

Specialisation: Where to from here?

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Convenor Advisory Committee on the
Registration of Veterinary Specialists
(ACRVS)

Specialisation: Where to from here?

Attrition in the profession

- Number of veterinary specialists
- Location of training of specialists
- Role of telemedicine – remote input into patient care

Standards & regulations

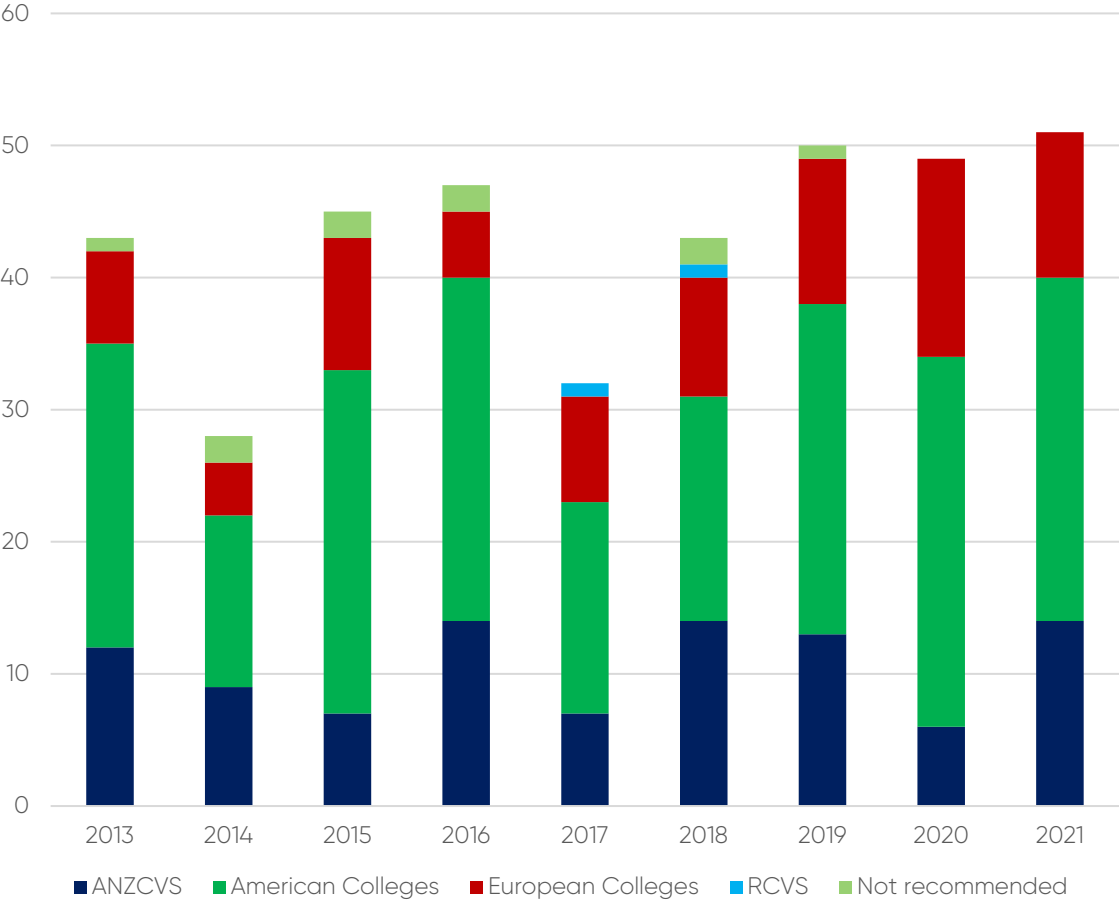
- What criteria does a veterinary practice and practitioner use to determine when to refer?
- When considering 'an expected standard of care' should Boards & Councils formally recognize 3 levels of qualifications?
- Maintenance of credentials:
 - What criteria should Boards/Councils apply for assurance of ongoing quality of practice for specialists and 'middle tier' practitioners?



