



## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Veterinary/Veterinary Nursing Student,

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. I am the Principal Researcher, and you can contact me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. If you decide to take part in this study, you can save a copy of this Participant Information Sheet and the signed consent form for future reference.

Rachel Lumbis

PhD student and Principal Researcher

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### Study title

An exploration of veterinary and veterinary nursing students' knowledge and attitudes of small animal nutrition.

### What is the purpose of the study?

This research is being conducted as part of the principal researcher's PhD in Veterinary Companion Animal Sciences. This study aims to collect information about the nutrition knowledge and competence of foundation phase veterinary and veterinary nursing students and establish the relevance and importance they place on nutrition-related education, patient care and owner advice. It will also categorise respondents' socio-economic status and compare any differences in survey responses.

### Why have I been invited to participate?

The following students studying in the UK and Ireland have been invited to participate in this study:

- First-year veterinary students.
- First-year higher education (undergraduate) veterinary nursing students studying a programme accredited by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) or Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI).
- First-year further education veterinary nursing students studying a programme accredited by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) or Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI).

### Do I have to take part?

No, participation is entirely voluntary, and you should only take part if you want to. Choosing not to participate will have no bearing on your academic progression, study grades or degree classification.

### **What will happen to me if I take part?**

You will be asked to provide clear consent to participate in the study and to process your personal data for the intended purpose by ticking a box (online) prior to completing the questionnaire.

The study will involve the completion of an initial online questionnaire which is estimated to take up to 20 minutes to complete. You will then be invited to participate in a follow-up focus group discussion which will take place online using Zoom video communications and enable a more in-depth exploration of themes identified in the online survey. The focus group will be recorded to allow for analysis but you can choose whether to have your camera switched on or off. If you consent to participate in the follow-up focus group discussion, it is estimated to last up to one hour and will be arranged at a time chosen by you.

Study participants will be asked to provide the postcode of their permanent residence which will be used for descriptive purposes, to define socio-economic status. All responses are confidential. If you are willing to be included in the focus group, you will be asked to include your name and contact email at the end of the questionnaire, but this is entirely optional. Once the focus group is finished and the data has been analysed, personal identifiable data will be destroyed. No other sensitive personal information will be collected as part of this study.

### **What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

There is no anticipated risk, or psychological harm to, participants. However, this study will require participants to give up the time needed to complete an online questionnaire and, if agreeable, to contribute to a follow-up focus group discussion. The total participant time burden is estimated to be no more than 80 minutes (questionnaire and focus group) or 20 minutes (questionnaire only). As a volunteer, you will enter the research freely and willingly and know and understand what you are agreeing to when you take part. Your consent to participate can be withdrawn at any time and without any bearing on your academic progression.

### **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

By studying the views, perceptions and knowledge of veterinary students in relation to small animal nutrition, this study will enable us to establish the relevance and importance that you and your peers place on nutrition-related education, patient care and owner advice. This information will enable deeper understanding of the approaches required for effective nutrition-related education; provide evidence to help improve the effectiveness of both veterinary nutritional practice and veterinary undergraduate education and build capacity in veterinary nutrition. The data will also contribute towards the principal researcher's doctoral degree aimed at exploring the knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and practice of small animal veterinary nutrition.

### **Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

All research data collected as part of this project is owned by the University of Glasgow and we will act as the 'Data Controller' of your personal data that is processed in relation to your participation in this study. The principal researcher will take ultimate responsibility for the collection, management, and sharing of the research data. Further information regarding how The University of Glasgow will process your data can be found in the attached Privacy Notice.

All responses that you provide to the online questionnaire and information which is collected during focus group discussions will be kept strictly confidential. Please note that assurances on confidentiality will be strictly adhered to. No one outside of the research team or appropriate

governance staff will be able to find out your name, or any other information which could identify you and you will not be identified in any associated publications or reports. If you consent to participate in a focus group discussion, your name and contact details will be segregated from the rest of your survey responses and stored in a password-protected file. We will not pass this information to a third party without your express permission.

### **What will happen to my data?**

- We may be collecting and storing identifiable information from you in order to undertake this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.
- Participants will give their clear consent to process their personal data for the intended purpose. You will have the right to withdraw your consent and your participation in the study at any time, without having to give a reason, by contacting the principal researcher, Rachel Lumbis ([r.lumbis.1@research.gla.ac.uk](mailto:r.lumbis.1@research.gla.ac.uk))
- Your rights to access, change or move the information we store may be limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible. You can find out more about how we use your information from the principal researcher, Rachel Lumbis ([r.lumbis.1@research.gla.ac.uk](mailto:r.lumbis.1@research.gla.ac.uk))
- All study data will be held in accordance with The General Data Protection Regulation (2018).
- Personal information will be collected, stored and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018).
- Data will be stored, predominantly, on a University of Glasgow file server using OneDrive for Business which is subject to two-factor authentication (2FA) or on a MyGlasgow laptop which is encrypted in accordance with [university policy](#). Access to the data will be controlled for the duration of the project and restricted to the Principal Researcher and her PhD supervisors.
- Survey data will be collected using Qualtrics and processed using SPSS Statistics, Microsoft Word and Excel, all of which are approved for this use by the University and are GDPR compliant. Focus group recordings will be captured and stored using Zoom video communications and transcribed in Word format or as plain text data at the earliest opportunity. Focus group recordings will be deleted as soon as the data has been transcribed.
- During processing, postcodes, and any other personal data, will be segregated from the rest and stored in a password protected file, on a University of Glasgow file server which is subject to two-factor authentication (2FA). Once a measure of socioeconomic status has been determined, the responses to this question and the associated data file will be securely and permanently deleted.
- The data will inform one or more research publications, and a PhD thesis, and will therefore be considered to have long-term value. The data will be stored in archiving facilities in line with the University of Glasgow retention policy of up to 10 years following PhD completion. After this period, further retention may be agreed, or your data will be securely destroyed in accordance with the relevant standard procedures.
- Your identifiable information might be shared with people who check that the study is done properly and, if you agree, in coded form with other organisations or universities to carry out research to improve scientific understanding. Your data will form part of the study result that will be published in expert journals, presentations, a PhD thesis and on the internet for other researchers to use. You will not be identifiable in any reporting or analysis of the study results.

**What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The study will be submitted for publication in veterinary educational literature and, where possible, data will be published in an Open Access Journal. You will be offered the opportunity to review the findings on completion of the study. The findings will also contribute to the PhD thesis of the principal researcher, Rachel Lumbis.

**Who is organising and funding the research?**

This research is being funded by the University of Glasgow, Small Animal Hospital Fund (The Ronald Miller Foundation).

**Who has reviewed the study?**

This project has been reviewed by the College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences Ethics Committee.

Thank you for reading this Participant Information Sheet. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Rachel Lumbis

PhD student and Principal Researcher

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