



A U S T R A L I A N
V E T E R I N A R Y P A L L I A T I V E C A R E
A D V I S O R Y C O U N C I L



2024 Conference Program

2024 Australian Veterinary Palliative Care Conference

Provisional^ Program: Saturday 2 November 2024

With thanks to our sponsors and supporters:



Time (AEST)	Session	Speaker
8:30	Conference opening and acknowledgements	Rosie Overfield
8:40	Prioritising Wellbeing in the Elderly Cat	Dr. Alison Jukes
9:15	Viewing Palliative Care Through a Veterinary Dentist's Lens: Enhancing Comfort and Quality of Life	Dr. Nicole Hoskins
9:50	Quality of Life and Palliation in Non-Traditional Companion Pets	Dr. Deborah Monks
10:25	Dying Well: Hospice Care and a Good Death	John Gabrielson
10:45	BREAK	
11:05	MC welcome back and sponsor presentation	Rosie Overfield
11:15	Integrative Approaches to Palliative Care	Dr. Catherine Schuetze
11:50	Get (Them) Up and Go(ing): Top Tips for Improving Function and Quality of Life in Neurological Patients	Dr. Yoko Clinch
12:25	Practice Tools: Navigating the Guidelines and Other Key Resources for your Clinic Toolkit	Dr. Jackie Campbell
13:00	BREAK	
13:25	Creating a Fear Free Passage from This Life	Dr. Chantelle McGowan
14:00	Self-Compassion for Veterinary Professionals	Dr Kat Williams
14:35	Rapid Fire Topic 1: Schedule 8 Drug Legislation in Veterinary Palliative Care – A Review	Michelle Neil
14:50	Rapid Fire Topic 2: A Survey of Final Year Vet Students: Understanding Palliative Care	Libby Falkiner
15:05	Formal Conference Close and 2025 Plan	Rosie Overfield Dr. Jackie Campbell
15:15	Ethical Challenges Associated with End-of-Life Care + Q&A with speakers	Dr. Anne Quain All speakers
16:00	Happy Hour Drinks and Networking	All attendees

^At the time of opening registration, AVPCAC provided the most recent information available. Due to unforeseen circumstances, some speakers and sessions may change prior to the conference day.

Speakers and Session Abstracts



Dr. Alison Jukes

Alison graduated from the University of Queensland in 2006 and started her clinical practice with an emergency medicine internship. She briefly worked in dermatology practice before finding her calling in feline practice. She has worked exclusively with cats since 2009. She became a Fellow of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists and a registered specialist in feline medicine in 2021.

Alison is engaged in further education of veterinarians regarding feline medicine and is involved in examination for membership in medicine of cats for the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists. She is also a tutor for the Sydney University Distance Education Course in Feline Medicine. Currently, Alison works at Cat Specialist Services in Underwood in a feline only referral hospital. At work, she enjoys looking after geriatric patients and managing all their co-morbidities and has a particular interest in feline dermatology and endocrine disorders.

Session Title: Prioritising Wellbeing in the Elderly Cat

Geriatric felines often have more than one comorbid condition such as endocrine disease, chronic kidney disease, hypertension and osteoarthritis. This session will discuss the management of the elderly cat with multiple conditions while prioritising the welfare of the patient.



Dr. Nicole Hoskins

Early in her career, Nicole developed an interest in acupuncture and adjunctive pain management tools for use in elderly patients, attaining her IVAS acupuncture accreditation in 1997 (a long time ago...). She has dabbled in many areas of interest, including diagnostic ultrasound and rehabilitation medicine, practice ownership and juggling GP vet life and raising a family. Thoroughly hating dentistry for the first half of a long career, she decided it was time to learn how to do it better.