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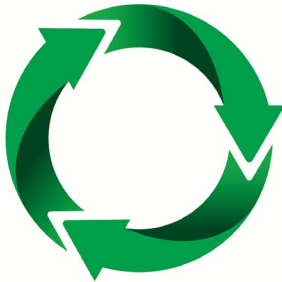
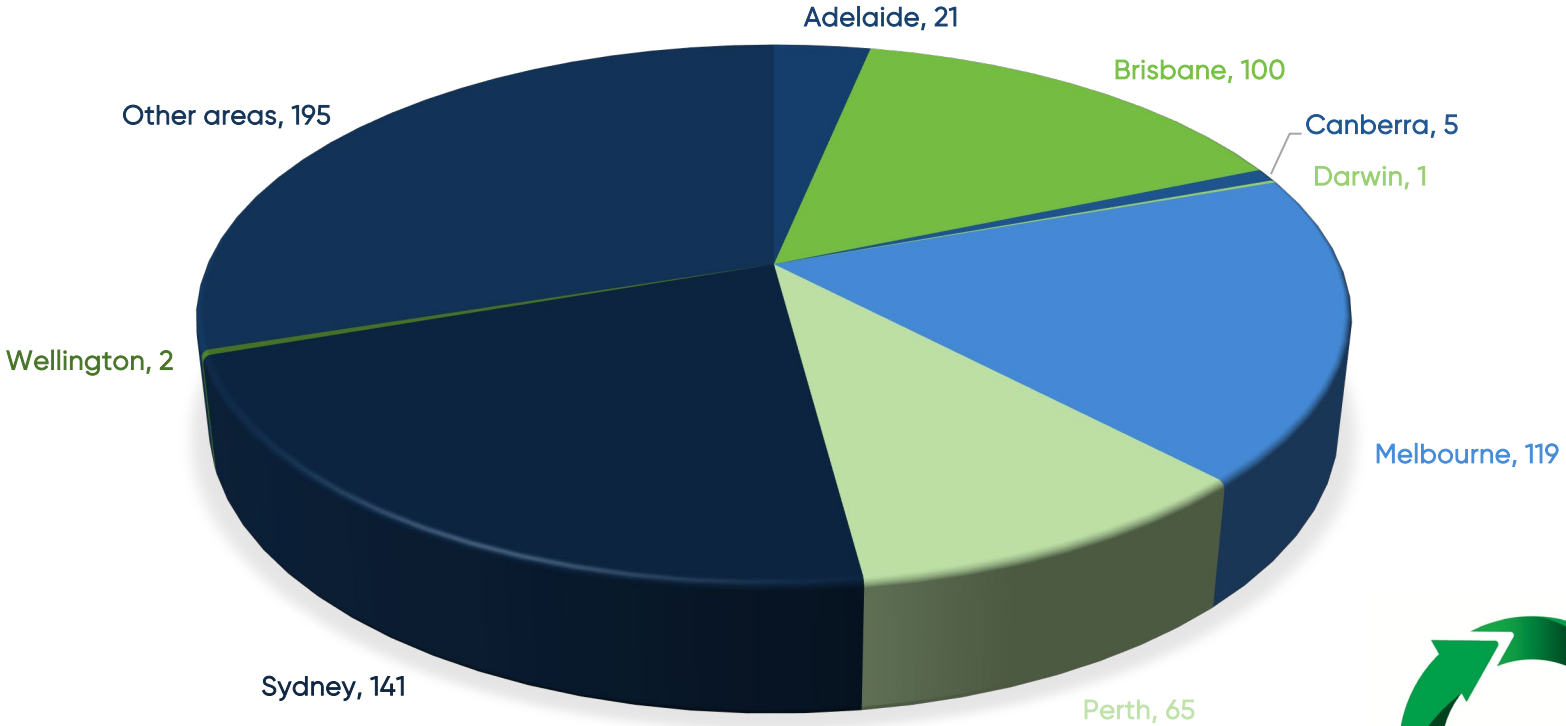
Four bodies certify the specialty training for Aus/NZ specialists?

