

Challenge Session



How can vets maximise their contribution to public health?

The Policy Perspective

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Vets in Gov't advise or make policy



DEFRA seeks to secure a healthy environment, now and in the future

Specifically Defra aims to:

- Address environmental risks (including animal disease threats)
- Secure a thriving farming sector
- Secure a sustainable and health food supply
- Secure a sustainable low-carbon and resource efficient economy



Animal Health & Welfare Strategy



- **Animal health policy guided by the AHWS 'reasons for intervention':**

- To protect public health
- To protect and promote animal welfare
- To protect the interests of the wider economy, environment and society
- To support international trade



Having the right evidence



- Defra has a strong commitment to **evidence based policy**
- Requires constructive **interaction with experts**
 - Help to ask the right question
 - Commission the right surveillance or research
 - Provide the evidence needed to design and implement effective policies

Vets as 'Translators'



- The government employ vets to work as '**intelligent customers**' or '**translators**'
 - To deliver appropriate, fit for purpose evidence
 - Ensure this evidence is correctly understood and used effectively
- **Our objective:** Recruit the right people into our posts: veterinary expert
 - Understands disease
 - Conducts risk assessment
 - Communicates this to non-specialists (inc via negotiations)

Training and experience



- A **potential employee** must have:
 - Appropriate undergraduate training
 - Non-technical competencies
 - Relevant post graduate experience
- The **added value** offered by a master's, PhD or ECVPH diploma could tip the balance in their favour
 - e.g. 61 applicants for 4 VA posts (Sep 09)

GVS skills & expertise framework



Head of Profession CVO

- reports to Cabinet Office:
- **Responsible for the profession in government**
 - 3 key areas
- **Professional skills in government**
- **Vet skills and expertise framework**
 - Links to recognised learning for vets (eg RCVS certs)
 - Concept of 'Veterinary public sector skills & expertise'
- **Advisory role on resources**
 - workforce planning incl. L&D procurement

DPM CertAVP Workshop 02 Feb 09

Support for ECVPH



- It is **in Defra's interest** to support the college
 - Provides a **pool of experts** with:
 - » A broad understanding of VPH
 - » Risk management skills
 - Participation in **supervising residents**
 - Access to a network of experts
 - Wider understanding of policy in the scientific community
 - Additional resources for small projects
- ?Potential employees?

Opportunities for ECVPH (1)



- Training and proficiency in key, non-technical competencies could give a **competitive advantage**
 - Leadership
 - Team working/ Collaboration
 - Particularly with non-scientists
 - Communication
 - Particularly with non-scientists
 - Decision making
 - Making things happen



Opportunities for ECVPH (2)



- **Cross- recognition** between ECVPH and RCVS
- **Extending the** 'Mutual recognition of Professional qualifications'
- **Better communication** of the standard set and how this is quality assured – Diploma should be widely recognised to reflect competence
- **?Influence** internationally?

DipECVPH: Strengths and Weaknesses



	MSc	PhD	DipECVPH
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear/specific skill set • Feasible to obtain on the job • QA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific credibility • Aids career prospects • QA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad and deep <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Residency placements in government vet services and industry • Risk assessment • Food science
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too narrow • Difficult to obtain on the job • Difficult to obtain mid career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited recognition • Difficult to obtain on the job • Difficult to obtain mid career

Gov't.: Self reported expertise



- International Animal Health – including expertise in import and export controls and international disease surveillance
- Epidemiology – including expertise in national surveillance design, disease control and risk.
- Welfare, Ethics and Law – including expertise in welfare in disease control, field investigations and animals in research
- Public Health and Food Hygiene – including expertise in animal by-products, zoonoses, food microbiology and controls of food-borne infections
- Infectious Diseases; diagnostics and field control – including veterinary clinical and science skills in immunology, virology and bacteriology etc.
- Veterinary Pathology – including expertise in forensics

Figure 1. Government Vet Expertise - Top 10 Profile 2006*

