

## partners in veterinary education

may 2005 | issue 3



Associate Professor Bob Radcliffe

In November David Hodgson, Grahame Feletti and I visited Partner District Veterinarians, Veterinary Officers and Practitioners on the Far North Coast and Northern Tablelands of NSW. We were particularly interested to learn about their experiences of our first full year of student interns participating in the new extramural studies program and to receive their advice if any for change. In the course of our visit we met two students participating in placements. We are amazed by the professional hospitality offered to our students and immensely grateful for the opportunities created and the time given to them. Partners spoke with enthusiasm about their role as veterinary educators of the interns and the feeling is reciprocated by the interns. I can assure you all that your input is contributing to an excellent outcome and the first graduates of the new curriculum joined the profession this year with a great deal of confidence.

I was delighted to learn that of the ten practices visited one has employed a graduate who spent a rotation there and another has employed a graduate hosted by a neighbouring practice. Anecdotally there is an increasing interest in working in a rural practice and this is a reward in itself.

The provision of elective rotations has profited many interns by permitting them to experience career interests prior to graduation and for one it confirmed her desire to pursue an equine practice position and for another to look at other fields. The new program has also resulted in enhanced wildlife placements with the four weeks and structured program achieving a much greater involvement in the work.

The partners with whom we spoke during our visit were pleased with the program. Students and faculty are delighted with the experiences and outcomes. Thank you all and I look forward to seeing many of you at the Partner Practitioners Conference on July 15/16 and during visits to other parts of the state later this year.

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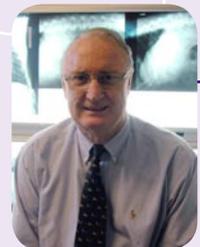
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**PRO VET**

# Partners in Veterinary Education Conference 2005

Friday 15 and Saturday 16 July  
 Veterinary Science Conference Centre  
 Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Sydney

*Guest speaker: Ultrasound specialist Professor Graeme Allen (top) and 2005 J D Stewart Address, 6pm, Friday 15 July presented by Professor Richard Whittington, Chair Farm Animal Health (full program enclosed)*



To register, complete the enclosed form and return to Melanie Robson, fax 9351 3056

## Student feedback for 2004

During 2004, there were 115 student interns completing four intramural rotations and at least six extramural rotations each. This involved the coordination of over 600 extramural placements both within Australia and overseas. The feedback collected from our interns was overwhelmingly positive and a tribute to the support and commitment of our educational partners.

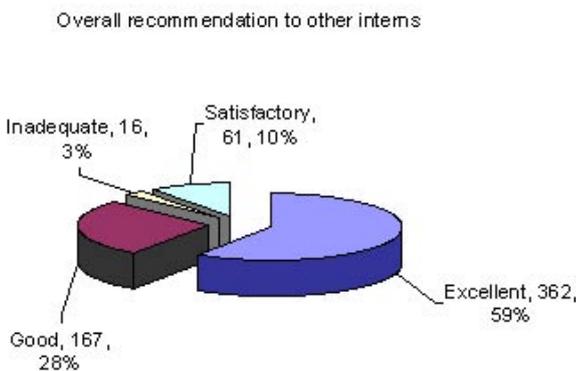
### Achievement of learning outcomes

For each rotation, interns are asked to determine specific learning outcomes related to three main domains of the Graduate Attributes and report on whether they were able to achieve these outcomes. Animal management attributes include animal handling and husbandry matters; clinical management attributes include typical veterinary technical skills and knowledge; and professional practice attributes include communication, team work and practice management.

Rotation Type	Achievement of Learning Outcomes	Animal Management	Clinical Management	Professional Practice
Small Animal Practice (n=262)	Yes	98% (256)	93% (243)	97% (254)
	No	2% (8)	7% (19)	3% (8)
Rural Public Practice (n=113)	Yes	93% (105)	86% (97)	96% (108)
	No	7% (8)	14% (16)	4% (5)
Rural Mixed Practice (n=150)	Yes	99% (149)	99% (148)	97% (146)
	No	1% (1)	1% (2)	3% (4)
Wildlife Centres (n=33)	Yes	94% (31)	85% (28)	97% (32)
	No	6% (2)	15% (5)	3% (3)
Equine Centres (n=58)	Yes	95% (55)	95% (55)	98% (57)
	No	5% (3)	5% (3)	2% (1)
Specialist Centres (n=40)	Yes	87% (35)	87% (35)	95% (38)
	No	13% (5)	13% (5)	5% (2)
Industry (n=7)	Yes	100% (7)	86% (6)	100% (7)
	No		14% (1)	

### Learning opportunities during rotations

Interns are required to rate the learning opportunities provided by the placement from inadequate to satisfactory, to good and excellent as well as provide an overall recommendation to other interns.