Number of Specialist Applications 2013 - 2021



Veterinary specialists: Demographics

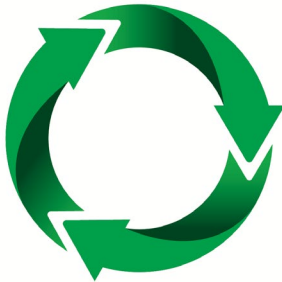
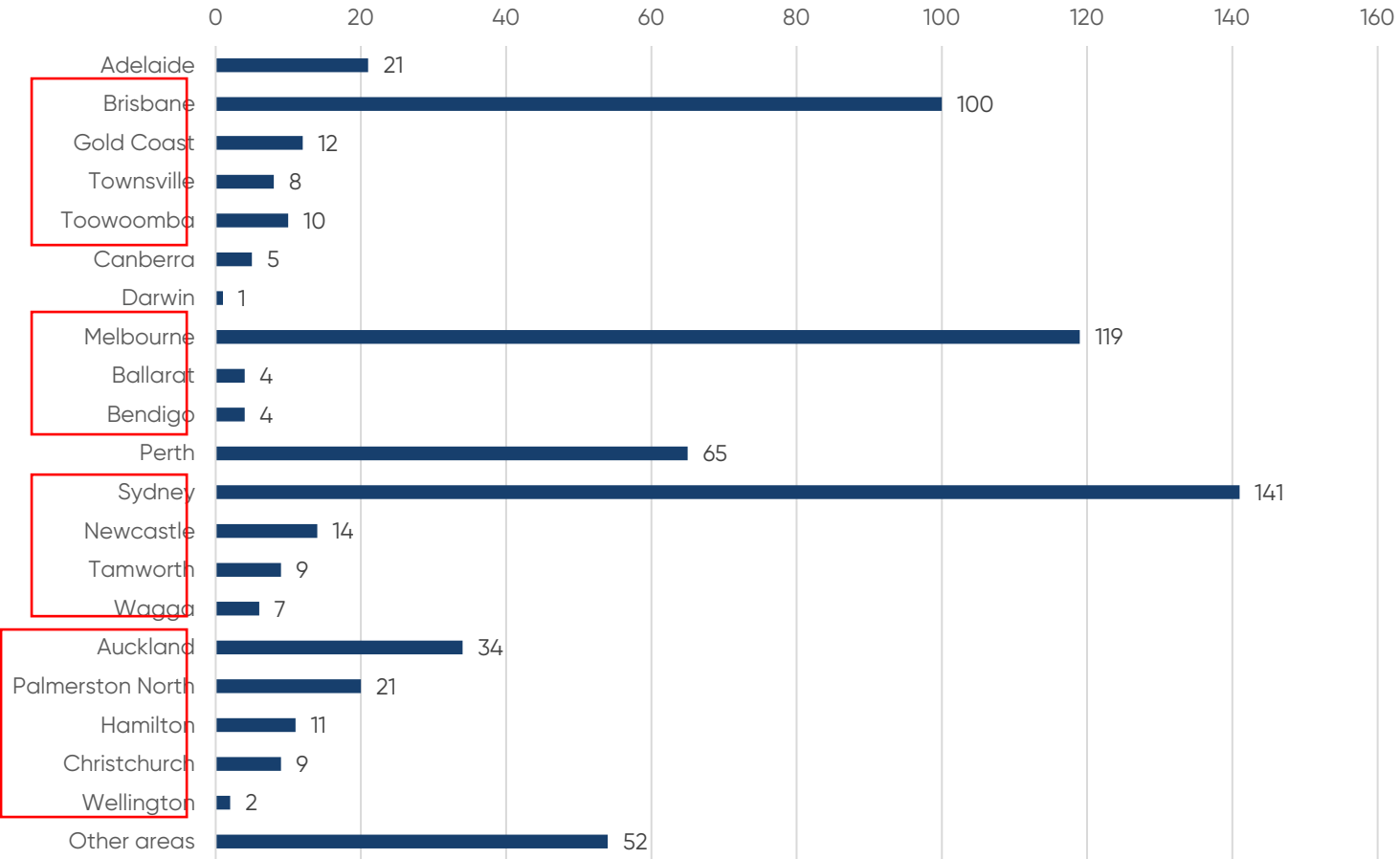
LOCATION OF SPECIALISTS REGISTERED IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND
(WHERE DATA AVAILABLE - COMPILED NOV 2022)