After spending time learning about the art of small animal dentistry, she was examined and attained her memberships in the field with the ANZCVS in 2014, she has discovered a passion for passing on the things she wishes she had learned earlier in her veterinary career about dentistry and after talking to many veterinarians who felt the same way she initially did about the topic, she decided it was time she did something about it. This talk is the perfect collision of my two worlds, talking about dental care and palliative care all in one 30-minute time socket! Nicole runs Soar Veterinary Consulting; teaching veterinary dentistry to all who will listen to her and works as a GP in Melbourne.

Session Title: Veterinary Palliative Care Through the Veterinary Dentist's Lens: Enhancing Comfort and Quality of Life

How many times have we looked at a palliative care patient and noted dental disease? When are patients "too old" to receive dental care or an anaesthetic? How does treating or not treating dental disease impact their lifespan and quality of life? What can be done and what should we avoid when discussing dental care in our palliative care patients? Come explore these ethical questions with me and we will see if we can find some evidence-based answers.



Dr. Deborah Monks

Graduating in 1995, Deborah initially worked in small animal practice before starting an avian residency in the UK in 2002. She passed her Fellowship Examinations in Avian Medicine in 2006, as well as her European College Zoological Medicine Avian examinations. She also obtained a Certificate in Zoological Medicine (UK) and an Avian Membership along the way. She started her own practice in October 2006, which now has 5 full time veterinarians, 7 full time nurses and three part-time nurses.

Session Title: Quality of Life and Palliation in Non-Traditional Companion Pets

Avian and exotic pets are frequently diagnosed with terminal conditions, and palliation of their condition to achieve a quality existence is commonly requested. This lecture will discuss the drugs commonly used in the author's practice, as well as tips in assessing and maintaining the quality of life in these animals.



John Gabrielson | Keynote

Originally from WA John has spent much of his career in State and Local Government (environment initiatives, public health and senior management), private enterprise and until recently, the not-for-profit sector. He describes his career as "diverse" with the good fortune to have been given many opportunities ranging from indigenous public health, waste management, management of the significant vector control programmes (minimising the incidence of AE, RRv & BFv), Eco System management and Climate Change Response Planning. The Climate Change Response Planning was incredibly interesting, an intriguing project and certainly a highlight in John's career to date. However, in 2017 John had the opportunity to contribute to the development of a new not for profit hospice (Katie Rose Cottage Hospice) on the Sunshine Coast.

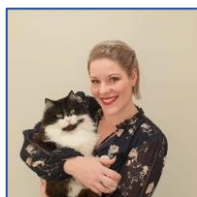
John recently left the hospice organisation after over 9 years of service. Along with a small team initially, he worked to develop a leading not for profit, fully accredited 3 room hospice (soon to be 5 rooms) which to date (since August 2018 – 24/7 nursing) has cared for 440 people providing those souls with the very best of end-of-life care/leading practice palliative care. The organisation provides

the service at no charge to the individual/family. They consider it their gift, their contribution to building community – in turn their community provides enormous support.

The organisation now employs 35 personnel (mostly Registered and Enrolled Nurses) and has over 250 volunteers across 7 business units. Palliative Care Doctors work side by side with the RN team to provide exceptional end of life care for those with incurable, terminal conditions.

Session Title: Dying Well – Hospice Care and a Good Death

What does the research say constitutes a 'good death'? This session will give an overview of human hospice care and dying well, Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) and the interconnection between human and animal compassionate end of life care.



Dr. Chantelle McGowan

Dr Chantelle (Channy) McGowan (PPGA, ISFM & ANZCVS (Veterinary Behaviour) member, Elite Certified Fear Free Professional and Coach) is owned by two mischievous kitties, Mittens & Smudge. Dr Channy's passion for behaviour started as a new grad, fast realising the importance of applying behavioural medicine within the clinic itself. Dr Channy implemented low-stress handling into veterinary team protocols over multiple practices and was appointed Head Veterinarian of an ISFM-accredited Cat Friendly Clinic.

