

Report of the revisit of the Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria dell'Università degli studi di Milano, Italy

Upon request of the FMV a revisit took place with two experts, Maria C. Peleteiro (chair) and Tjeerd Jorna, coordinator Gert Niebauer (EAEVE) on the 30th and 31st October, 2012.

The **major deficiencies** reported after the first visit, that took place in October 2009, were the following:

1. *No hospitalization of small animals (SA) and no 24 hours emergency service*
2. *Lack of mobile clinic*
3. *Lack of propaedeutical animals and shortage in food animal patients with particular respect swine medicine*
4. *No isolation facility for large animals*

The observations and remarks of the team regarding these deficiencies are the following:

1. *No hospitalization of small animals and no 24 hours emergency service*

Findings

The team has evaluated the effort that has been made by the FMV in establishing a Small Animal Hospital, with facilities that were adjusted from previous existing hospitalization services. Five new veterinarians were contracted to perform 12 hours shifts with third, fourth and fifth year students.

The students during that period are supervised by veterinarians on duty 24/24 in all tasks executed in the hospitalized patients that is, administering medication, performing physical examination, treatments etc. Attached to the emergency service is a room housing an intensive care unit. In another room a pharmacy and a small laboratory are allocated, equipped with essential instrumentation for treating and monitoring patients 24/24 hrs. Accommodation with sanitary facilities for the students during the night shifts is available within the premises.

The number of hospitalized animals that was reported to ECOVE in past annual reports has been the following:

From May to September 2011

Dogs	128
Cats	41
Total	169

Two hundred and thirty two students (232) were involved in the teaching rounds organized by the hospital during the period mentioned above. These rounds are compulsory and comprise three students each.

From January to July 2012

Dogs	63
Cats	43
Total	106

30 of these animals (29%) were treated in the intensive care unit.

One hundred and eighty two students (182) were involved in the teaching rounds organized by the hospital during the period mentioned above. These compulsory rounds comprise three students each, in general.

The decrease in the numbers of dogs hospitalized in 2012 in comparison with 2011 may have to do with the economic crisis that Italy, as other European countries, is facing.

However, the number of cases registered in hospitalization has to be added to the total number of cases attended in the hospital. During 10 months of 2012, the total number of cases followed by the students was 4983, which the team has verified that is strictly controlled by the FMV.

Conclusion: Hospitalization services, an intensive care unit and a 24/24hrs 7 days/week emergency service are instituted and functioning; students in small groups (3, in general) are regularly and actively involved in animal care in those services.

The previous deficiency, “lack of hospitalization for SA and 24hr emergency service”, has been resolved.

2 - Lack of Mobile Clinic.

Findings

The large animal hospital provides 24 hours service and also a Mobile Clinic is functioning since the beginning of 2011. In the academic year 2012-2013 the Mobile Clinic was operated by 15 contract professors (practitioners) who teach under formal arrangements but are not remunerated: 9 specialists for cattle practice; 3 for pigs and 3 for horses. From November 1st 2011 till October 29th 2012, 128 “trips” were effectuated, each including 6 to 10 students, sometimes more. In total, 791 students were involved in the Mobile Clinic activity, with veterinary services being rendered in 73 cattle farms, 41 horse farms and 12 pig farms. Most of the students participated in the activity three or four times, a few five or more times. Professor Mortellaro is the responsible and coordinator of the Mobile Clinic activity that can now be regarded as excellent, focusing on herd health control/management and internal medicine; obstetric and gynecologic procedures; surgery and hoof care/trimming. The students also do rectal palpations, hoof care and nutrition management. The team was shown many photographs of the students taking part of the activity involving the Mobile Clinic with all activities being registered in their individual Log Books. The feedback from the students and teachers was very enthusiastic.

Conclusion

The previous deficiency “lack of Mobile Clinic” has been resolved.

