title, the editors (if applicable), town, country, month date a to b, year, and page numbers (if applicable), eg: Miller W. (1976) A state-transition model of epidemic foot-and-mouth disease. *Proceedings of an International Symposium: New Techniques in Veterinary Epidemiology and Economics*. Reading, UK, July 12 to 15, 1976. p 56.
- **Websites** should include the title of the page, website address and date accessed, eg: DEFRA (2001) Explanation of Foot and Mouth Restrictions. www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/fmd/disease/restrictions/explanation.asp. Accessed August 24, 2001.
- **Personal communications** should be cited within the text and follow the form 'AB Smith, personal communication'.

Submission of coursework

- Upon completion, all coursework must be sent to the course leader (Brian Sharp). Two copies of each piece of coursework must be forwarded:
 1. Paper copy – to be sent to:
 - Brian Sharp (VNRT Course)
 - Peagham Lodge
 - Peagham Barton
 - St Giles in the Wood
 - Torrington
 - Devon
 - EX38 7HZ
 2. Electronic copy – to be sent to: caninephysio@yahoo.co.uk
- Coursework will be returned with the mark and relevant comments.

Module dates

	Level 1			Level 2				Level 3
		Anatomy	Neuro	Physio	Ortho	Exercise	Critical	
2012								
Jan		20th/21st						
Feb								3rd/4th
Mar	16th/17th							
Apr						20th/21st		
May			18th/19th					
Jun							22nd/23rd	
Jul	13th/14th							
Aug								
Sep				21st/22nd				
Oct								
Nov	2nd/3rd							23rd/24th
Dec					14th/15th			
2013								
Jan		25th/26th						
Feb								8th/9th
Mar	15th/16th							
Apr						19th/20th		
May			17th/18th					
Jun							21st/22nd	
Jul	12th/13th							
Aug								
Sep				20th/21st				
Oct								
Nov	1st/2nd							22nd/23rd
Dec					13th/14th			
2014								
Jan		24th/25th						
Feb								7th/8th
Mar	14th/15th							
Apr						25th/26th		
May			16th/17th					
Jun							20th/21st	
Jul	18th/19th							
Aug								
Sep				19th/20th				
Oct								
Nov	7th/8th							28th/29th
Dec					12th/13th			

Online facilities

There will be online facilities available for students to aid learning and revision, and these will be appropriate to each module. Access to the online facility for each module will only be available to students who have attended the teaching component of that module, but will continue to be available during the duration of the course. Sites will contain items of interest such as:

- Information about coursework
- Articles, notes of interest
- Quizzes, revision questions and answers
- Video clips of techniques, cases
- Information about other relevant courses, books that may be of interest

Sites will be continually updated with new and additional information, and students should regularly log on to the sites to access this updated information. Details regarding access to these sites will be sent to each student by CPD Solutions, and any queries regarding access to the sites should be directed to them. Queries regarding content of the sites should be directed to the course leader (Brian Sharp).

Placements and revision sessions

There is no formal requirement for students to participate in revision sessions or placements, but some may wish to further their learning by participating in these events.

Revision sessions

As an aid to learning, students may wish to meet outside of the formal teaching sessions, to practise techniques, revise anatomy or even just to discuss cases etc. This is to be recommended, but it remains the responsibility of the students to arrange such sessions, which do not form part of the course proper. Whereas it would be anticipated such sessions would just involve students meeting informally, if more formal sessions were required (with the attendance of the course leader to facilitate the session), there may need to be a small charge to cover tutor expenses, accommodation etc.

Several one-day practical revision sessions will be organised by the course leader each year to provide students with the opportunity to practise techniques learnt on the course and discuss the practical examination. It is recommended that all students completing the Diploma attend at least one of these sessions, but Certificate students are also welcome to attend for information. In the past these sessions have been free but this cannot always be guaranteed. However, the course leader will always endeavour to keep costs as low as possible.

Placements

Observation placements with the course leader can be arranged, and may last from half a day to two days. This will provide an opportunity to observe veterinary physiotherapy, and to discuss cases. Although the course leader will attempt to book sufficient cases for the placement period it must be appreciated there can be no guarantee as to the type or number of cases available to see. As a result, there will be no charge for this placement, although any accommodation and travel requirements will need to be organised by the individual student. Only one student will be able to attend at any one time, and bookings must be made via the course leader.

Hydrotherapy placements can also be organised at a pool local to the course leader in Uxbridge, Middlesex. The level of involvement of the student in the hydrotherapy process remains the decision

of the individual student, but to maximise the opportunity, it would generally be expected that the student will get in the water with the hydrotherapist or physiotherapist and participate fully in the hydrotherapy process for the attending dogs. There may be a small charge made for this placement, which must be organised via the course leader, although the student can always make their own arrangements at a pool local to them.