After joining Royal Canin for a few years and leading the Take Your Cat to The Vet initiative & Calm Diet launches, Dr Channy realised their passion lay with the behavioural needs of pets & promotion of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI). Founding the 'Calm Pet Vet' inclusive mobile veterinary and behavioural services, team training and public speaking figure across Melbourne, Dr Channy also sat for their memberships to the ANZCVS in 2023. This was while taking on various volunteer roles, helping launch the first DEI conference for the veterinary profession (TVK Summit 2023) as Treasurer for the Australian Rainbow Vets and Allies, and Vice President of The Veterinary Kaleidoscope. Dr Channy is openly proud disabled, non-binary, neurodivergent, intersex veterinarian.

Session Title: Creating a Fear Free Passage from This Life

Veterinary Behaviour Medicine is present in every single interaction, report and discussion about our patients. From becoming withdrawn when unwell to aggressive when painful, every single veterinarian in the world is required to interpret behavioural data to inform their treatment recommendations and application of treatments to the patient. Patient distress in clinic is extremely common, and difficulty examining and treating patients is a huge obstacle for most vets. Large scale studies across Australia and across the world also confirm many veterinarians are at risk of dog / cat bites and scratches, so what to do about this disconnect, especially at the most sensitive time of a pet's life and your relationship with their guardian? Education on body language, gentle restraint and anxiolytic medication options for in clinic or in the home are highly effective in reducing patient distress and giving their guardian a smooth experience in a difficult time.



Dr. Catherine Schuetze

Dr Catherine Schuetze BV Biol (Hons), BVSc, CVA, BAPS (Hons) is an integrative veterinarian and medical anthropologist researching the veterinary anthropology of Tibetan cultural areas. Her veterinary clinical focus is companion animal integrative medicine, acupuncture, herbal medicine, geriatrics and palliative care. Catherine currently works at The Natural Vets on the Sunshine Coast. She helped found the NGO, Vets Beyond Borders, and worked in One Health initiatives like rabies and dog population management, animal welfare, and veterinary training in the Himalayas. She is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Sydney investigating the Veterinary Anthropology of Bhutan and Tibetan cultural areas including their traditional veterinary medicine. She is particularly interested in human-animal studies and how human relationships with animals affect the ways veterinarians practice and understand their profession.

Session Title: Integrative Approaches to Palliative Care

This lecture will explore integrative approaches to palliative care, focusing on enhancing the quality of life for animals in their final stages and supporting both the pet and family through to the end. Catherine will delve into her holistic approach to care, focusing on pain management, symptom relief, and emotional support. Sharing with us some of her extensive knowledge through key case studies, attendees will gain practical insights into the application of these therapies in real-world scenarios.



Dr. Yoko Clinch

BSc BVMS (Hons) MANZCVS (Veterinary Radiology, Veterinary Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation (VSMR) – Canine), CCRT, President & Science Week Co-coordinator of the ANZCVS VSMR Chapter

Yoko graduated from Murdoch University in 2004 and started her veterinary career working in mixed practice in rural South Australia. She moved back to Perth in 2007 and has been working in small animal general practice ever since. In 2009, Yoko attained membership to the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists in Veterinary Radiology. She bought Roleystone Animal Hospital in 2013 in conjunction with one of her friends, and after 3 years of working on and in the practice started to follow her passion for veterinary rehabilitation therapy, becoming qualified as a Certified Canine Rehabilitation Therapist through the Canine Rehab Institute in 2017. She then set up Veterinary Rehabilitation Services and accepts referrals for patients with impairments in mobility or suffering from significant discomfort. She has treated all sorts of species from lizards and birds (ask her about fitting a rooster to wheelchair), to dogs, cats and ferrets.

In 2020 she organised the establishment of the Veterinary Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation (VSMR) chapter in the Australian & New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists, with both canine and equine subsections. In 2022 she, along with 6 other veterinarians from Australia and overseas, sat & passed the inaugural membership exams in canine VSMR. She continues to be the President and Science

Week Co-convenor for this chapter and is also involved in the Exams Evolution & Support Project with the College as part of this.

