



Optivet Newsletter

November 2017

WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE

Expansion at Optivet

Exciting times ahead

Optivet was founded more than 10 years ago and has developed an international reputation as a leader in ophthalmology. For the last 5 years there has been gradual expansion of the medical and surgical teams and we are delighted to announce that there has been rapid recent progression in our team. With the addition of specialist internal medic Matthew Best and specialist general surgeon Ian Nicholson to the team we can now offer referrals for medicine and surgery 5 days a week.

The ethos at Optivet has always been to offer top quality, truly specialist-led referral services while maintaining a high-value service to our referring vets and clients in a way that only an independent referral centre can. In line with this our expansion enables us to offer an even better service for our patients and clients. The increase in staff coincides with a further extension of our facilities with the addition of new dog and cat ward. This allows us to keep our critical patients in the ICU and maintain the excellent standard of care that you would expect of a specialist referral hospital.

Our equipment at Optivet is outstanding with a top-quality, super-fast, 128-slice, Toshiba CT, full endoscopy set up (including flexible cystoscopy), full diathermy capabilities and ligasure. A new high-powered, high-frequency ultrasound is on its way.

But this is only part of the picture and it is the experience and expertise of our staff that is the true secret to what we can offer. We are exceptionally proud of our staff starting with our amazing receptionists making every client feel welcome, our caring veterinary care assistants ensuring the inpatients have the best possible comfort and wellbeing, our highly skilled and qualified nursing team that ably support our vets' clinical activities as well as the veterinary surgeons.

In collaboration with Veterinary Independent Specialists we have two European Specialist surgeons able to tackle all manner of soft-tissue and orthopaedic surgeries. Our medicine team not only has the internationally-renowned Kit Sturgess but now has Matt working alongside.

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Cutting edge updates

Our very own Ian Nicholson publishes in JSAP, see **page 4**, and there is an update on the latest release of treating heart disease on **page 5**.

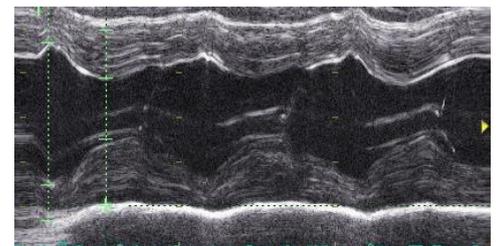
New staff at Optivet

We are excited to introduce new staff members bringing new skills to the growing team, read about them on **pages 3-4**



EPIC ultrasounds

The results of the EPIC study change the way we manage patients with mitral valve disease but presents challenges in its application. On **page 5** we outline a new service to help you provide the best care to this group of patients.



Interesting cases

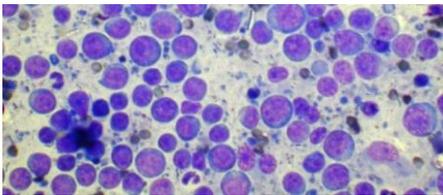
We have two interesting cases that we have seen in the last month. On **page 2** is a dog with a dramatic and curable lung disease while on **page 6** is a great example of biliary disease in a cat.

The breadth of experience is huge and we are particularly keen to point out that Kit is an advanced practitioner in cardiology (in addition to Fellow of the Royal College and Specialist in internal medicine) while Matt has a particular interest and extensive experience in medical oncology. As part of our internal medicine service we are very happy to see cardiology, oncology and emergency cases. This gives referring vets peace of mind that however a case might develop we have the skills to provide the best care and to provide the best possible outcome.

This is all in addition to our top-quality ophthalmology department who continue to provide cutting-edge care for all eye conditions. As a centre of excellence we are excited to be training the next generation of veterinary ophthalmologists; we have just had Francesca Hendy (Chez) start with us as an ophthalmology resident, this means we currently have 3 residents training at Optivet.

