

OP3. EVIEDVET - PROMOTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR EVIDENCE-BASED VETERINARY MEDICINE

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The ability to practise evidence-based medicine (EBM) is among the most important competences for a veterinarian (1). EBM refers to the “conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients. The practice of evidence based medicine means integrating individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence from systematic research” (2). Implementing EBM in veterinary practice is arguably more challenging than in human medicine, as it is harder to find credible, high-quality, evidence-based information (3), thus demanding from veterinarians critical thinking skills for appraising the credibility of published research or even empirical principles and practices (4).

The ability to access and interpret reliable and accurate information has been paramount in the current COVID-19 pandemic, as veterinarians need to answer such questions as the role of animals in spreading the disease or decide on the need for quarantining pets from infected humans (5). There is, however, insufficient evidence that veterinarians are competent in collecting, interpreting and assessing the quality of scientific information.

This presentation aims to introduce FCT-funded project “EVIEDVET – Promoting education and training for evidence-based veterinary medicine” (PTDC/CED-EDG/0187/2020). EVIEDVET aims to, firstly, comprehensively map and critically evaluate how EBVM is currently being taught to veterinary students and practitioners in Portugal, and compare the Portuguese landscape with examples from selected European veterinary schools (namely Austria, Ireland and Finland). EVIEDVET will also be actively involved in promoting education in EBM, by elaborating, road-testing, evaluating, and disseminating free educational resources, on a dedicated website, all of which will be bilingual (Portuguese and English). These will serve as basis for a final deliverable of a full-fledged e-learning curriculum on scientific reasoning and critical thinking applied to veterinary practice.

Keywords: Evidence-based medicine; distance education; veterinary medicine; clinical practice.

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