

Quality Improvement Advisory Board (QIAB) Terms of Reference

1. Background

- 1.1 It is vital to assess what we do in order to ensure that we are moving with the times and adapting and responding to the advances in evidence and in the profession.
- 1.2 As expectations of customers grow day by day, it is important for practices to continually improve the quality of the care and services they have to offer. High standards do not just happen by chance; they evolve over some time as a result of experience and evidence.
- 1.3 Practices will constantly have numerous priorities to deal with. Practice teams often feel overworked and unable to take on new work. By introducing quality improvement techniques, the aim is to optimise the design, delivery and efficiency of current systems of care to ensure the highest level of quality.
- 1.4 Quality Improvement is about making veterinary healthcare more safe, effective, client and patient-centred, timely, efficient and evidence-based. We are focussing on what organisations and individuals can do using quality improvement tools with an aim to bring about measurable improvement by applying evidence-based veterinary medicine (EBVM) in practice.

2. Remit and responsibilities

2.1 The QIAB Chair has been appointed to

- 2.1.1 Provide direction and accountability for the delivery of the RCVS Knowledge Quality Improvement in Veterinary Practice Initiative (QI Initiative) in order to meet the expected high-level requirements and key-performance indicators, ensuring completion within scope, budget and timeline as set out in the strategy and program plan.
- 2.1.2 Be the spokesperson for the QI Initiative
- 2.1.3 Be the lead contact for the QIAB, providing the group's representation to RCVS Knowledge
- 2.1.4 Liaise with RCVS Knowledge Board of Trustee Representative to provide assurance that the Initiative is in concordance with the remit set out by the Board of Trustees
- 2.1.5 Regularly liaise with the Vice-Chair of the QIAB to ensure smooth deputisation.
- 2.1.6 Delegate work packages to the QIAB and the wider veterinary community
- 2.1.7 Ensure appropriate mitigations against risk
- 2.1.8 Horizon-scan for opportunities and threats, and build networks to understand, for example, research and best practice from other similar organisations, acting on this information appropriately
- 2.1.9 Take the role of Chairperson for meetings of the QIAB, including
 - 2.1.9.1 Ensuring discussions and decision making processes are focused on addressing the key issues and questions identified in the agenda
 - 2.1.9.2 Attending planning meetings, including providing agendas and key lines of inquiry
 - 2.1.9.3 Defining key areas to address, and areas for recommendation.

2.2 The QIAB Vice-Chair has been appointed to

- 2.2.1 Conduct all responsibilities for the Chair of the QIAB on a deputisation basis, as required
- 2.2.2 Liaise with the Chair of the QIAB to ensure smooth deputisation.

2.3 The QIAB, RCVS Knowledge Board of Trustees Representative has been appointed to

- 2.3.1 Ensure that the QI Initiative is operating within the objects of the charity as set out in the charity's Articles of Association
- 2.3.2 Ensure that the QI Initiative operates in line with the "bigger picture" of the charity's overall strategy as set out in the its strategic plan (the remit set out by the Board of Trustees)
- 2.3.3 Report to the Board of Trustees, providing assurance on the progress of the QI Initiative, specifically highlighting matters outside of the scope, budget and timeline set out in the Charter.
- 2.3.4 Liaise with QIAB Chair to ensure the flow of communication between the Board of Trustees and the QIAB
- 2.3.5 Ensure appropriate mitigations against risk
- 2.3.6 Horizon-scan for opportunities and threats, and build networks to understand, for example, research and best practice from other similar organisations, acting on this information appropriately

2.4 RCVS Knowledge has established the QIAB to

- 2.4.1 Act as a customer representative to accurately represent the customer's needs with the principal aim of advancing the quality of veterinary care for the benefit of animals, the public, and society
- 2.4.2 Provide consensus recommendations for the Board of Trustees on the scope and strategy of the QI Initiative
- 2.4.3 Ensure that the project meets requirement, within time and in scope.
- 2.4.4 Provide leads, feedback for areas of improvement, and communicate successes to show the Initiative's impact
- 2.4.5 Use professional networks to secure buy-in and to assist in the development of the project
- 2.4.6 Actively participate in the collation, dissemination and publication of the outcomes of the QI Initiative
- 2.4.7 Lead on the clinical review and development of resources
- 2.4.8 Champion the project internally and externally, working in partnership with RCVS Knowledge Communications and Digital team to ensure alignment with RCVS Knowledge Communications Strategy, this may include
 - 2.4.8.1 Speaking and facilitating at events
 - 2.4.8.2 Writing evidence-based works or opinion pieces for publication
 - 2.4.8.3 Responding to colleagues in discussion with the best-interests of the RCVS Knowledge and the QI Initiative in mind

2.5 For QIAB meetings, all members of the team will be required to

Attend all meetings where possible, including pre-meetings

- 2.5.1 Read paperwork provided in advance of meetings
- 2.5.2 Suggest questions and issues to be investigated
- 2.5.3 Maintain efficient communication before, during and after meetings
- 2.5.4 Help to identify and develop possible recommendations.

