reports once more from the first international conference on MRSA, where delegates were urged to develop a hygiene mindset

**ROBIN FEARON**

**Veterinary Times features editor**

**Magic bullet no stopper for MRSA**

VETERINARY professionals need earplugs, if the sound of alarm bells ringing and wake-up calls won’t induce permanent deafness in general practitioner-ers. Speaking at the University of Liverpool’s first international conference on MRSA in animals, Tim Nuttall told the audience, in quiet, sensitive tones, to expect more alarms.

Regarding MRSA control, infection control aren’t a leap of faith, neither is careful use of antibiotics and disinfectants. Fear, though, is a great motivator, he said. So if you have a scary head nurse, then make her your head of infection control. Then stand back and watch them jump, presumably.

Liverpool’s senior lecturer in veterinary microbiology, Dr Nuttall, made light work of a serious subject. Educating and motivating staff to deal with infections, including MRSA, is a must. Animal practice needs a live and active mind. The profession needs to develop infection control skills among all members of the practice, including the receptionists and pharmacy. For the first time, the conference was co-ordinated by Susan Dawson, lecturer in small animals studies, and she said the event had focused on the profession of the problem of MRSA.

Future events are planned, she said. “The intention is to continue every two years with the possibility the next meeting will operate as a satellite of the World Congress of Veterinary Dermatology.”

The papers from this meeting will be published in a special edition of Veterinary Microbiology next spring.

Speaking after the two-day conference, Bella Moss Foundation director Jill Moss gratefully acknowledged the help of DEFRA and Petplan in providing funding for the event.

Mr Moss, whose dog died due to an MRSA infection, said she organised the event with the University of Liverpool to address infection in practice, adding: “For me, this event was a fitting tribute to Bella and the other animals who have lost their lives unnecessarily to MRSA.”

**Collaborations with Nepalese vets**

**JACK REECE**

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reports on more charity work in India, this time involving veterinary colleagues from Nepal.

As a part of our extension project, which aims to spread good practice – particularly in animal birth control programmes – we have developed ties with various groups in Nepal.

During training visits to Nepal, I had issued invitations to our hospital to go and work with a group of Nepalese vets, which included Dr Subir again. Although only qualified a short time from the college himself, he is responsible for most of the surgical classes at the Nepal College. Last year’s students qualified with only a theoretical knowledge of surgery, though Dr Subir’s efforts, this year’s final year will fully equip, having spent at least one dog and anaesthetised another.

During their visit, we were able to discuss how we managed our programme and how it could be done most cost-effectively. The gas anaesthetic machine, generously donated during my Nepal trip by two American veterinary colleagues, was proving too costly for regular use and Dr Subir and his students had had to resort to the intravenous xylazine and ketamine mixture we use here in Japan.

The level of surgical skill demonstrated was, despite the very difficult conditions under which they work in the Nepal College, much in advance of what many Indian vets show on first exposure to canine surgery. For example, the Nagpur University, which usually carry out only 10-12 dogs a day, every day of the week. This is generally much larger than our trainees can experience at their base. This was the case with these academics. At the Nepal Veterinary college, the newly established ‘ABC’ programme is being used most cost-effectively.

When visiting colleagues from the college at the Nepalese veterinary college that they were coming to visit. In typical subcontinental style, the visit was announced with around five days’ notice and gone to with no reference to whether it was convenient. Planning takes on a different meaning here and one learns to cope with these sudden changes in plan. Luckily, we had no other trainees booked for the proposed dates so our full attention could be devoted to the two classes and a final year intern student from the Nepalese college.

One of our advantages as a training venue over many ABC projects is our throughput. We usually carry out around 10 to 12 cases a day, every day, of the week. This is generally much larger than our trainees can experience at their base. This was the case with these academics. At the Nepal Veterinary college, the newly established ‘ABC’ programme is being used most cost-effectively.

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