CPD evening

In September we hosted a very successful evening teaching session for our dedicated and knowledgeable referring vets. Attendees were treated to a discussion on the latest approach to multicentric lymphoma in dogs as well as some updates from the recent European conference in internal medicine. Lymphoma is the commonest blood cancer in dogs and both treatments and diagnostics are a rapidly developing field. Matt has a particular passion for the treatment of lymphoma and it was great to share this with the attendees. The evening was a great success and it was also an excellent opportunity to discuss some cases and approaches with our colleagues on the front line.



Bronchial Foreign Body

A Case Report

When a 6 year old, male neutered, 35kg, mixed breed dog was presented to us with the suspicion of an inhaled foreign body no one was quite prepared for what would be found. His referring vet had treated with several rounds of antibiotics which had controlled a persistent cough but only for short periods of time. On further questioning the coughing had begun in June during a session chasing a ball in a farmer's field of wheat.

The dog was anaesthetised so that Kit and Matt from our medicine team could explore with our videobronchoscope. Sitting in a major bronchus in the right side of the lungs was the end of a small piece of vegetation. Surrounding this was a large amount of foul smelling, purulent fluid. The material had almost certainly been there for 3½ months and was not only well-wedged but was at risk of fragmenting. This was a delicate extraction but using one of our endoscopic snares and a great deal of patience it was possible to very gradually work the foreign body loose.

It was only once the snare was carefully pulled out that we were able to see the offending foreign body. I think you will all be amazed by the 9cm entire head of corn that was retrieved. It is extraordinary that this dog was not more sick having had this in his lung for so long, but we are confident that he must feel a lot better now that it has been removed!

ENDOSCOPY @ OPTIVET

We are able to offer a wide range of endoscopy at Optivet including rhinoscopy, bronchoscopy, upper and lower gastrointestinal endoscopy and rigid and flexible cystoscopy. As well as performing biopsies, brushings and washes during endoscopy we can perform certain interventions including foreign body removal and mural foam injections for urethral sphincter mechanism incompetence. Please do get in touch if you wanted to discuss whether endoscopy might be useful in your case.



New staff at Optivet

Ian Nicholson

RCVS recognised Veterinary Specialist in Small Animal Surgery.

Since finishing his specialist training, Ian has worked in university and private referral hospitals in the UK as a general surgeon performing soft tissue, orthopaedic and neurosurgical procedures.

Ian has particular interests in helping pet owners to decide what to do for the best; avoiding over-diagnosis and over-treatment; patient safety; the benefits of surgical generalism; openness; and collaborative clinical research.

He also has a strong interest in teaching, and provides undergraduate teaching to vet students at the University of Surrey, plus post-graduate training to specialists, advanced practitioners and general practitioners in all aspects of small animal veterinary surgery.

Ian graduated from the University of Bristol in 2000 and spent time in mixed practice before undertaking further training for a year at the Royal Veterinary College (RVC), London, then three years at the University of Cambridge Veterinary School.



Francesca Hendy (Chez)

Chez graduated from St George's University Grenada in 2011 after completing her clinical years at the Royal School of Veterinary Studies Edinburgh.

After a year in mixed practice she completed an equine internship at a busy equine referral hospital in Berkshire and stayed working there as an equine ambulatory and hospital assistant.

She has had a keen interest in ophthalmology and has been involved with cases at Optivet for the last few years. Chez joined the practice full time in June and has just started her residency program with us here at Optivet.

She hopes to expand the ophthalmology services available to equine clients and surrounding equine veterinary practices as well as enjoying the challenges of small animal ophthalmology.



Debbie Chapman

This is Debbie's cat Frankenstein (being as affectionate as he gets!).



Debbie has been a veterinary nurse since 2002 when she took the plunge and decided that she had to have a career caring for animals and trained to do the job that she loves! Prior to this she had been a ferry steward, a casino croupier and an animation artist.

All things 'cat' interest her and Debbie is currently studying for the ISFM Diploma in Feline Nursing.

Aside from anything at all to do with animals my other big passion is American country music.