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Veterinary specialists: Demographics

LOCATION OF SPECIALISTS REGISTERED IN AUS NZ
(WHERE DATA AVAILABLE - COMPILED NOV 2022)



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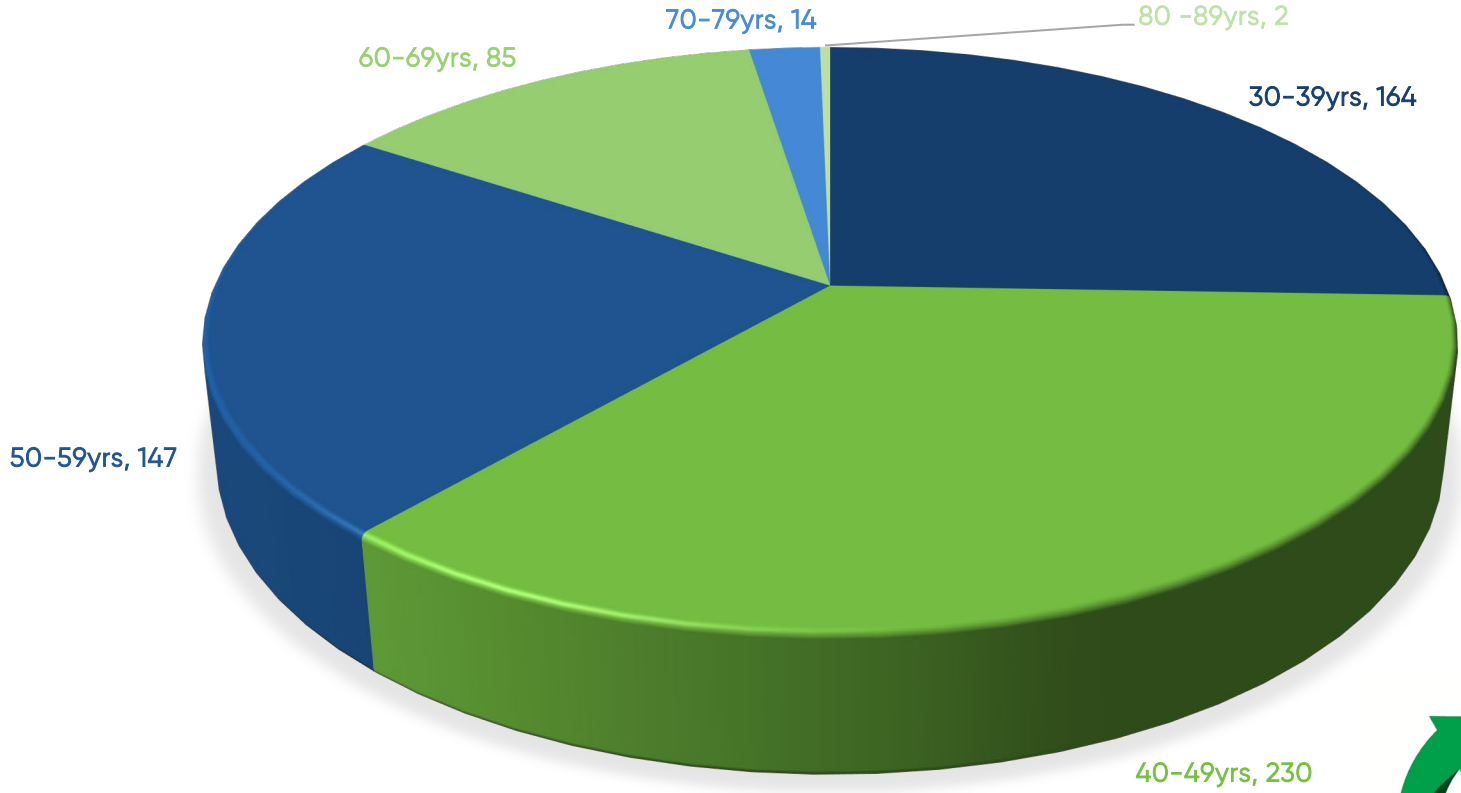
Disciplines of specialists registered in ANZ

