

**European Association
of Establishments for Veterinary Education**

**Association Européenne
des Etablissements d'Enseignement
Vétérinaire**



**REPORT ON THE REVISITATION TO THE FACULTY OF VETERINARY
MEDICINE OF WARSAW, POLAND**

12-13 November 2014

by the EXPERT GROUP

Chairperson of the visiting team in 2010

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Introductory information

Three Major Deficiencies were identified during the visit in 2010:

- 1. Insufficient necropsy caseload*
- 2. Lack of hands-on training in all species*
- 3. Insufficient food animal teaching: production, individual and herd health management.*

The faculty prepared a 64-page written report (referred here to as Revisitation Report 2014, attached to this report) with facts related to the rectification of all three major deficiencies on the first 8 pages. The rest are annexes, mostly in Polish. During the visit, some additional information requested by the team members was available; especially the caseload and necropsy indicators were recalculated based on the most recent data. The documents provided by the faculty are attached to this report.

A two-day programme pre-consulted with the team members covered well the topics of interest and was efficient.

The team would like to thank especially the Dean, prof. Marian Binek, the Vice-Dean prof. Marcin Banbura and the whole team nominated by the dean for this occasion for their work they have done before the visit and for their openness and support during the revisitation.

Ad 1. Insufficient necropsy caseload

Findings

According to the Revisitation Report 2014, the faculty took several measures for rectifying this deficiency.

- Necropsies of cases available in the clinics were added to the programme of regular practicals and of rotations in clinical sciences. All these necropsies are under a supervision of a pathologist from the Department of Pathology and Veterinary Diagnostics (altogether 62 necropsies of farm animals and horses).
- Practical extramural training under the supervision of a veterinarian approved by the Faculty and the Veterinary Chamber includes, if available, necropsies (altogether 70 necropsies).
- Extramural training organized by the Faculty in an animal carcass repository 60 km from Warsaw.

The students are obliged to write a necropsy record and all records are archived at the Dept. Of Pathology and Veterinary Diagnostics. Records on necropsies performed by individual students must also be kept in their Day One Skill log-books.

* Ratios (denominators) related to necropsies as re-calculated by the faculty during the revisitation:

Ratio	Denominator 2010	Denominator 2014
R18	0.24	1.07
R19	5.44	2.80
R20	1.82	0.96

* See Attachment 1 for details

Comments

The Faculty has made an effort to improve the caseload by re-organizing the system of necropsies within the entire Faculty and to find extra material outside the faculty. Based on the Evaluation Report 2010, according to which the numbers of small animal necropsies and poultry and rabbit caseload were acceptable, they focused mainly on farm animals. A comparison of indicators showed a positive effect in this case (R18), while a decrease was observed for poultry/rabbits (R19) and for small animals (R20). This trend is in agreement with a decrease in small animal patients in the clinics (see below).

Conclusions related to the Major Deficiency concerned

According to the opinion of the team, this major deficiency related to the necropsies in large animals has been rectified and the current way of teaching complies with the minimum standard requirements. Special attention should be paid in the future to stopping the decrease in small animals.

Ad 2. Lack of hands-on training in all species

Findings

To address this issue, the Faculty has modified the curriculum and clustered clinical rotations to semesters 10 and 11. 30 hours were added to the Avian Diseases course and for Farm Animal, Small Animal and Horses diseases courses 90 hours for each. Additional 320 hours are represented by compulsory “summer practices” in approved extramural clinics and farms. Records are kept in the Day One Skill logbooks by individual students and a “Diary of Summer Practice” must be presented to the Faculty by each student.

To increase the caseload in small animals, the Faculty organized influx of patients and sterilization of dogs and cats provided by a local animal shelter.

For large animals, practical training in a farm (Obory) was organized and for this purpose, a practitioner was hired. Extramural clinical rotations of students are based on an agreement between the Faculty and field practitioners. Visits to farms, examinations of genital organs, visits to slaughterhouses and use of teaching phantoms make part of the newly introduced system.

