

Bella Moss get message across at Discover Dogs

THE BELLA Moss Foundation was once again supported by veterinary student volunteers on its stand at Discover Dogs.

This year hand hygiene was the theme presented by The Foundation to those that visited the stand, and Peter Purves, Foundation Vice-Patron and Marc Abraham, resident vet on the Paul O'Grady Show and Kennel Club veterinary advisor, were there to help get the message across.

Using a hand cream that showed up under ultra-violet light, visitors to the stand were able to see how effective their hand washing was. Jill Moss, President of The Foundation said, 'Most pet owners understand the importance of hygiene, but sometimes we need to see just how difficult it is to get our hands properly clean. This exercise has been brilliant in helping understand this.'

Marc Abraham said, 'Even though vets and vet nurses get training in hand hygiene we need to remember that everyone involved

in the care of animals has a responsibility to aim for the very best standard of cleanliness. Showing pet owners, vets and vet nurses how much they need to do to get their hands really clean is a great way of concentrating the mind.'

Involvement

Peter Purves is well-known for his long involvement in animal welfare and he dropped by to see the demonstrations. 'All pet owners need to know that keeping their hands as clean as possible is the most effective way of protecting a sick pet from harmful bacteria. Anything that helps them get this right is a good thing,' said the former Blue Peter presenter.

The Foundation also received help from Max4 Health, a charity working to improve hand hygiene, in the form of badges, balloons and

posters giving guidance on good hand washing techniques.

'Most of the time we don't think about how effectively we wash our hands,' said Jill. 'And Max Health already has an excellent track record in improving hand washing technique among NHS staff. We are very grateful that Max Health wants to help us do the same for pet owners, she added.'

Jill received special help this year from the student vets from the Royal Veterinary College who volunteered to help on the stand. 'The Foundation gets a fantastic response from students every time we have an event and it makes a

difference to the people who visit our stand to know that the vets of the future are playing such an important role in delivering The Foundation's message,' said Jill. In all, twelve students spent time on the stand talking to pet owners about ways of protecting pets and preventing avoidable infections.

Emily Marriott, one of the RVC students who volunteered at Discover Dogs, spoke of her time at the show.

'I found the experience very rewarding, The Bella Moss Foundation educate and inform owners without scaremongering; everyone who stopped by was



● Jill Moss, President of The Foundation, tests Vice-Patron Peter Purves' hands under the supervision of TV vet and OUR DOGS' very own Marc Abraham.



● Royal Veterinary College student Emily Marriott volunteers her skills at Discover Dogs.

grateful for the information we provided on animal health.

'We talked about hygiene in veterinary practices and in general how good most practices were, but the public said there should be set standards of hygiene in animal hospitals as there is in human hospitals, that it should not be left up to individual practices to decide to practice standards of care when it comes to infection control.'

'We also discussed with owners the importance of limiting the use of antibiotics in their pets and how crucial it is for animals' health to identify present bacteria before

beginning antibiotic treatment begins. This is the message that BMF advisors give to vets and nurses through training seminars and we need to get the public on board so that pet owners do not expect to have pets treated when it is not necessary.'

The Bella Moss Foundation would like to express gratitude to Hygienic solutions for giving them a gloworm testing kit for the show, and to Max4health charity for all of their contributions.

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