3. Accountability

- 3.1 The QIAB are clinically accountable to the Chair of the QIAB, and the Vice-Chair as deputised.
- 3.2 The QIAB are managerially accountable to the Head of Quality Improvement of RCVS Knowledge.
- 3.3 All are accountable to the RCVS Knowledge Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees Representative will attend the QIAB meetings, acting on their behalf and provide regular progress reports to the RCVS Knowledge Board of Trustees.

4. Membership

- 4.1 Appointments of the QIAB are through arrangements agreed by RCVS Knowledge.
- 4.2 The board shall have between ten to fourteen members, but may operate with fewer if a vacancy exists, provided the quorum is maintained. The members shall include
- 4.3 A Chairperson
- 4.4 A Vice-Chairperson
- 4.5 A Representative of the RCVS Knowledge Board of Trustees
- 4.6 A Veterinary Surgeon whose primary area of work is in practice
- 4.7 A Veterinary Nurse whose primary area of work is in practice
- 4.8 If any member has an interest relating to a specific project issue, pecuniary or otherwise, and is present at the meeting at which the matter is under discussion, they will declare that interest at the start of the meeting, or when the Conflict of Interest becomes apparent, and shall not participate in the discussions. The Chair will have the power to request that member to withdraw from the meeting until the consideration has been completed.

5. Code of Conduct

- 5.1 All members are required to abide by the RCVS knowledge's Code of Conduct, Annex 1. It is the responsibility of the members to ensure that declarations are kept up-to-date.

6. Confidentiality

- 6.1 Members are privy to materials in the conduct of their roles that may be confidential in nature or not for wider distribution. This confidentiality is required to be maintained.
- 6.2 All materials shared with are assumed to be confidential, unless otherwise stated. All members will be required to sign and abide by non-disclosure agreements.

7. Quorum

- 7.1 A quorum for each Committee of at least three members in attendance in person or via teleconference (or similar), is maintained.

8. Attendance

- 8.1 Members are required to attend all scheduled meetings. However, a nominated deputy, approved by the Chair, may attend in the member's absence.
- 8.2 Where the Chair is unable to attend, the Chair should nominate from the attending members an acting Chair in their stead.

9. Frequency of meetings

- 9.1 It is expected that QIAB will meet approximately twice a year with additional electronic contact.

10. Terms of office

- 10.1 The term of office for the QIAB Chair will be three years from the date of their first QIAB meeting in that post. At the end of each term, the QIAB Chair may stand for re-election for a maximum of three consecutive terms (nine years in total).

- 10.2 The term of office for the QIAB Vice-Chair will be three years from the date of their first QIAB meeting in that post. At the end of each term, the QIAB Chair may stand for re-election for a maximum of three consecutive terms (nine years in total).
- 10.3 Where a QIAB member is serving as either the Chair or Vice-Chair and their term in this office expires, they will automatically be invited to remain on the QIAB for the duration of their unexpired tenure in this post (taking into consideration their time as a QIAB member before they became Chair or Vice-Chair).
- 10.4 The term of office for appointed members shall be two years. At the end of each term, members may be re-elected for a maximum of two consecutive terms (four years in total).
- 10.5 Re-elections will be determined by the RCVS Knowledge Board of Trustees.

11. Removal of appointed members

- 11.1 RCVS Knowledge may remove a member before the expiration of their period of office in agreement with the RCVS Knowledge Board of Trustees.

12. Disqualification or vacation of office

The office shall be vacated if

- 12.1 The member ceases to be in good professional standing with the RCVS;
- 12.2 The member is absent, without leave, or suitable deputisation, from 50% of meetings or RCVS Knowledge QI events, held throughout a 12 month period, and RCVS Knowledge resolve that the office should be vacated;
- 12.3 The member is directly or indirectly interested in any contract with RCVS Knowledge and fails to declare the nature of their interest and RCVS Knowledge resolve that the office should be vacated;
- 12.4 A member holds an interest which is in conflict with the objectives of the project or the charity and RCVS Knowledge resolve that the office should be vacated.

13. Conflicts of interests and conflicts of loyalty

- 13.1 Whenever a member has a personal interest (including but not limited to a personal financial interest or a duty of loyalty owed to another organisation or person) directly or indirectly in a matter to be discussed at a meeting or in any transaction or arrangement with regards to the project (whether proposed or already entered into), the member concerned shall;
- 13.1.1 Declare an interest at or before any discussion on the item;
- 13.1.2 Withdraw from any discussion on the item save to the extent that they are invited expressly to contribute information;
- 13.1.3 Not be counted in the quorum for the part of any meeting and any vote devoted to that item; and
- 13.1.4 Withdraw during the vote and have no vote on the item.

14. Remuneration

- 14.1 RCVS Knowledge will cover reasonable travel expenses to attend the meetings.

15. Review of the Terms of Reference

- 15.1 RCVS Knowledge undertakes to give prior notice of any updates to these Terms of Reference.