



## Careers information sheet

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### Animal Care (including Veterinary Nursing)

#### What does Animal Care involve?

Animal care businesses and organisations need people who can combine strong technical knowledge and a scientific approach with practical skills. There are opportunities in zoo-keeping, animal protection and health inspection, animal welfare, pet shops, boarding kennels, breeders, wildlife parks and rescue charities.

Qualified Veterinary Nurses provide skilled care for sick animals and support for their owners. They undertake diagnostic tests, medical treatments and minor surgical procedures. Veterinary Nurses also play an important role in the education of owners on good standards of animal care.

You can train either as a small animal veterinary nurse or as an equine veterinary nurse. Small animal nurses work mainly with cats and dogs but also learn to care for smaller pets and more exotic animals. Equine nurses work with horses.

Most veterinary nurses train whilst working in an RCVS (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons) approved training practice. Training is quite intensive and involves attending a recognised college to complete the Veterinary Nursing NVQ at levels 2 and 3, and the RCVS Veterinary Nursing Theory Examinations at levels 2 and 3.

(Source: RCVS/BVNA/jobs4u/Sparsholt College)

There are several different pathways to become qualified in Animal Care.

- ROUTE 1 - Veterinary nursing degree
- ROUTE 2 - Work based learning
- ROUTE 3 - Vocational learning

Go to the Key Routes web pages for interactive versions of these routes – <http://www.keyroutes.org.uk/careas/lanenv/opt-animal.aspx>

There is no upper age limit. Adults can go into Veterinary Nursing after gaining experience in other animal-related jobs. They need to follow the same training as young people to become qualified.

#### What else should I be doing?

It would help your Animal Care career to:

- keep up to date with new developments in animal welfare
- develop your decision making and problem solving skills

- develop your negotiation and analytical skills
- care for a pet of your own
- choose work experience where you will meet the public and use your communications skills
- work shadow in a veterinary practice if possible
- become a Young Member of the British Veterinary Nursing Association

### **Useful links**

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons oversees standards and qualifications for Veterinary Nurses. RCVS maintains the statutory list of veterinary nurses and awards veterinary nursing NVQs.

<http://www.rcvs.org.uk/vetnurses>

The British Veterinary Nursing Association is the national representative body for Veterinary Nurses.

<http://www.bvna.org.uk>

The College of Animal Welfare runs Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses for nurses who want to develop their skills. Some courses are available by distance learning.

<http://www.caw.ac.uk>

The British Equine Veterinary Association has a guide to Equine Veterinary Nursing (EVN).

<http://www.beva.org.uk>

The Animal Care College has a guide to Equine Veterinary Nursing (EVN).

[http:// www.animalcarecollege.co.uk](http://www.animalcarecollege.co.uk)