Matt graduated from the University of Cambridge in 2008 where he was awarded the year prize at clinical school. After one year in mixed general practice, he moved to Brisbane Australia where he worked for three years in general small animal practice. Matt moved to Brisbane Veterinary Specialist Centre in 2012 and completed a residency in Small Animal Medicine. In 2015 he passed the specialist examination to become a Fellow of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists.

He moved back to the UK to take up a position at Optivet in summer 2017 and he is very excited to be part of a team that is not only cutting edge but that genuinely cares about patients and their owners.

Matt has extensive experience in all areas in the discipline of small animal internal medicine and has a particular interest in the treatment of cancer in dogs and cats. He has shown great talent in the diagnosis and management of complicated medical problems in small animals and he has numerous publications in international peer-reviewed scientific journals.



Matthew Best

Sara Benton



Sara graduated from the University of Wales, Swansea in 2005 with a Bachelor of Science honours degree in Zoology, before attending Duchy College to train as a veterinary nurse. Since qualifying as a registered veterinary nurse in 2007 she has worked in several different types of practice; from zoos and first opinion, to charity clinics and now, referral.

Sara has a strong interest in animal behaviour and training, and holds qualifications in both areas. She is keen to expand her knowledge in medicine, analgesia, and anaesthesia.

Amy Tunabuna



Amy has been a qualified vet nurse for 10 years and still really enjoys the nursing. She has worked in first opinion and in referral practices; it is the referral practice that has really captivated Amy and where her interests lie.

Amy enjoys all aspects of nursing including spending time in theatre, the challenge of medicine and spending time caring for pets on the wards.

At home she is the proud owner of a working Cocker Spaniel who greets her enthusiastically when she returns home from a busy day at work.

The latest from the literature

A major collaborative publication on enteric surgery by our Ian Nicholson

We are proud to be able to draw your attention to the latest issue of the Journal of Small Animal Practice (JSAP) a leading British veterinary journal with an international readership and reputation. The leading original article has none other than our latest specialist recruit Ian Nicholson in the prestigious position of last author.

This article was written prior to Ian arriving with us at Optivet and is an exciting collaboration of 15 referral centres from across the UK. The paper redefines the surgical complication rate of intestinal biopsies which previously were considered a high-risk procedure. This important work will help to change the way we manage intestinal disease in dogs and cats and improve the information that we are able to provide to our clients. A copy of this paper is attached to this email – it is a good read!

As the last author Ian was key in the inception and coordination of this paper, it should not be emphasised how much work and effort is required to put such a big multicenter paper together.

We are of course proud that here at Optivet we are able to offer you the most qualified and well-respected opinion-leading specialists from around the country. Well done Ian!



CPD OPPORTUNITY

Look out for our festive-themed CPD event on **Thursday 7th December** when you will get the chance to hear Ian speaking on safe surgery of the GI tract at. We will be in touch nearer the time to let you now more details.

Echocardiography in presymptomatic mitral valve dogs

A new clinical service

The **EPIC** study has recently been published in the Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine. EPIC stands for **E**valuation of **P**imobendan **I**n **C**ardiomegaly.

This groundbreaking study has shown that at last we have a way to slow down the progression of sub-clinical mitral valve disease in small-breed dogs.

The EPIC study showed that when small-breed dogs that had mitral valve disease causing cardiomegaly but **not** congestive heart failure were treated with pimobendan there was a significantly longer time period before they progressed to congestive heart failure as well as an increased survival time.

This study only demonstrated benefit for dogs with radiographically **and** sonographically confirmed cardiomegaly. The echocardiographic parameters were found to be of key importance. Currently treatment is **not** recommended in patients with a heart murmur and no cardiomegaly



To enable you and your patients to benefit from these very significant findings, Optivet have now introduced a special "EPIC" outpatient ultrasound service.

This service is offered to dogs weighing less than 15 kg with a grade 3 or louder heart murmur without signs of congestive heart failure (ie increased sleeping respiratory rate or exercise intolerance).