Yoko has a strong passion for maximising patient comfort, function and ultimately quality of life, with veterinary rehabilitation therapy.

Session Title: Get (Them) Up and Go(ing): Top Tips for Improving Function and Quality of Life in Neurological Patients

This session will run through basic rehabilitation treatments that general practitioners can apply to neurologically affected patients to help improve their function and quality of life. Yoko will also highlight things she monitors in neurologic patients to help assess their function/progress and guide quality of life talks with their families.



Dr. Jackie Campbell

Dr Jackie Campbell BVSc Hons, Dip CMT, CHPV is widely recognised as Australia's leading voice in the field of veterinary palliative care and as the Director of Sunset Vets, spends much of her time helping families to effectively navigate medical decision making at end-of-life.

Jackie is a passionate speaker and as an advocate for the continued advancement of palliative medicine loves assisting practices to develop and upskill their teams in this field of care. Jackie was Australia's first veterinarian to obtain Certification in Animal Hospice and Palliative Care and continues to support the work of IAAHPC through her representative role here in Australia. She is the co-founder of the Australian Palliative Care Advisory Council, an initiative bringing together experts across all disciplines to promote better standards of care across the field and is also responsible for the nationally recognised Sunset Grief Support program. Run in partnership with key university institutions, this platform helps to deliver free professional grief counselling to families needing assistance through their grief and is available for all veterinarians across Australia to access for their clients.

Session Title: Practice Tools – Navigating the Guidelines and Key Resources for Your Clinic Toolkit

Join Jackie for a fast and fun roundup of the essential tools every veterinary practice needs to deliver effective palliative care. In recent years, interest in this field has surged, leading to a wealth of new literature, studies and clinical resources. But where do we stand in 2024? This session will cover the latest updates to the End-of-Life Care guidelines for dogs and cats, along with some of Jackie's personal favourite resources. You'll gain valuable tips and strategies for managing and communicating about pain, alleviating caregiver burden, and addressing specific disease states. By the end of the session, you'll walk away with practical knowledge and a comprehensive toolkit to enhance the compassionate care your clinic provides to patients and their families during end-of-life care.



Dr. Kat Williams

Dr. Kat Williams graduated with a Bachelor of Veterinary Science (Hons) from the University of Queensland in 2012. After working in small animal practice and experiencing her own mental health challenges including anxiety and depression, she developed a passion for psychology and how it can benefit veterinary staff. Kat attained her Bachelor of Psychological Science from the University of New England in 2022. She now works as a behaviour support practitioner supporting people with disabilities, is a registered LivingWorks suicide intervention trainer, and co-founder of VetHerd, a suicide prevention program for the veterinary community. Kat works to combine her veterinary, mental health, disability and suicide prevention experience to champion the wellbeing of veterinary staff through practical and evidence-based approaches.

Session Title: Self Compassion for Veterinary Professionals

As high achieving veterinary professionals, we can often be our own worst critics. Many of us beaten ourselves up over clinical errors or poor clinical outcomes. While harsh self-criticism adds to our suffering, self-compassion is an alternative response. It's an inner resource we can turn to in the face of failures and other difficulties. In this session we will unpack the three core elements of self-compassion and explore how it differs from self-pity, self-indulgence, and complacency. We will review the evidence for its psychological benefits including correlations with higher levels of pleasant emotions, wellbeing, and resilience, and lower levels of burnout, anxiety, and depression. We will work through practical examples of how veterinary staff can harness the power of being kind to themselves.



Michelle Neil

Admitted Australian Legal Practitioner, Certificate of Legal Practice, Bachelor of Laws, Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice, Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing, Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, Certificate III in Animals in Captivity

Michelle has been a dedicated veterinary professional since 2004, with experience as a veterinary nurse in general practice, emergency, and critical care, working with both domestic animals and native wildlife. She has also served as a veterinary nurse trainer and assessor, as well as a nursing and practice manager.