PLACEMENT TYPE	RATING	LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES				
		Discuss Cases	Examine Animals	Practical Experience	Interact with Clients	Effective Supervision
Small Animal Centres (n=262)	Excellent	70% (170)	67% (161)	58% (158)	41% (99)	55% (133)
	Good	19% (46)	22% (54)	23% (56)	33% (81)	29% (71)
	Satisfactory	9% (21)	10% (25)	17% (42)	21% (57)	12% (29)
	Inadequate	2% (5)	1% (5)	2% (8)	5% (11)	4% (9)
Rural Public Practice (n=113)	Excellent	58% (62)	30% (32)	30% (32)	39% (42)	51% (56)
	Good	33% (36)	30% (33)	37% (40)	24% (28)	32% (35)
	Satisfactory	7% (8)	28% (28)	24% (23)	21% (23)	16% (17)
	Inadequate	2% (2)	14% (15)	9% (10)	16% (17)	1% (1)
Rural Mixed Practice (n=150)	Excellent	74% (108)	70% (102)	68% (98)	57% (82)	59% (88)
	Good	20% (29)	26% (37)	28% (41)	35% (51)	28% (41)
	Satisfactory	6% (8)	4% (6)	4% (6)	7% (10)	7% (10)
	Inadequate				1% (2)	1% (1)
Wildlife Centres (n=33)	Excellent	77% (21)	45% (12)	41% (11)	33% (9)	70% (19)
	Good	19% (5)	33% (9)	41% (11)	22% (6)	22% (6)
	Satisfactory	4% (1)	22% (6)	11% (3)	30% (8)	4% (1)
	Inadequate			7% (2)	15% (4)	4% (1)
Equine Centres (n=58)	Excellent	69% (38)	56% (31)	49% (27)	47% (26)	51% (28)
	Good	22% (12)	35% (19)	27% (15)	25% (14)	29% (16)
	Satisfactory	9% (5)	7% (4)	22% (12)	24% (13)	18 (10)
	Inadequate		2% (1)	2% (1)	4% (2)	2% (1)

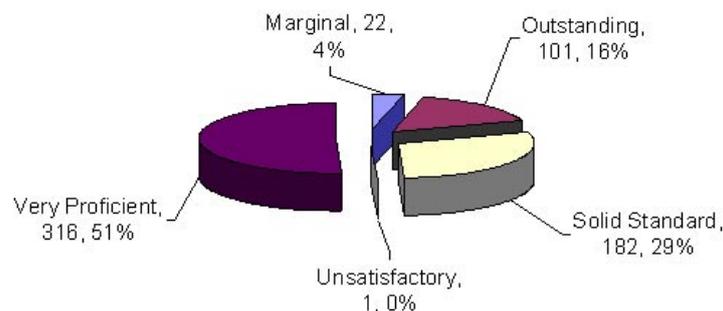
## Supervisor feedback for 2004

Supervisors report on eight major criteria in order to assess interns as well as providing an indication of overall performance and progress towards graduation. Interns should be congratulated on their performance during 2004 with two thirds of supervisor reports providing an overall rating of performance as either very proficient or excellent.

