

# *Organising a pan-European specialisation...*



## ***The veterinary specialist experience***

**Linda Horspool, European Board of Veterinary Specialisation**



**Linda Horspool** BVMS, PhD, DipECVPT, MRCVS  
**Secretary**



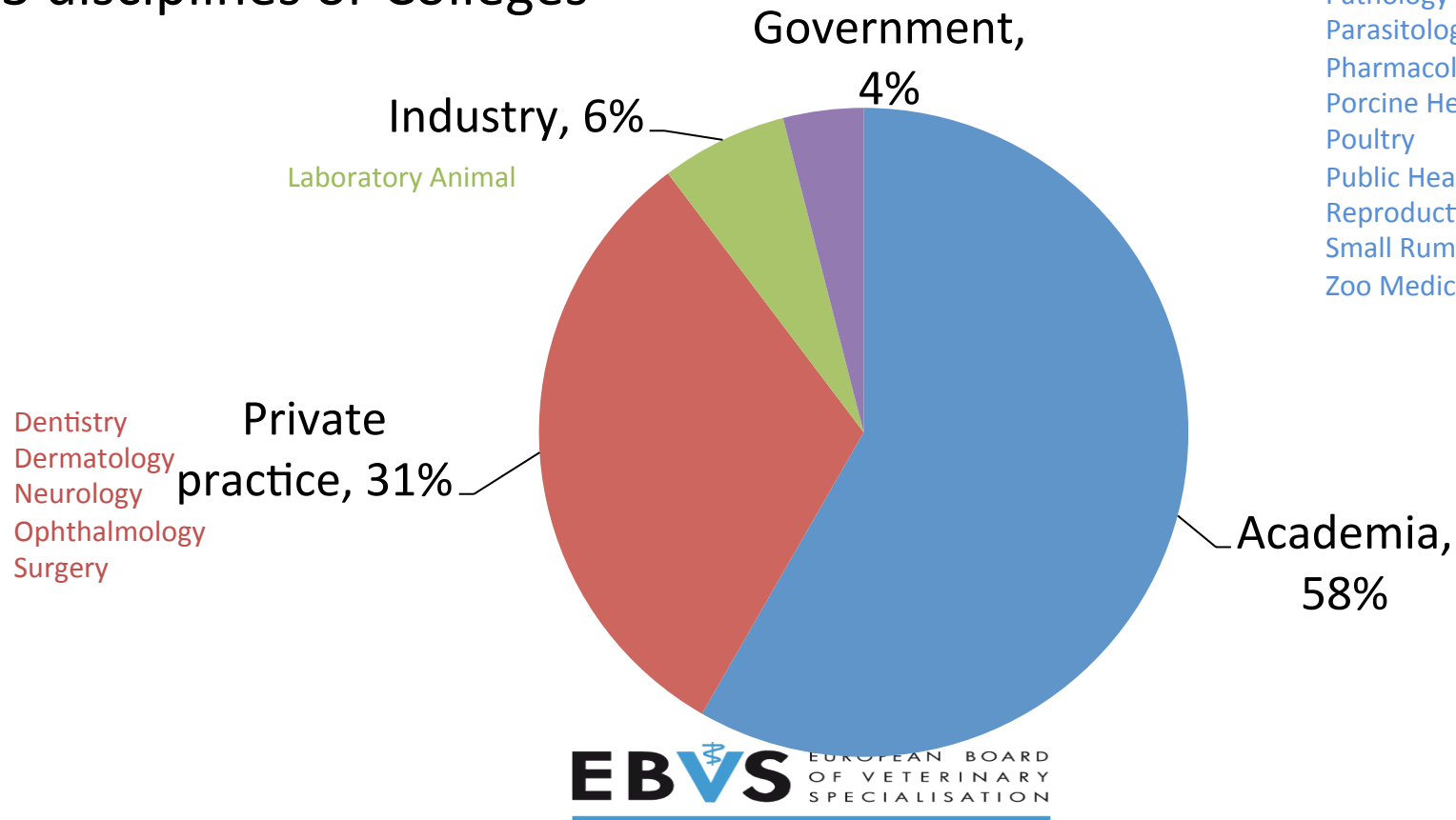
# History of veterinary specialisation in Europe



# A picture of veterinary specialisation

- EBVS - A major regulatory body for veterinary specialisation
- c. 4500 members (including residents)
- 23 disciplines or Colleges

Anaesthesia  
Behaviour – Welfare  
Bovine Health  
Clinical Pathology  
Diagnostic Imaging  
Internal Medicine CA  
Internal medicine Eqione  
Clinical Nutrition  
Pathology  
Parasitology  
Pharmacology & Toxicology  
Porcine Health  
Poultry  
Public Health  
Reproduction  
Small Ruminant Health  
Zoo Medicine



Dentistry  
Dermatology  
Neurology  
Ophthalmology  
Surgery

Private practice, 31%

Laboratory Animal

Industry, 6%

Government,

4%

Academia,  
58%

# Who is EBVS?

- Board of Executive officers and representatives of 23 Colleges
- Each College has up to two board members
- 1 vote per College
- Observers representing
  - Veterinary education in Europe - European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE)
  - Veterinarians - Federation of Veterinarians in Europe (FVE)
  - Non-EU specialist associations e.g. ABVS, ANZCVS

