

A conversation with...

Marie Rippingale REVN tells how her career has brought huge opportunities

PROFILE

Job title:	Registered equine veterinary nurse and head equine nurse
Practice:	Scarsdale Veterinary Group, Derby
Customer type:	Equine

BACKGROUND: I started riding at the age of five and ended up working at a riding stables between the ages of 11 and 16. I got my first pony, Cherokee, aged 13 and my second horse, Chaplin, aged 29. I compete Chaplin regularly in affiliated eventing competitions so both my work life and home life very much involve horses.



CAREER CHOICE: I graduated from The Nottingham Trent University in 2005, with a first class honours degree in equine sports science. While studying for my degree I discovered that I had a real interest in equine veterinary nursing. I decided to take a year out of my degree in 2003 and worked at Scarsdale Vets as an equine nursing assistant. After completing this year out, I was sure that I wanted to pursue a career in equine veterinary nursing. I was delighted when Scarsdale offered me a job as a student equine nurse when I graduated from university. From then I went on to qualify as a registered equine veterinary nurse (REVN) and became head equine nurse at Scarsdale in 2007. Since then I haven't looked back and have gained my G-SQP, clinical coach, DipHE CVN and Dip AVN (equine). I love teaching and have lectured on the Veterinary Nursing Diploma Course since 2010 at Bottle Green Training in Derby. I have organised and given talks for XLVets, BEVA and BVNA. I have not regretted my career decision for a second as it has enabled me to work at the 2012 Olympics as a veterinary technician, and just recently to go to Gambia to work at The Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust.

KEY ROLE: My key role at Scarsdale is to ensure high standards of patient and client care, as well as assisting in the smooth running of the equine hospital. I am responsible for making sure that my team know where they are supposed to be, and what they are supposed to do at all times. I take part in all aspects of practice life from patient care, to taking radiographs, to assisting with monitoring anaesthetics and helping in theatre; it's a very varied role. I also have a training role, being a clinical coach I have a responsibility to guide my student equine nurses through their nursing qualification and NPL. I also help to teach the vet students who come to the practice for rotations from The Nottingham Vet School.

KEY SKILLS: To do this job you need to love horses, be compassionate and have the ability to adapt to any situation. No two days are the same and often even the most carefully made plans go to waste, as your day changes without warning.

WORDS OF ADVICE: If you are considering a career in equine nursing, go and get some work experience at an equine practice. A lot of places take work experience students. This way you can get a realistic idea of what the job involves, before committing to the training. This job is not for everyone, but for the right people, it is the best job in the world!