

Site visit report

Revisit to Firat University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Elazig, 1-4 November 2011.

Experts

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Introduction

The team was warmly received with a very open mind from the faculty, and the arrangement was very professional and constantly adapting to the needs of the team members.

The faculty had prepared a commendably short and precise report, and during the site visit the team validated the report and found total coherence between the written report and the actual findings. The team was overall very satisfied with the findings, and appreciates the great efforts done by the faculty since the first site visit in May 2007.

Category I deficiencies identified and described in the 2007 site visit report:

- 4.1 The curriculum must include training that adequately covers swine and swine diseases, in particular the practical, theoretical and clinical aspects of the production, slaughter and inspection/control and associated products for human consumption.
- 4.2 Practical teaching in radiology including teaching in radiation safety must be included, and provided in a suitable facility (see Chapter 6) that follows appropriate procedures.
- 4.14 The amount and intensity of clinical training on companion animals (especially dogs and cats) and the caseload and facilities to support such training, must be improved.
- 6.9 The radiological facilities, equipment and procedures must be modernised and upgraded to enable the unit to provide a full, safe and professional level of service.
- 7.2 The necropsy caseload in all species must be increased.
- 7.4 The companion animal caseload available for teaching undergraduate veterinary students must be increased, in particular with respect to cases receiving hospital-based treatment.
- 10.1 The number of support personnel working in direct and effective support of the academic activities of the departments and divisions of the FVMFU must be increased.

Decision by JEC, April 2008.

- The curriculum must include training which adequately covers swine and swine diseases
- Practical teaching in radiology including teaching in radiation safety must be included and the radiological facilities must be modernised
- The amount and intensity of clinical training on companion animals (dogs and cats) including the caseload and facilities must be improved
- The necropsy facility should be remodelled, caseload must be increased, chilling facilities and adequate students cloakrooms are necessary
- The number of support personnel working in direct and effective support of the academic activities must be increased

Overall conclusion and suggestion by the 2011 revisit site team

The report goes through each of the Category I deficiencies based on the 2011 faculty report and to a much lesser extent the team referred to the 2007 report (Draft A, May 2007. To fully understand the report the reader will have to consult the 2011 faculty report.

The team finds that the faculty has sufficiently corrected four of the five deficiencies. The only critical point is that the number of necropsies should have been increased more than the (2011, Oct-Dec still pending) 150 necropsies per year on average, and although this is at the lower end, the team suggests that it should be accepted by ECOVE.

In conclusion the team suggests that the Firat University Faculty of Veterinary medicine be granted approval or conditional approval by ECOVE.

Deficiency 1

" The curriculum must include training which adequately covers swine and swine diseases"

Findings

Swine is not a major animal species in Turkey due to religious beliefs and there is absolutely no swine production in the region of Elazig. Therefore there is an understandable lack of teaching covering swine and swine diseases. But pigs are an important food animal species both within EU and in other regions of the world and if Turkish students and graduates go outside Turkey they are confronted with swine production, swine diseases, pig slaughtering and with pork as an important meat source. Another reason why swine diseases should be taught is that wild boars are a source of zoonotic diseases and notifiable diseases like FMD and that these diseases don't stop on the borders.

The Faculty is aware of these facts and it has included major topics of swine medicine in relevant courses of the curriculum. In general the curriculum of FUFVM is not species-based. The main teaching method for the swine specific diseases is power point presentations with excellent pictures and comments, short video films and practical training in anatomy on plastic models. The team went through the written (handouts/kompendiums) teaching material in internal medicine and noted that swine is mentioned in excess of 250 connections. Furthermore the Faculty has established a very small but newly renovated pig unit with indoor and outdoor pens on its farm with at the moment three pigs. Here the students have contact with live pigs, they can learn to handle pigs and they have some practical training too.

The Faculty has proven with all its activities to be willing to improve swine medicine teaching and at the present time the theoretical teaching is sufficiently covering swine medicine. But there is still a lack of practical training in clinical farm situations and in pork inspection at a slaughterhouse. These problems can not be solved in the “swine-absent” region of Elazig, a fact what EAEVE should accept.