In 2015, Michelle pursued a law degree driven by her commitment to improving animal care and welfare. She graduated in 2021, and Michelle currently practices at a boutique law firm in Queensland, while continuing to freelance as a veterinary nurse at a koala-specific veterinary hospital in North Brisbane.

Session Title: Schedule 8 Drug Legislation in Veterinary Palliative Care – A Review

Pain management is a crucial aspect of animal palliative care. In this presentation, Michelle Neil will share the findings from a year-long review of state legislation surrounding the use of Schedule 8 drugs in animal welfare and pain management. This session seeks to demystify the legal complexities and address common concerns, with the goal of empowering veterinarians and providing reassurance to pet owners during the end-of-life stage.



Libby Faulkner

Bachelor of Veterinary Biology & Veterinary Science 4th year Student, Charles Sturt University, Australian Veterinary Association Student Group Committee Member and Campus Representative

Libby grew up on a mixed farming operation in south-west Victoria but has spent the last four years studying Veterinary Science at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga, NSW. Curious at heart with a great zest for adventure, Libby is currently studying in the US on a scholarship at Kansas State University, aiming to build connections and add a more global perspective to her ever-developing knowledge bank.

Throughout her veterinary training, Libby has become increasingly passionate about student advocacy and spreading the word about the positive, innovative, enjoyable and rewarding career path that is Vet-Med. Through her past role as president of CSU Veterinary Students Association and as a current member of the Australian Veterinary Association Student Group, Libby aims to work with likeminded peers to develop and implement practical strategies that educate and empower budding vets right from the beginning of their journey. Libby appreciates that end-of-life care can be a challenging topic for aspiring vets. Through being a part of the AVPCAC, Libby hopes to better bridge the gap between vet school and the industry, helping students feel more comfortable with palliative care.

Session Title: A Survey of Final Year Vet Students: Understanding Palliative Care

End-of-life care in veterinary medicine can present considerable challenges, especially for new graduates who may initially lack confidence in navigating the complexities of these sensitive situations. In this session, Libby Falkiner will discuss findings from a recent survey of final-year veterinary students and detail ways in which the AVPCAC plans to support emerging veterinarians as they transition to practice.



Dr. Anne Quain

Anne Quain completed a BA with honours in philosophy prior to undertaking a BVSc/BSc(Vet) at the University of Sydney, graduating in 2005. She is a member of the ANZCVS in Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law, a Diplomate of the European College of Animal Welfare and Behaviour Medicine in Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law, and has a PhD in veterinary ethics.

Anne has been an active member of the Australian Veterinary Association New South Wales Committee and the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee. Together with Siobhan Mullan, she co-wrote *Veterinary Ethics: Navigating Tough Cases* and is the author of *The Veterinary General Practice Casebook: Companion Animal Clinics* with Andrew Gardiner.

Anne is a senior lecturer in the Sydney School of Veterinary Science and continues to work in private practice and academic. She is passionate about primary care, clinical and ethical decision making and animal welfare. She is a founding member of the Australian Veterinary Palliative Care Advisory Panel, and a member of the NSW Animal Welfare Advisory Council. She received a Fear Free Research Award in 2023 in recognition for her commitment to alleviating fear, anxiety and stress in animals through evidence-based research, and a Centenary Medal from the Veterinary Practitioner's Board in 2024 for her work in animal welfare and ethics. In her spare time, Anne enjoys cooking, bushwalking, photography and reading.

Session Title: Ethical Challenges Associated with End Of Life Care

End of life decision making, and care raise ethical issues for veterinary team members and animal guardians alike. This interactive session, led by Dr. Quain, will explore common ethical issues that can occur for veterinary professionals. She will present case studies and engage attendees to challenge their own thinking and practices and discuss and share perspectives on this important topic.