

Veterinary Nursing in South Africa

Sr. Theresa Lotter



AIM

- To support the veterinarian to provide quality patient care in the veterinary practice



History

- Veterinarians recognised a need for trained and skilled assistants in the veterinary practice.
- First Class of Nurses Qualified in 1978.
- Current qualification is a 2-year full time diploma course (SAQA credits = 355).
- Currently only offered at the Onderstepoort Veterinary Academic Hospital; University of Pretoria.
- Combination of classroom and practical training.
- Student nurses work in the various clinics of the training hospital on rotational basis; as well as work place experience at private practices; animal welfare organisations; zoos and research facilities.

Curriculum

- First year Subjects: Anatomy; Pharmacology; Physiology; Ethology: Laboratory Technique; Microbiology; General Nursing & Parasitology
- Second year Subjects: Medical Nursing; Surgical Nursing; Theatre Practice; Anaesthesiology; Radiography & Reproductive Nursing.
- Companion animal studies: canine; feline & equine
- Production animal studies: bovine; ovine & caprine



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Scope of Practice



- Basic animal management including daily care; nutritional and hygiene requirements; grooming and dental scaling and polishing.
- Basic laboratory techniques such as: haematology and blood chemistry; urine examination; faecal examinations; skin scrapings etc.
- Administration of medicines, including intravenous fluid therapy.
- Premedication, induction & monitoring of anaesthesia.

Scope (2)

- Taking of radiographs & assisting with other diagnostic imaging tools.
- Supervision of animals giving birth and caring for the newborn.
- General procedures: enemas, stomach tubes, lancing of abscesses; superficial skin suturing, wound management and bandages.
- Theatre Practice.
- Dispensing of medication.
- Physical rehabilitation.
- Client liaison.



Career opportunities

- Private practice
- Animal welfare organisations
- Community welfare clinics
- Industry
- Wildlife & Zoos
- Rehabilitation centres
- Academia
- Research Facilities
- Other



VNASA



- Veterinary Nurses Association of South Africa
- Promotes the profession both to veterinarians and the public.
- Supportive tasks such as job adverts, salary scales, code of conduct etc.
- Merchandise.
- Liaising with the Faculty and students.
- Maintaining a membership data base.
- CPD.
- Official publications: “Paws for thought”; “Itching Post” and “EduPaws”

Challenges



- Degree course
- Specialisation (Intensive care: Anaesthesiology; Oncology)
- Only 1 service provider
- Threat from lay people
- Working Independently (Behaviour; Kennel Management & Rehabilitation; Home care)

Thank you



- **QUESTIONS???**