The team reckons that the FUFVM has sufficiently corrected the deficiency with relevant and available means to secure that students receive a minimum training in both swine specific diseases, notifiable diseases and transmissible and zoonotic diseases.

Conclusion by the site visit team to this issue

The team suggests that ECOVE records the Cat. I deficiency on adequately covering of swine and swine diseases as being rectified.

Deficiency 2

"Practical teaching in radiology including teaching in radiation safety must be included and the radiological facilities must be modernised".

Findings

The imaging section has been remodeled and new, modern standard equipment has been purchased. The changes include:

- Reconstruction of the walls with lead incorporated into the walls
- Modern aprons, gloves and accessories are in place and used
- Dosimeters are in place and used
- A Canon, 1000mA, 80kw, DR, Flat panel digital radiography has been installed
- A written radiation safety policy (SOP) has been issued by the hospital management. It was posted in the room and it is distributed as part of the notes/hand outs for students, and also included in the website based notes for the course
- Prof., Dr. İbrahim Canpolat, and a technician are responsible for the use and instruction in the equipment

- In 2010 the imaging facilities were inspected and approved by the Turkish Radiation Safety Institution (Türkiye Atom Enerjisi Kurumu), which is mandatory for running the facility. An annual auditing procedure is in place.

Apart from this the faculty has acquired a GE Logibook Enhanced Doppler ultrasound equipment and a Karl Storz flexible video endoscopy system also maintained by the imaging section.

Conclusion by the site visit team to this issue

The team suggests that ECOVE records the Cat. I deficiency on diagnostic imaging and related safety procedures as being rectified.

Deficiency 3

" The amount and intensity of clinical training on companion animals (dogs and cats) including the caseload and facilities must be improved"

Findings

Most faculties would envy FUFVM the very good caseload in cattle and bearing in mind that the class size is 65. In addition to this the caseload in dogs and cats has been increased from an average of 145 dogs and 34 cats per year in the time period 2004-6 to an average of 552 dogs and 92 cats per year in the period 2009 –September 2011.

It was documented that 330 of the dogs were stray dogs and the rest were privately owned dogs.

Part of this succes is probably due to the efforts done by the Faculty in creating a modern clinical environment with up to date examination rooms, modern equipment, totally renovated operating theatres, sufficient hospitalization facilities, and isolation facilities for both small and large animals. We saw surgery performed on small animals during the site visit and we saw cattle having undergone surgery (traumatic reticulitis with peritonitis) within 2 days.

The FUFVM has advertised to the public that the local center for clinical treatment of small animals is at the university, and during our discussion we touched upon the very high number of cattle and relatively high number of dogs in relation to the neighbouring private practitioners. To our astonishment there is no specialised small animal clinic in the city of Elazig, only mixed practices with focus on cattle. And most cases of all species are referrals (secondary) cases. This gives students a broad view of clinical cases ranging from simple standard procedures as castration and

ovariohysterectomy in all stray dogs to clarification of referred cases. We saw examples of the clinical card ensuring that the students go through a number of clinical procedures. As we saw student training in groups of one teacher, one assistant and 2 – 4 students. A very student friendly but labour intensive teaching procedure.

Students now must participate in compulsory extramural training during summertime.

It has been documented that there is a sufficient increase in the caseload both with respect to the number of animals and also to hospitalization.

The composition of the caseload with respect to species and primary/secondary cases gives students a broad view of clinical cases ranging from simple standard procedures as castration and ovariohysterectomy in all stray dogs to clarification of referred cases.

Further to this professional quality CTC cameras has been installed in operating theatre of both the small and large animal clinics and in the necropsy room. These cameras are connected to the campus network enabling the students to watch activities live while performing other duties. Records are kept for 1 month so students may retrieve a specific incident and study it in details at a later time.

Conclusion by the site visit team to this issue

The team suggests that ECOVE records the Cat. I deficiency on the amount and intensity of clinical training on companion animals (dogs and cats) including the caseload and facilities as being rectified.