* Ratios (denominators) related to hands-on practice as re-calculated by the faculty during the revisitation:

Ratio	Denominator 2010	Denominator 2014
R11	Not calculable/calculated	0.41
R12	20.6	Not calculated (see Att. 1)
R13	0.066	0.86
R14	2.07	0.81
R15	0.31	0.31
R16	53.1	39.45**
R17	0.03	0.092

* See Attachment 1 for details

** See Comments

Comments

1. Large animals

As all three major deficiencies identified in 2010 were in a way related to problems in teaching large animal medicine (necropsies, caseload, and production medicine), the Faculty aimed to make essential changes in this area (see also above and below). Consequently, all indicators related to large animals improved over the four years, including caseload. It seemed during the visit that the system of visits to farms and of care of equine patients complies with the standards. The Faculty sought for alternative ways how to substitute the impossibility to house cattle in the campus and succeeded in this aspect.

2. Small animals

Several problems related to small animal medicine emerged during the revisitation. According to the Revisitation report 2014, the figures related this area were standard although not impressive. However, during the revisitation, it was apparent that the flow of patients in the Small animal clinic was quite low as well as the numbers of hospitalized patients, which contrasted with the figures. According to students, numbers of small animal cases could be higher.

Several explanations were provided by the staff. First, in general the numbers of patients were decreasing over years due to the financial crisis as less people were willing to pay for specialized veterinary care. Second, the organization of the clinic is based on days assigned to different years and during the revisitation, we could not see the entire week-long cycle. Third, extramural, Faculty-supervised activities not seen in the Faculty clinic were included into the figures. Fourth, the caseload differed between specialized ambulances, with high numbers e.g. in cardiology.

Based on these data, the team decided to analyse closer the figures and controversies related to the area of small animal medicine. Based on the Revisitation report 2014, “between 1.1.2013 and 1.3.2014, 564 animals were treated in the Hospital of the Small Animal Clinic”, “30-40 surgeries per month were performed” and “172 shelter animals were sterilized in the same 14-month period” (page 4). The ratio R16 recalculated during the revisitation and submitted to the team had the denominator 76.36, based on 13312 cases recorded. However, if we recalculate these numbers to 12 months, it represents around 670 animals in 2013. Therefore, the team asked the Faculty for an explanation and/or revision of this indicator. The explanation (See Attachment 2) argued that the electronic recording system can only provide data on registered visits and not numbers of patients (which should be done manually client by client). Therefore, the Faculty’s assumption was that an average was two visits per patient and they recalculated the ratio for 6825 individual patients. These figures do not contain numbers of cases seen by students during extramural (supervised or not supervised) hands-on teaching.

Based on the calculations, explanations and the on-site revisitation, it seems to the team that the ratio provided by the Faculty does not reflect a real situation and the denominator must be lower.

To be correct, the team cannot omit improvements in this area. Hands-on practice in small animals has been included into the DOS list and students have to get it confirmed in their logbooks. Alternative ways of providing teaching material were introduced (shelter animals, extramural supervised teaching). Based on students’ opinions, the situation improved but it still is not optimal. They are clearly involved in the clinical activities more than they were in 2010 and have access to hands-on experience, but practical teaching in this area is limited by the low patient flow in the clinic. The team recognizes that additional extramural teaching not included in the ratios calculated can contribute to hands-on practice as well as students’ stays in private small animal clinics during vacation, based on their personal activities. However, it is difficult to quantify these indicators and the team was concerned by the fact that it is impossible to retrieve correct data for accurate evaluation of this part of teaching activities.

Conclusions related to the Major deficiency concerned

As the Major Deficiency in caseload was identified for all species, all principal animal species were evaluated. According to the team, the way of teaching hands-on practice in general has changed as compared to 2010. Students are involved in clinical activities and an effort has been made to increase caseload. This latter task has been undoubtedly successful for all species except small animals. In our opinion, this fact is due to a combination of two different factors. Lower influx of patients to the Faculty clinics is related partly to the financial crisis, partly to increased competition with many new veterinary clinics in the area. However, this is a common problem for many other schools, not specific for this Faculty. Therefore, the second factor contributing to this situation is poor management of the Small Animal Clinic and its hospital based on rather low capability to attract higher numbers of cases. Based on discussions with staff and students, it seems that the capability of attracting patients is strongly person dependent. Therefore, the team thinks that this area still needs significant improvement. Due to this fact, the rectification of this Major deficiency as a whole seems to be at the borderline.

