



Sunday 12th October 2025 | Pattingham 2 | 09:00-10:00

Speaker: Emma Collins, RVN, A1, L3 AET, L5 DET

Title: Spotlighting nutrition as the fifth vital sign



Emma has spent over 20 years working in a veterinary practice in Herefordshire. Qualifying in 2004, she went on to gain her A1 assessor qualification and later became a clinical coach. Emma's passion for student veterinary nurse training led her into teaching. Emma has achieved the Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training and is lead tutor at Abbeydale Vet Nurse Training. Emma teaches on both the Level 2 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing Assistant and Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing courses. Emma is also a CQ OSCE examiner.

Synopsis:

This session will focus on the fifth vital sign; nutrition and how we can enhance the VCA role in veterinary practice. Nutrition plays a large role in both the veterinary and human healthcare sector. Good nutrition is vital for us to stay fit and healthy, the same can be said for our patients. As a VCA, when looking after our inpatients, we are aware of the importance of measuring and recording the four vital signs, temperature, pulse, respiration and pain. This session will focus on the fifth vital sign, nutrition identifying how the VCA, with an understanding on how to gain an accurate nutritional history from the client, can support the RVN in performing a nutritional assessment. We will also look at how we can help provide nutritional support, including supporting the RVN with the challenging patient. The session will also cover how to prepare appropriate food and fluids for hospitalised patients and basic nutritional calculations. A tick on the hospital sheet is not enough, we need to make sure we are recording how much food and water is being offered and how much is being consumed.

Learning Objectives:

1. Evaluate the principles of in-patient care, the importance of nutrition.
2. Identify how to support the RVN with the challenging hospitalised patient.
3. Learn how to perform a body condition score and nutritional assessment.