Deficiency 4

"The necropsy facility should be remodelled, caseload must be increased, chilling facilities and adequate students cloakrooms are necessary"

Findings

Entrance to the necropsy room is through a small cloakroom adequately serving students and staff to put on protection clothing. The team was forced to put on protective clothing before entrance, and the standard rules for staying and working in the necropsy room were displayed in a prominent place. A new cold store room at the Anatomy Laboratory can also be used by the pathology section.

The necropsy hall is large and adequately disposed and the necessary equipment to perform necropsy of all species is present. However, delivery of large animal carcasses is difficult but manageable.

A necropsy of a goat examined at the large animal clinic the day before was necropsied including tissue sampling for histopathology while the team was there. A clear connection between the clinical signs (severe neurological signs) and the pathological findings (cerebral, parasitic cyst (*E.granulosus*)) was seen and commendably the necropsy was performed by the same small team of students that had done the clinical work up.

However, it is clear that the necropsy caseload still is too low although it has been increased considerably. The faculty struggles with the fact that the Elazig region is neither a horse area nor a developed companion animal area. But they have managed to increase the number of necropsies in small ruminants considerably, and in general they have an average of 150 necropsies per year.

The team advised to further increase the number of necropsies and advised the dean to negotiate a contract with the nearby official diagnostic laboratory including student access to all necropsies performed at this laboratory. This would be beneficial to the students, to the faculty, to the animal owners, to the community and also to the official laboratory due to the increased awareness of the importance of veterinarians in public health generally and to the positive economical impact of constantly surveying the disease situation.

Conclusion by the site visit team to this issue

The amount of material for necropsy is still low and the faculty should continue its work to increase the necropsy caseload. However, the necropsy caseload does not indicate neglect from the faculty but rather reflects the regional species composition, traditions in local veterinary practices and among farmers and lack of a tradition for doing necropsies at a high level as part of clinical practice.

Deficiency 5

" The number of support personnel working in direct and effective support of the academic activities must be increased"

Findings

This is a common problem of all the Turkish faculties. The faculties have to request new positions from the Rectorate and its financial potential depends on the Ministry of Finance and on the Higher Education Council. The faculties themselves do not have any influence over the recruitment of support staff.

The FVMFU tried to get more support staff but the result was not positive. Since 2007 the number of support staff increased from 62 to 64. All other efforts to recruit more personnel were returned from the Ministry of Finance.

The number of technical personnel in the hospital can be judged as adequate in relation to the number of academic staff, the number of students and to the patient case load. Furthermore the

students are also involved in the clinical work as this is part of their training. Also the number of staff at the faculty farm (18 persons) is appropriate.

The main issue is the lack of technicians in the laboratories. There are only two technical staff in the whole faculty. Much of the work in veterinary research laboratories is quite specialized and some of the laboratories use very modern equipment which should be handled by a permanent technical staff. But at the Faculty all this work is undertaken by the academic staff itself, especially by the postgraduate research assistants. The new research assistants have to learn all the skills in the laboratories and to work with the equipment from the older assistants. This could be a problem for the quality of the laboratory work and for the quality of the scientific papers. However, the research results are published in well known peer reviewed scientific journals which proves that the system works without permanent technical staff.

Nevertheless the work would be more precise and efficient if it were done by technical personnel with appropriate knowledge and skills. An important example showing that qualified personnel is mandatory is the renewed virology research laboratory allowing to work with biosafety level 3 agents. This laboratory could be a danger without high qualified technical staff.

The faculty needs more support personnel for the well equipped laboratories. But the claim in the evaluation report from 2007 must be seen relative to the demonstrated effective functioning of the laboratories and the fact that support staff in relation to training of students is appropriate.

Conclusion by site team to this issue

The team suggests that ECOVE records the Cat. I deficiency on the amount of support staff as being rectified.

Miscellaneous

It should be mentioned that the FUFVM proudly presented a new, state-of-the-art biosafety level 3 virology research laboratory. The laboratory is currently used for research in Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever virus.

DECISION BY ECOVE: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

One cat. 1 deficiency remaining:

- 1. Insufficient necropsy case load**