An out-patient echocardiographic examination will be performed to specifically report on the criteria defined in the EPIC study (confirmation of mitral regurgitation with thickened mitral valve, left atrial to aortic ratio and normalised left ventricular diameter in diastole).

A written report will be sent stating whether the criteria are met.

Thoracic radiography is advised to be performed at your clinic and of course, ongoing/ lifelong pimobendan if indicated, will be prescribed by your clinic.

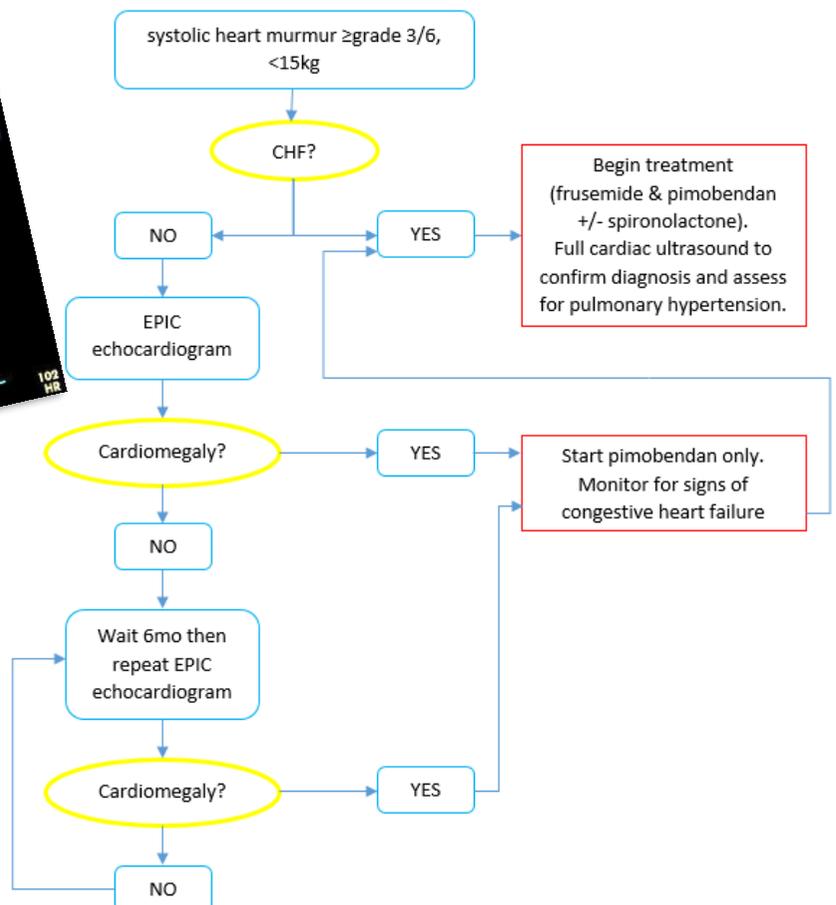
To enable the maximum number of dogs to benefit, these ultrasounds will be priced at a reduced rate of £150.

ULTRASOUND TO ASSESS EPIC

If you have patients that would benefit from this service, please call reception and ask for an "EPIC ultrasound booking".

Please note that this service is specifically designed for evaluation of the EPIC criteria only. A full echocardiographic examination is still required for any other cardiac cases.

If you have any questions, please contact any of the medicine team at Optivet.



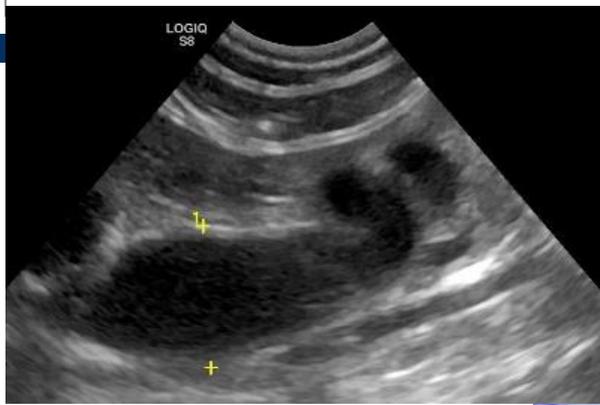
Feline Bronchitis

A Case Report

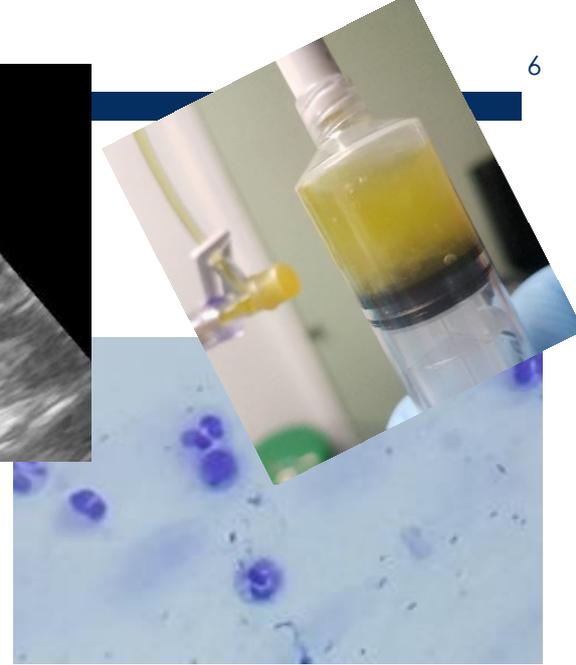
A 10 year old female neutered Siamese cross-breed cat was presented to Matt with a 10 month history of waxing and waning vomiting and inappetence which had previously responded to corticosteroids but had worsened in the last week. The cat was hyperthyroid and well-controlled on thiamazole.

Clinical examination revealed mild dehydration but was otherwise unremarkable.

Bloods showed a mild mature neutrophilia and a mild increase in ALT at 77mmol/l (presumably related to hyperthyroidism). TBil, ALT and GGT were all within normal limits. Abdominal ultrasound showed normal intestine and pancreas but a markedly dilated and tortuous common bile duct (<15mm) which could be followed to the duodenal



papilla. Cholecystocentesis was performed under ultrasound guidance without complication and flocculent pale bile was retrieved. In-house cytology was performed and this revealed large numbers of neutrophils and bacilli bacteria. Aerobic culture was performed and there was a heavy pure growth of E coli with multiple resistances including to some β lactam antibiotics. Treatment was started with potentiated amoxicillin and there was an excellent clinical response. This case emphasises the



changeable nature of these cases and the benefits of ultrasound in these cats that are anorexic and 'not doing right'. There was no suggestion on the bloodwork of a significant hepatopathy despite the presence of raging suppurative cholangitis. In these cases it is important that a culture and sensitivity is performed as there can be a varied sensitivity profile.

Recent updates

Results of the VALVE study released at ECVIM congress 2017

The latest prospective cardiology study was released at the ECVIM congress in September this year. The study has been called VALVE (**V**asotop in **A**ddition to **L**asix and **V**etmedin for the treatment of mitral valve **E**ndocardiosis) and Matt from our internal medicine team was there at the release to get you the latest news.

This well-designed study followed up on the QUEST study of 2008 and enrolled 158 dogs to investigate whether or not we should be using ace inhibitors alongside pimobendan in our dogs in congestive heart failure due to mitral valve disease. The results were very clear and they showed that the ace inhibitors provided no additional benefit. As such we no longer recommend the use of ace inhibitors in dogs with myxomatous mitral valve disease either before or after entering heart failure.



CONTACT US

As always we are very happy to discuss cases with you including your approach as well as what role referral might play. We are also very open to hearing any ideas about content that you would like to see in our newsletters and at future CPD evenings.

On this note **our next CPD evening is on Thursday 7th December** and will have a distinctively festive theme with a focus on both surgical and medical emergency cases that you might over the Christmas period.

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