# What are the objectives of EBVS?

Committed to leading and promoting veterinary specialist professional training and certification in Europe

- Focus on services provided by the veterinary profession to the public
- Ensure superior animal and public health and well being
- Create frameworks for training and qualifications
  - “professional specialist diplomas”
  - not directly related to the academic system

# What does EBVS do?

- Recognises and coordinates veterinary specialty Colleges
- Assures the quality of specialists by monitoring College standards
- Furnishes advice and assistance to groups submitting applications for establishment and recognition of Colleges
- Maintains a register of EBVS specialists
- Provides information on veterinary specialisation in Europe to government bodies, private organisations, veterinarians and animal owners

# What does EBVS do?

- As an executive member of ECCVT with EAEVE and FVE
  - Exchanges information on content, level, assessment & structure of undergraduate & postgraduate veterinary training
  - Promotes and implements QC of veterinary training
  - Establishes minimum requirements for postgraduate qualifications



# How is veterinary specialisation coordinated by EBVS?

- New College application from interested party – letter of intent
- Appointment of liaison officers from EBVS Board
- College steering committee = foundation diplomates
  - Clear criteria on qualifications, publications, duration of experience
- Provisional recognition application once structures in place
  - Clear criteria on annual meeting attendance, committee structure, etc.
  - Open period to apply for de facto recognition (5 years)
    - Clear criteria on qualifications, publications, duration of experience
  - Residency programmes should start within 5 years
- Full recognition application
  - 2 EBVS Board reviewers

# How is quality assurance addressed by EBVS?

- “Template” Constitution and Policies & Procedures
- College appraisal by peer review
  - Annual reports to EBVS Board
    - Number of residencies, active diplomates, pass rates
  - Detailed reports every 5 years to EBVS Board
  - Re-evaluation of Diplomates every 5 years using EBVS approved template
- Examiner (and resident supervisor) training
- External observers at examinations

# Standardised Veterinary Specialist Training

- c.1000 residents in standard or alternative programmes
  - An alternative route must be provided for candidates unable or unwilling to follow standard training programmes.
  - Alternative programme is tailor-made for candidate
- Largest disciplines are CA internal medicine, diagnostic imaging, surgery, and pathology (c. 60% of residents)

# Residency Programmes

- Entry requirements include an internship or equivalent of at least one year
- Detailed objectives
- Synopsis of number and type of patients required and emphasis and expected depth of study for each patient / subject area
- Minimum requirements for facilities, equipment, and laboratory capabilities
- Duration of training at least 4 years  
(At least 1 year internship and at least 2.5 year residency)

# What has EBVS achieved?

- Limited legal recognition
  - EU Directive 2010/63/EU - Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes - at several points, it refers to the engagement of veterinary specialists in Laboratory Animal Medicine, and also in the area of wildlife practice (ECZM).
- National recognition
  - EBVS College qualifications can be used in at least 11 EU MS (Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, UK) plus Norway and Switzerland
  - EBVS College qualifications recognised officially in several (7) MS (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, Sweden, UK)

# What has EBVS achieved?

- Database of specialists
- Time-limited certification
  - 5 year recertification programme – for individuals and speciality colleges
- High standard of qualification
  - Tendency to phase out national specialist qualifications (e.g. UK)
- Establishment of best practices
  - Examiner training
- Learning from other associations for continuous improvement

# What has EBVS achieved?

- European Skills/Competences, Qualifications & Occupations (ESCO)
  - Specialist practitioner listed as a key occupation of veterinarians in developing multi-lingual European classification scheme



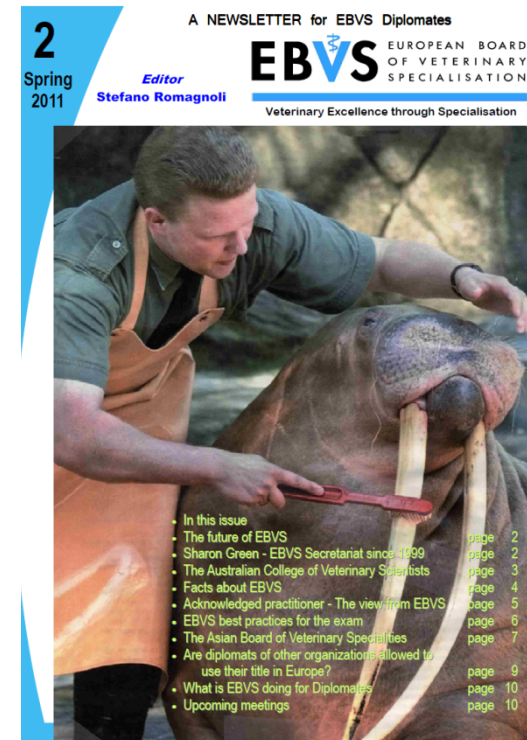
# What is new / ongoing?

- Middle tier training for veterinarians (VETCEE)
- CTF
- National EBVS representative for each MS to work with national veterinary associations and competent authorities



# What are the challenges ahead?

- Standard setting and benchmarking
- Achievement of needed critical mass (small specialities)
- No monopoly on veterinary specialisation
- Reaching the 10 MS needed for CTF
- Applying for legal recognition



Thank you!

**EBVS** EUROPEAN BOARD  
OF VETERINARY  
SPECIALISATION

---