

## ***Veterinary Public Health Association (VPHA): Where Veterinary Public Health meets One Health, from Animal welfare to Zoonoses***

### **What is the VPHA?**

The Veterinary Public Health Association is a diverse organisation bringing together vets and non-vets from across the world with a range of backgrounds and with a breadth of experience. The association is involved with many interesting and diverse Veterinary Public Health activities of importance relating to humans, non-human animals and the environment. For example:

- public health, animal health and welfare (of all species) including
  - welfare at slaughter
  - regulation of puppy production
  - food quality
- environmental health and sustainability
- controlling diseases (zoonotic & non-zoonotic, endemic and emerging)

### ***One World, One Health, One Welfare: Global Health = Veterinary Public Health***

One recent example of how the VPHA is aiming to fulfil its vision is its involvement in a project to help pet ownership improve the health (physical and/or mental) of the elderly, vulnerable and/or disabled. The companionship provided by well socialised and adapted pets can enhance the wellbeing of an important sector of society.

We are a specialist division of the BVA, provide representatives on several BVA panels and are regularly asked for advice on various topical issues. Recent involvement has featured animal welfare including non-stun slaughter and transport, bovine TB, raw pet food and the impact of Brexit and COVID-19 on the profession. VPHA not only has links in the UK (eg. FSA, GVS, DEFRA, universities and industries) but members also work actively in Europe (eg. in FVE/UEVH, EVERI, EFSA,).

### **Conferences and study tours**

We are a friendly organisation with twice yearly conferences held jointly with the Association of Government Vets and other specialist BVA divisions. These meetings have traditionally provided a wonderful opportunity not only to hear about recent developments in the field of Public and One Health from a diverse range of speakers, but also to present your own research or ideas in our biannual poster and blitz talk competition. There is also usually plenty of opportunity to mingle and socialise with other members, both old friends and new acquaintances. In fact, in our opinion, the social aspects of our conferences have been just as important as the formal elements!

Our international Study Tours (held every two to three years) have also offered a great opportunity to learn new things while having a great time and sampling the local produce. Linking closely with veterinary colleagues in the host nation these tours provide a unique insight, behind the scenes, of systems and protocols (and social venues) on an international scale.

Although we are unable to carry out our normal socialising at the moment, we are delighted to announce that we are holding our **Autumn conference online, free of charge**. Please see our website for details (<http://www.vpha.co.uk/>). It won't be the same without seeing everyone and having a get-together but here's hoping we can meet you and celebrate together next year!

### **Who can become a VPHA member?**

**Anyone** (vets and non-vets) interested in Veterinary Public Health and One Health issues at **any stage in their career**.

Find us at <http://www.vpha.co.uk/> , on Facebook @VPHAssociation or follow us on Twitter @VPHA

### How can you join?

To apply for membership, fill in the application form at <http://www.vpha.co.uk/join-the-vpha.html> .

**Student** (Undergraduate/postgraduate) Membership - £10

**Standard and Associated** Membership - £50

**Retired** Membership - £20

### Why should one join VPHA?

If, in one way or another, you already contribute to the enrichment of animal and human lives and their shared environment in the developing and developed world, the Veterinary Public Health Association (as one of the specialist divisions of the BVA) is exactly the organization which will provide you with the opportunities to exchange interests, ideas and opportunities to work together with other like-minded people.

With the range of membership and VPHA's involvements in the UK and Europe it offers an ideal platform for you to explore new areas and form new connections within and outside the profession. For students (undergraduate and postgraduate) there are opportunities to present or discuss your research or ideas with others outside the normal research environment at our conferences and the website also provides a platform to present research abstracts and posters. Many members are happy to help and advise where they can and professional involvement, be it private, industry or governmental, can be invaluable. The VPHA website also has links to training resources and current issues affecting the profession and public health, together with information on events and the current activity of council members working on behalf of the VPHA.

In summary, VPHA membership (both for vets and non-vets) is great value for money and provides opportunities to:

- Articulate, through Council, your ideas and concerns on issues that are relevant to veterinary and allied professionals, especially the UK's role in a changing EU/world.
- Meet new colleagues and make new friends from all parts of the world (and from different academic, scientific or technical disciplines) in a convivial atmosphere.
- Attend VPHA/AGV conferences in the UK and webinars (counts as CPD) and participate in study tours within Europe every two or three years (counts as CPD).

### What is associate membership?

- According to the BVA and VPHA constitutions, qualified veterinarians are eligible for full membership whilst non-veterinarians are eligible for associate membership.
- Although associate members cannot hold Council positions (including Presidency) they can be co-opted to represent the particular interests of allied professions.
- **VPHA highly values associate members' interest in VPH and recognises their tremendous continuing contribution.**

**VPHA currently has more than 250 full and associate members, but this is only a fraction of all those either working in – or simply interested in – veterinary public health in the UK/ EU. We therefore appeal to all those who are not yet members to consider joining us!**

**Remember, you don't have to be a veterinarian to belong to the VPHA.**