Ad 3. Insufficient food animal teaching: production, individual and herd health management

Findings

The Faculty has introduced several conceptual changes in food animal teaching. All subjects listed in SOP Annex 2 are covered by the curriculum, either under the same names or under different names. Subjects missing in 2010 have been included into the current curriculum. Based on the evaluation report 2010, the Faculty has introduced the concept of individual (Major Deficiency related to caseload and necropsies) and herd health management (Major Deficiency on its own). A new subject, Veterinary Prevention has been introduced to the curriculum of the clinical years and appropriate changes were made in the contents of other clinical subjects. A multidisciplinary team has been nominated to cover all aspects of this integrative concept. 80 hours of hands-on training were introduced as a “summer practice”. Student must provide written reports by the end of this stay in cattle and pig farms, in studs or breeding centres.

Comments

Here, the Faculty did a good job. The multidisciplinary staff nominated to address and resolve this issue fully understood the essence of this Major Deficiency and took appropriate measures. They reorganized teaching not only in terms of increasing clinical and necropsy caseload and of introducing missing subjects. The subject Veterinary Prevention is based on a modern concept, backed-up by appropriate logistics. Although its concept has clearly been well established, it is too early to evaluate it definitively. It has been running since two years, with one year necessary for elaborating the theoretical concept and for taking specific organizational measures. However, it has been evaluated positively by the first year of students who have experienced it and it also was quite well argued during on-site discussion.

The contents of all other Animal Production subjects are comparable to other European veterinary schools and their way of teaching is standard. It is mostly veterinary-oriented, although one part is taught (in the first years of the curriculum) by staff from the Faculty of Agriculture.

Conclusions related to the Major Deficiency concerned

According to the team, this Major Deficiency has been fully rectified.

Other issues related to the revisitation

1. The Faculty provided thorough information on general measures taken for improving the quality of teaching. Elements of Quality Assessment have been introduced. In general, these activities represent a useful approach for the future of teaching veterinary medicine and it was good to learn about them from the report. Among those closely related to the purpose of the revisitation, the definition of Day One Skills and introduction of the corresponding logbook is considered by the team as an important step forwards.

2. With regards not only to the purpose of the revisitation but also as a generally important issue for the future of the Faculty, the team strongly recommends the Faculty to address problems related to the Small Animal Clinic. The team has appreciated the attempts to find alternative ways of teaching (extramural stays, shelter animals) but it seems that a more efficient approach is still missing. Like in the large animal area, a modern concept of the Small Animal Clinic that would allow coping with the decreasing numbers of patients should be elaborated and implemented. Based on this and based on a high reputation of a university clinic, teaching in this extremely important area of veterinary medicine would have a chance to further improve.

General conclusions

It is the role of ECOVE to harmonize the final decision about the faculty's request with decisions made for other European schools in comparable situations. The purpose of this report is to provide ECOVE with all information necessary for this decision.

The team has appreciated the Dean's drive for improvements. We could see that the Faculty has undertaken a considerable effort to improve the shortcomings described in the report of 2010.

In general, the team was pleased to see that the first visit was explored as an efficient feedback and tool for further development of the Faculty, which is the primary purpose of the EAEVE evaluation system.

All three Major deficiencies were addressed and significant changes have occurred in all three areas since 2010. Caseload in small animals seems to be at the borderline of the minimum standard requirements as defined by the SOPs.

Warsaw, 13 November 2014

Prof. Dr. Petr Horin, Dr. Hervé Hiard

Annex 1 Decision of ECOVE

The following major deficiency has not yet been rectified:

1. Low case load in small animals to guarantee sufficient hand-on training

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Warsaw is classified after revisitation as holding the status of: **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL**