A day in the life of......
....a Veterinary Nurse

7.30am Arrive at the Hospital for a hand over with the night nurse about the inpatients.

8.00am Start to take the patients (dogs) for their morning walk in the paddock - after this they will have their temperature, heart rate, respiratory rate and weight checked (all of which is recorded on the patient's hospital sheet). If allowed, the patients will then be fed a carefully calculated amount of food to aid recovery.

8.30am The vets arrive and they will go over each patient with the kennel nurse to make a plan for their treatment and decide if they are well enough to go home.

9.00am Day patients will start to arrive at the hospital for either surgery or other procedures. They will be admitted by the vet and the nurse will then prepare the patient for it's procedure that day. This will involve taking blood samples, inserting IV catheters and administering their pre-medication. Once all the day patients are admitted the vet and nurse make a surgical plan for the order in which the procedures will be done.

9.30am A key part of the Veterinary Nurse’s role is to then assist the vet during surgery. The nurse will help the vet anaesthetise the patient and then monitor the patient throughout the procedure. They will be using manual and electrical monitors to observe the heart rate, the respiratory rate, mucus membrane colour and temperature of the patient and will adjust the anaesthetic levels accordingly.

11.30am Once the patient is out of theatre the kennel nurse will then Recovery the patient in a nice warm bed in the kennel area. When the patient is awake enough the nurse will offer them food and water and take them out for a walk.

1.00pm After all the procedures are done it is time to clean and prepare the instruments and theatres for procedures that are taking place the next day.

3.30pm When it is time for the patient to go home the nurse will discuss with the owner at the discharge appointment how to care for their pet after their procedure. They will also dispense and explain and medication that needs be given and how long for.

4.30pm Once all day patients have gone the kennels/cat enclosures will all be cleaned and made ready for patients arriving the next day.

Looking after sick patients that are in the Hospital is a 24hr job - they will be monitored frequently throughout the day by the kennels nurse and their progress recorded on their hospital sheet. The night nurse will arrive at 5.30pm and have a hand over with the kennel nurse from the day about the inpatients. The night nurse will then take over the care of the patients until 7.30am the next morning.

As a Veterinary Nurse we have to carry out many duties within the practice, not just kennel duties looking after the sick inpatients and those day patients in for surgery. We also carry out nurse consultations which run all day at the practice and assist the vets sometimes if they need us in one of their consults. There is always plenty of cleaning to do if we do happen to get any free time!!