Specialty	TOTAL
Sheep Medicine	1
Veterinary Aquatic Animal Health	1
Veterinary Pharmacology	1
Veterinary Public Health & Food Hygiene	1
Veterinary Toxicology	1
Zoological Medicine	1
Ovine Medicine	1
Porcine Medicine	2
Veterinary Nutrition	2
Animal Behaviour	4
Veterinary Radiation Oncology	4
Veterinary Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation (Equine)	5
Veterinary Epidemiology	5
Veterinary Dentistry	6
Avian Medicine & Surgery	7
Veterinary Neurology	7
Large Animal Medicine	7

Dairy Cattle Medicine	7
Veterinary Anaesthesia & Analgesia	10
Veterinary Cardiology	11
Canine Medicine	12
Veterinary Pathology	12
Feline Medicine	14
Veterinary Anaesthesia	16
Veterinary Reproduction	19
Veterinary Clinical Pathology	19
Veterinary Dermatology	23
Veterinary Oncology	23
Veterinary Emergency Medicine and Critical Care	29
Equine Medicine	33
Veterinary Ophthalmology	33
Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging)	39
Veterinary Anatomical Pathology	42
Equine Surgery	63
Small Animal Medicine	92
Small Animal Surgery	116

Veterinary specialists: Demographics

AGE OF SPECIALISTS REGISTERED IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND
(WHERE DATA AVAILABLE - COMPILED NOV 2022)



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Attrition in the Profession

- Numbers of veterinary specialists
- Do we have sufficient specialists in 2022? Will we have sufficient in 5 or 10 years time?
- Are we training sufficient specialists to fill gaps left by retiring specialists and for an increasing demand for specialist services?
- Will there be sufficient specialists in veterinary schools with currency in clinical practice to adequately teach veterinary students
- Are there barriers/restrictions to the numbers entering specialist disciplines



Workforce Impact *Specialist Demand*

Demand is rising faster than for generalists

- H/A Bond – pet owners more likely to seek referral
- Generalist shortage
 - ✓ Extended wait times – patients more seriously ill
 - ✓ Stretched capacity to accept/work up new cases
- Impending retirements
 - ✓ 57% of diplomates \geq 50 yrs old (2018)

Workforce Impact *Specialist Employment Market* (Fall, 2021)

The number of open specialist jobs at only five corporate practices exceeded the number of available candidates by as much as 4x.

	# Positions	# Candidates	#Pos/#Cand
Internists	200	49	4.1
Surgeons	181	65	2.8
Criticalists	182	78	2.3
Radiologists	85	50	1.7

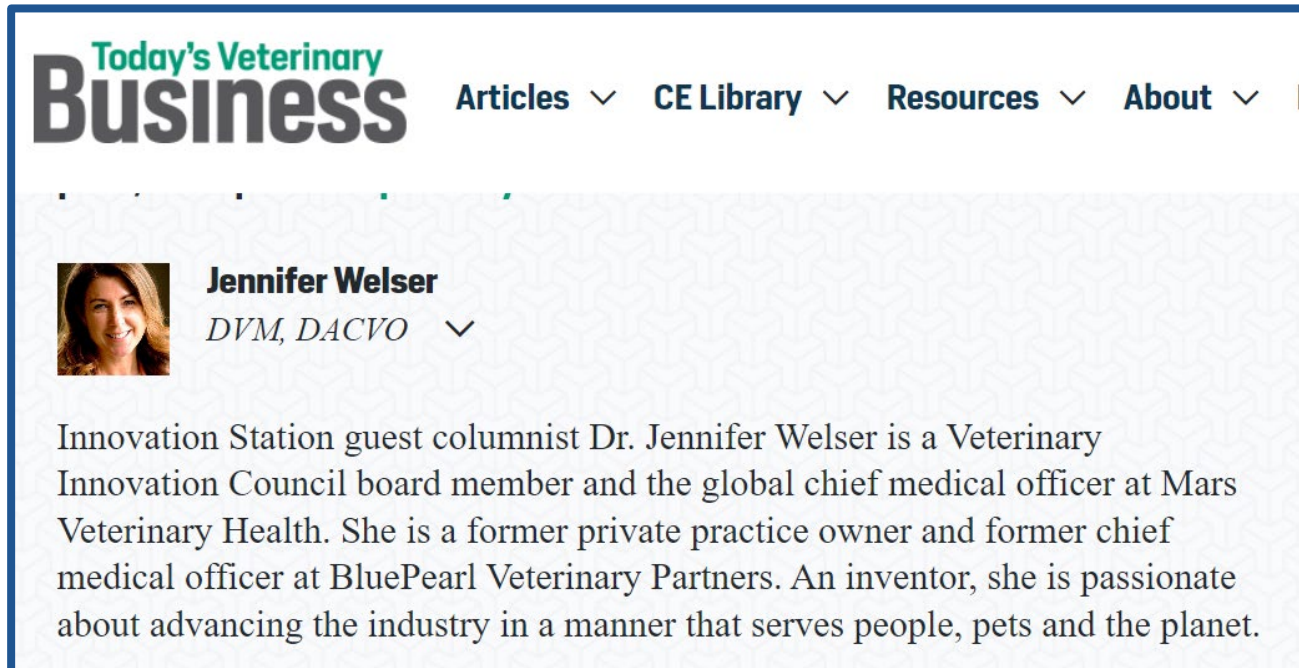
Workforce Impact *Specialists in Academia*

Academic specialist shortage threatens
DVM training,
specialist training, and
clinical research.

Disproportionate, prolonged impact

Attrition in the Profession

- Numbers of veterinary specialists



The screenshot shows the header of the 'Today's Veterinary Business' website with navigation links for Articles, CE Library, Resources, and About. Below the header is a profile for Dr. Jennifer Welser, DVM, DACVO. Her bio states: 'Innovation Station guest columnist Dr. Jennifer Welser is a Veterinary Innovation Council board member and the global chief medical officer at Mars Veterinary Health. She is a former private practice owner and former chief medical officer at BluePearl Veterinary Partners. An inventor, she is passionate about advancing the industry in a manner that serves people, pets and the planet.'

How we train residents isn't sustainable.

Online learning and greater collaboration between universities and private practice are among the solutions.

The specialist shortage hurts:

- Primary practice veterinarians who need the support.
- Specialty practices providing services.
- Most importantly, the pets that need specialized care.

<https://todaysveterinarybusiness.com/residents-veterinary-specialist-shortage/>



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Will University hospitals continue to have the capacity to train specialists?

- Variable capacity at Aus/NZ university hospitals

World-Class Care

Ithaca, NY

- Companion Animal Hospital
- Small Animal Community Practice
- Equine Hospital
- Equine Park
- Nemo Farm Animal Hospital
- Ambulatory
- Janet L. Swanson Wildlife Hospital
- Maddie's® Shelter Medicine Program

Elmont, NY

- Cornell Ruffian Equine Specialists

Stamford, CT

- Cornell University Veterinary Specialists



Cornell University
Hospital for Animals



Will University hospitals continue to train specialists?

- Based on data from 2019-2021, 71.5% of applicants for specialist eligibility completed their specialist training at university hospitals. 28.5% of applicants trained in private hospitals.