3. *Lack of propaedeutical animals and shortage in food animal patients with particular respect swine medicine*

Introduction

The report of the expert team in 2009 stated: *“However, teaching in particular in swine medicine- but also for small ruminants- appeared to be very marginal. There are only a few propaedeutical animals with no swine among them”*.

Findings

On the farm campus of the Faculty in Lodi, the team saw a well functioning ruminant hospital with an IBR free area and a non-IBR free area. The number of patients from January 1st till November 10th 2011, were 303 calves, 98 cattle, 11 swine and 10 small ruminants. In the period January 1st to July 31st 2012, the numbers of hospitalized patients were 145 calves, 127 cattle, 79 swine and 4 small ruminants. Also the number of animals housed in the Husbandry Unit of the Faculty [Livestock Experimental Centre] remained almost constant and is fully operational. Cattle, pigs, small ruminants and poultry are now regularly present and these animals are also used for propaedeutical teaching. The students showed their Log Books for confirmation.

Conclusion.

This former Category 1 Deficiency has been resolved. This conclusion is also based on and supported by the findings reported in #2, the Mobile Clinic.

4. *No isolation facilities for farm animals*

Introduction

This was the most difficult problem to resolve, because it depended on substantial investment and funding by the Faculty, which was made available in October 2011. The premises were completed in March 2012 and are operational since the beginning of May 2012.

Findings

A very efficient isolation unit was developed, totally separated from the ruminant hospital, with two holding rooms, one for large animals [cows] and one for small ruminants [calves, sheep and goats]. The entrance of the animals is independent from all others, opening from the outside. A well functioning corridor is situated along the unit for staff and students, with escape doors from the holding rooms. A very clear Operating Instruction for Access to the Isolation Unit was available and posted. At the time of the visit, no animals were in the unit. It was explained that the rooms were used on the average for one or two (contagious) animals per month (see text in annex dated September 2012, sent by the Faculty with pictures of the Isolation Unit).

Conclusion

A well functioning Isolation Unit for farm animals was present and thus, the previous Category 1 Deficiency has been resolved.

P.S. The team has also visited the excellent horse hospital with a well functioning Isolation Unit.

Category two deficiencies

Three category two deficiencies were also reported in the first visit:

5. Lack of companion animal carcasses in anatomical dissections
6. Lack of integrated teaching of “Farm to Table” approach, including “Good Farming Practice” and “Good Hygiene Practice”.
7. Review of the examination system limiting the number of exams the students can take.

The observations and remarks of the team regarding these deficiencies are the following:

5 – The FMV has established an agreement of the Azienda Sanitaria Locale di Milano, a municipal shelter, for the provision of cadavers of small animals (cats and dogs). This has provided the anatomy practical's with a better opportunity for hands on training for the students.

Although there is still room for improvement (more cadavers of small animals to dissect), the team has considered the present situation as satisfactory.

6 – The FVM has addressed the problem by changing the curriculum in order to have Inspection I (Food Industries and Food Hygiene) and Inspection II (Meat Inspection, Seafood Inspection, Practical works at slaughter house, inspection of avian, rabbit and wild animal's meat) inserted after “Infectious Diseases”, in the 7th semester.

A set of activities for the students have been put up, referring to critical analysis of published scientific papers that students have to collect through the use of keywords regarding Food Safety . The students have to write a report, of which the teacher provides corrections and suggestions for improvement.

In spite of the fact that the practical's of meat inspection are based upon organs brought from the slaughterhouse, the number of practicals of students in slaughterhouses are still very reduced: one per student.

Although there is still room for improvement (more opportunities for the students to go to slaughterhouses), the team has considered the present situation as satisfactory.

7 – The Team is fully aware that the situation (unrestricted re-take of exams) cannot be addressed by the FMV alone. The examination system is a national problem of the Italian System for Higher Education.

In Conclusion, the team's opinion is that the Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria dell'Università degli Studi di Milano can now be fully approved with no category one and no category two deficiencies being present.

Milan, 31st October, 2012

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ECOVE DECISION: FULL APPROVAL