Criterion	Outstanding	Very proficient	Solid standard	Marginal	Unsatisfactory	Not observed
Basic knowledge and understanding	8% (52)	52% (332)	37% (243)	3% (19)	0% (1)	0% (2)
History taking and data gathering	10% (60)	44% (280)	40% (254)	3% (19)	0% (0)	3% (18)
Communication and observation skills	22% (141)	51% (339)	21% (137)	4% (24)	1% (4)	1% (5)
Procedural skills	14% (88)	44% (284)	37% (241)	4% (23)	0% (2)	1% (5)
Clinical problem solving and case assessment	8% (52)	48% (303)	38% (238)	4% (25)	0% (1)	2% (13)
Case reports and patient management plans	11% (64)	51% (309)	31% (185)	3% (18)	0% (1)	4% (23)
Professional attitudes and interest in learning	35% (218)	46% (295)	15% (92)	3% (20)	1% (4)	0% (1)
Reliability, work ethic and humanistic values	35% (222)	45% (280)	17% (106)	2% (14)	1% (4)	0% (2)
<b>Overall evaluation</b>	<b>16% (102)</b>	<b>50% (316)</b>	<b>29% (182)</b>	<b>4% (22)</b>	<b>0% (1)</b>	<b>1% (5)</b>

As the year progressed, the number of students judged as definitely likely to attain satisfactory competency by graduation increased from 54% in the first quarter to 71% in the last quarter. Further, those of definite concern fell from 6% in the first quarter to 2% in the final quarter.

Overall evaluation and progress



## Important feedback for students to note

Supervisors provided feedback of great value to the Faculty and current and future interns regarding how to best prepare for year five. Consistent with surveys of employers regarding graduates, the qualities vital for interns include:

- Initiative and an interest in learning
- Confidence in oral and written communication
- Reliability and enthusiasm
- Understanding of the problem, the priorities and implications with respect to clinical competency

## Changes for 2005 and beyond

During 2004 we received a number of comments from student interns and practitioners regarding the program. Overall the program of rotations was considered very successful and an excellent method for preparing our students for practice but there were some suggestions for improvement.

- The rotations are a bit rushed**  
Extramural rotations now end on the Wednesday of the fourth week to ensure adequate time to prepare for and travel to the next placement.
- There is too much assessment**  
There is now only one written assessment task for each rotation (2,000-2,500 words) plus a communication task. The number of administrative forms required for each rotation has also been reduced.
- Case logs are too brief to enable demonstration of understanding**  
The Case Log now consists of only 3 or 4 cases depending upon the rotation. Each case must be dealt with in more detail to demonstrate that the intern understands how the patient was managed.
- We would like to investigate rotations over the Christmas break**  
Students are now allocated rotation groups in year 3 so that the Christmas break can be used to investigate options for placement preferences.
- How am I going (intern and practitioner)?**  
We have developed an automated system to provide feedback in a number of areas for interns and Partners each quarter or every 3 student placements.
- What about facilitating a better rural experience?**  
Small Animal Practice core rotations are being completed at some rural mixed practice sites.  
For 2006, many rotation schedules have the Rural Public Practice and Rural Mixed Practice core rotations together so the student can remain in one area.
- What about the cost of year five?**  
The Intern Feedback form has been modified so more information can be collected. From 2004, first year students are instructed on the possible costs of year five rotations in a tutorial on creating budgets and managing personal finances.



## OHS Update

### Students taking x rays

Supervisors must gain an exemption in NSW to enable students to take x-rays. The required forms have been placed on the Partners website and there is no cost associated with this change to a licence.

### Radiation monitoring

At present there is no requirement for students to wear radiation monitoring devices however the Faculty has been pursuing the most cost effective and practical way to provide this service to our interns and there will be a system in place for 2006.

### OHS Induction

An induction for interns when they first arrive at your practice should include an overview of potential OHS hazards, how OHS hazards and incidents should be reported and OHS protocols and manuals.

## year 5 team honoured

The Year Five Team consisting of (below from left) John Baguley, Federico Costa, David Hodgson, Gerard Marcus, Bob Ratcliffe, Melanie Robson, Angelika Trube and (not pictured) Clare Fitzpatrick and Grahame Feletti, was honoured through the inaugural Vice Chancellor's Award for Support of the Student Experience. The Award was based upon four criteria: enhancing the quality of the student experience; innovative and practical; user participation; and positive feedback. The Team was also represented at the Business and Higher Education Roundtable Awards.



### Something to say?

We are interested in your feedback and contributions. Please contact John Baguley with your ideas or suggestions for future editions.

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