Location of Specialist Training for Recommended Applications		
2019 - 2021		
	University hospital	Private hospital
Animal Behaviour		1
Avian Medicine	2	-
Dairy Cattle Medicine & Management	3	-
Equine Medicine	7	1
Equine Surgery	8	1
Feline Medicine		2
Large Animal Medicine (food animal)	2	-
Pig Medicine	1	-
Small Animal Medicine	9	11
Small Animal Oncology	1	-
Small Animal Surgery	12	7
Veterinary Anaesthesia & Analgesia	9	3
Veterinary Anatomical Pathology	5	2
Veterinary Cardiology	1	-
Veterinary Clinical Pathology	4	-
Veterinary Dentistry	3	-
Veterinary Dermatology	1	1
Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging / Veterinary Radiology	12	-
Veterinary Emergency Medicine & Critical Care	10	1
Veterinary Emergency Medicine & Critical Care (Equine)	1	-
Veterinary Epidemiology	1	-
Veterinary Neurology	3	1
Veterinary Oncology	1	4
Veterinary Ophthalmology	2	4
Veterinary Radiation Oncology		1
Veterinary Reproduction	2	1
Veterinary Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation (Equine)	3	-
Total	103	41

Attrition in the Profession

- Location of training of specialists
- It is becoming increasingly difficult for veterinary schools to support the education of DVMs, let alone post-DVM specialty and graduate research training.

(The National Academy of Sciences 2012)

- The location of specialist training has shifted from University Veterinary Hospitals to private specialist practices.
 - What are the implications of this change?
 - What are the benefits to training at a University compared to a private specialist practice? (what value does the profession place on academic training in research, teaching)



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Attrition in the Profession

- Location of training of specialists

There is a limited number of residencies relative to the demand for specialists.

In university teaching hospitals, where the majority of residencies take place, tight finances often constrain the number of slots.

Thrive Pet Healthcare, which has around 350 hospitals across the country, went from sponsoring four residents at two universities last year to sponsoring 20 at nine universities this year.

“There are strengths associated with private practice residencies and strengths associated with academic residences. There's great opportunity for us to work collaboratively to try to harness the best out of both settings.”

<https://news.vin.com/default.aspx?pid=210&Id=10904281&f5=1>



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Attrition in the Profession

What role are specialists able to play in undertaking remote input into patient care?

- a. point of care, real-time continuing education between virtual specialists and veterinarians (filling the mentoring gap left by retiring practice owners/senior veterinarians)

What role can remote supervision play during training of veterinary specialists

'Hands on' specialties generally are considered require direct (on site/in person) supervision.

Under what circumstances or in which specialist disciplines would remote supervision of training be acceptable?



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Standards & regulations

What criteria does a veterinary practice use to determine when to refer?

- What legal (veterinary legislation) risks are involved in retaining cases
- how do practices achieve a balance between referring clients on to a specialist and the business/professional desire to personally service clients, build & retain breadth/depth in medical and surgical skills



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Standards & regulations

- When considering an 'expected standard of care' *should* Veterinary Boards & Councils formally recognize 3 levels of qualifications
 - Registration as a veterinarian
 - General practice
 - Middle tier
 - RVCS Advanced practitioner
 - MANZCVS
 - Specialist



Standards & regulations

‘Maintenance of credentials’

- What criteria should Boards/Councils apply for assurance of ongoing quality of practice for specialists and ‘middle tier’ practitioners?



Standards & regulations

'Maintenance of credentials'

- What criteria should Boards/Councils apply for assurance of ongoing quality of practice for specialists and 'middle tier' practitioners?

ANZCVS: The objectives of Maintenance of Credentials (MOC) requirements are to allow the individual to

- reflect on their personal knowledge and performance,
- commit to a process of improvement and re-evaluation,
- promote engagement within their professional organisation.

The overall result is to improve quality of the profession, which can be externally promoted and align with accrediting body requirements.

- CRITERIA 1: Relevant practice in discipline – 100 cases (MANZCVS) 250 cases (FANZCVS)
- CRITERIA 2: Ongoing learning in discipline – 200 hrs (MANZCVS) 500 hrs (FANZCVS) per 5-year period
- CRITERIA 3: Active involvement in College / Chapter – during each 5-year period



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Specialisation: Where to from here?

‘Rather than cling to what we cannot keep,
Let us pursue what we cannot lose’.

Donald Smith 2013 JVME



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