



## FVE position on Continuous Professional Development

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The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) along with its Sections each one of which represent a vital sector of the veterinary profession – the Union of European Veterinary Practitioners (UEVP), the European Association of State Veterinary Officers (EASVO), the Union of European Veterinary Hygienists (UEVH) and the European Veterinarians in Education, Research and Industry (EVERI) – have recognized that there might be a need for a common European recommendation of the content and outcome of CPD systems to enable mutual recognition<sup>1</sup>.

FVE together with its sister organisations, the European Association of Establishments of Veterinary Education (EAEVE) and the European Board of Veterinary Specialization (EBVS), coordinate opinions and activities through the European Coordinating Committee on Veterinary Training (ECCVT). ECCVT advises that continuing education is necessary to ensure that all veterinarians remain up-to-date in relation to their areas(s) and level of activity<sup>2</sup>.

### IN VIEW OF THOSE OPINIONS AND WHEREAS:

- ❖ Continuous Professional Development (CPD) or Life-Long Learning (LLL) can be defined as the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills, including the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout the veterinarian's working life;
- ❖ The veterinary profession has a 'social contract' to deliver high level services in animal health, animal welfare as well as public health and welfare to the society<sup>2</sup>;
- ❖ Recognizing that CPD refers to blended learning acquired through activities such as lectures, professional courses, seminars, symposia, workshops, conferences/congresses, practical training and distance learning;
- ❖ Other forms of individual educational activities such as officially recognized forms of specialization (EBVS or national training schemes), Master's study, PhD study shall also be regarded as CPD training;
- ❖ Promoting high-quality, science-based veterinary education at both pre- and postgraduate level - so that veterinarians can ensure the quality in veterinary

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services and have maximum positive impact on animal and human health is a priority of FVE <sup>1,3</sup>;

- ❖ Competence and professionalism is one of the core values of the Veterinary Code of Conduct, where veterinarians shall maintain and enhance their knowledge and skills relating to the state of veterinary science<sup>4</sup>;
- ❖ European Union Law calls on each Member State, continuing education and training shall ensure that persons who have completed their studies are able to keep abreast of professional developments to the extent necessary to maintain safe and effective practice<sup>5</sup>;
- ❖ Recognizing that there is a lot of diversity in Europe, with different CPD systems applying in different countries and with no clear distinction which is the best<sup>6</sup>;
- ❖ OIE recommends that Veterinary Authorities should ensure that there are effective mechanisms for delivery, ready access to and evaluation of continuing education including e-learning materials for the veterinary profession, based on close cooperation among Veterinary Education Establishments, Veterinary Authorities, Veterinary Statutory Bodies and Veterinary Associations<sup>7</sup>;
- ❖ Acknowledging that quality assurance and accreditation based on duration of post-graduate training is at the moment the most widely adopted system in most countries;
- ❖ Recognizing the lack of a holistic and harmonized approach in quality assurance of CPD in Europe;
- ❖ Addressing the need for standardization of post-graduate training to facilitate harmonization and mutual recognition;
- ❖ Recognizing that the accreditation scheme proposed by the Veterinary Continuous Education in Europe (VETCEE)<sup>8</sup> can help veterinarians to acquire recognition of their competences and skills Europe wide and that way facilitate their mobility and further development;

#### FVE RECOMMENDS:

- An integrated, comprehensive, non-descriptive approach aiming at
  - making available a broad range of CPD covering all different disciplines of veterinary medicine;
  - encouraging and supporting veterinarians to take CPD activities closely linked to their interests and/or main activity;
  - promoting quality assurance in CPD;

- using an international measure unit to calculate CPD credits, such as ECTS or hours of training;
  - encouraging structured CPD, where veterinarians can have a vision for their development;
  - facilitating recognition of acquired skills through Europe;
- The establishment of a structure in each country, such as a National CPD committee, set up in close collaboration with the national professional bodies and the veterinary statutory body;
  - That the composition of a National CPD Committee should reflect different aspects of the veterinary profession, should be linked to the Competent Authority a National and could be in charge of accrediting CPD providers, evaluating CPD training and monitoring veterinarian's CPD records;
  - Standardization of post-graduate structured CPD, for example via VETCEE or EBVS accreditation, to facilitate recognition of skills and competences acquired by veterinarians throughout Europe.

#### FVE CALLS UPON:

FVE, together with its Member Organisations, call upon the International Organisations and Institutions, such as the EU and the OIE, and the national competent authorities to work together towards the establishment and implementation of CPD systems in line with the above recommendations.

#### Supporting information

<sup>1</sup>[FVE policy paper on veterinary education](#)

<sup>2</sup>[ECCVT Policy on Veterinary Education](#)

<sup>3</sup>[FVE Strategy 2015-2020](#)

<sup>4</sup>[European Veterinary Code of Conduct](#)

<sup>5</sup>[Directive 2005/36/EC](#) as amended by [Directive 2013/55/EU](#)

<sup>6</sup>[FVE Survey-CPD in Small Animal Medicine](#)

<sup>7</sup>[4th OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education – Final Recommendations](#)

<sup>8</sup>[VETCEE Standard and Dossiers of Competences](#)

[UEVP paper on Acknowledged Veterinarian, UEVP CPD position](#)