



Veterinary Science Newsletter

UQ VETS anaesthesia team supports successful white tiger procedure at Dreamworld

Team Anaesthesia was recently invited to anaesthetise a white tiger at Dreamworld. Wendy and Taylah worked alongside Dreamworld staff and a large team of specialists from Veterinary Specialist Services to ensure Kiko's safe care as she underwent several procedures. She recovered beautifully — a fantastic example of a well-organised, multi-team approach in action.



Welcome to Clinics Workshop a success!

On 31 July a Welcome to Clinics Workshop day was held for fourth year BVSc and second year BVetTech students to prepare them for the transition into clinical placements. The day was developed in response to feedback from current and former senior students.

The day included:

- A welcome session covering professional expectations, assessments, feedback processes, support structures, and clinical preparation.
- An interactive student panel sharing practical advice, common challenges, and lessons learned from current clinical students.
- A workshop on managing clinical pressures, confidence, wellbeing, imposter syndrome, and resilience.
- Cohort-building activities to strengthen peer connections and teamwork.



Feedback on the day was positive - and by the end students seemed to have a relatively good grasp of what to expect for the final clinical year.

Thanks to Hills for sponsoring this event and to everyone who helped make this day a success!

2026 SVS HDR Symposium

The Veterinary and Animal Science HDR Symposium 2026 took place on 4 June 2026, at Hamon Centre in Gatton, showcasing a diverse array of research endeavours. With 25 presentations, the event proved to be both enlightening and engaging. Researchers presented their findings across various domains, highlighting the ongoing investigations in veterinary and animal sciences.



Congratulations to the winners in the following categories:

- **Production Animals:** Rhiannon Gurkin
- **Veterinary Epidemiology and One Health:** Tasneem Imam
- **Companion Animals:** Jordan Flood
- **Wildlife and Exotics:** Jennifer Sullivan

The success of the symposium was attributed to the dedication and hard work of the organising committee, specifically our HDR students- Tasneem Imam and Jessica Mitchell. Special thanks to Professor Nigel Parkins, Dr Gry Boe-Hansen, Claire Girvin, Lauren Reabel, Ben Ahern, and Kate Dutton-Regester. The efforts of the organising committee and staff ensured a seamless experience for all participants.

BIRRST-Partner grant success

Dr Rachel Stephenson (School of Chemistry and Molecular Biosciences), Professor Rachel Allavena and Dr Jose Granados (School of Veterinary Science), and Dr Halley Ravuri (School of Biomedical Sciences) have secured a Faculty of Science BIRRST-Partner grant in collaboration with Seppic, a global leader in vaccine and immunotherapy adjuvant technologies. The project, From Bench to Kennel: De-risking and Benchmarking Novel Adjuvant Immunotherapies for Canine Cancer through a Comparative Oncology Platform, will evaluate new cancer immunotherapies in pet dogs with naturally occurring cancers. By combining veterinary oncology, immunology and proteomics expertise, the team aims to develop safe, effective, and affordable cancer treatments for dogs while generating valuable translational data to support future human cancer therapies.



SVS Work and Wellness Day

The School of Veterinary Science recently came together for a successful and engaging Work and Wellness Day, providing an opportunity for staff to connect, reflect, and contribute to the future direction of the School.



The day commenced with a meaningful Smoking Ceremony, acknowledging Country and setting a positive and reflective tone for the discussions ahead.

A key focus of the day was sharing and discussing the results of the recent Pulse Survey. Staff participated in open and constructive conversations before breaking into dedicated academic and professional staff working groups. These sessions provided an opportunity to explore the survey findings in greater depth, identify priority areas, and develop practical ideas to strengthen our culture, wellbeing, communication, and ways of working.

The event also marked the launch of the draft SVS Strategic Plan 2026-2029, outlining the School's vision and priorities for the years ahead.

The discussions throughout the day highlighted the commitment and enthusiasm of our staff to help shape a positive future for the School and to ensure the Strategic Plan reflects the aspirations of our community.

Surgical tutor training builds consistency and innovation in practical teaching

On 26 June 2026, the School of Veterinary Science held its semesterly Surgical Tutor Training Workshop, led by Dr José Granados. Established in 2024, this initiative is delivered before each semester to support the development of a skilled and collaborative tutor team dedicated to surgical practical teaching across multiple veterinary courses.



The workshop aims to harmonise teaching approaches across surgical practical classes, ensuring students receive a consistent, high-quality learning experience. It also provides an opportunity for tutors to share experiences, discuss new ideas, and explore innovative teaching models that enhance student learning and engagement.

By investing in tutor development and fostering a strong community of educators, the program continues to strengthen the School's capacity to deliver exceptional surgical training and support the next generation of veterinarians.

APCOVE field epidemiology training in Timor Leste, Cambodia and Laos

Field epidemiology training activities under the [Asia Pacific Consortium of Veterinary Epidemiology \(APCOVE\)](#) project, led by [Professor Joerg Henning](#), have been rolled out across the Asia-Pacific region over the past few months.



In June 2026, a workshop was held in Timor-Leste to initiate six-month, field-based research projects aimed at strengthening animal health research capacity in the country. Twelve trainees are participating in four field projects, each aligned with key animal and public health priorities in Timor-Leste:

- ***Evaluation of post-vaccination antibody titres against Newcastle disease in local chickens in Timor-Leste: Assessing the effectiveness of Newcastle disease vaccination and***

identifying risk factors associated with disease outbreaks.

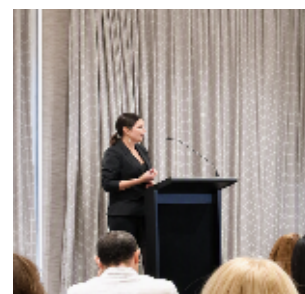
- **Seroprevalence and knowledge, attitudes and practices survey on brucellosis in small ruminants:** *Evaluating disease burden and identifying gaps in awareness, prevention and management practices.*
- **Biosecurity in pig production:** *Assessing farm-level biosecurity measures to reduce disease risks in a key livestock sector.*
- **Hygienic practices at local slaughterhouses:** *Examining food safety and hygiene practices to improve public health outcomes.*

Earlier in the year, APCOVE also delivered investigation workshops in Cambodia and Laos. These workshops aimed to strengthen the capacity of frontline veterinary professionals to detect, respond to and mitigate infectious disease emergencies. Participants received training in outbreak preparedness, followed by two days of practical, field-based learning using simulated cattle and poultry outbreak scenarios. The final day focused on analysing and integrating outbreak data collected during the exercises to inform evidence-based response strategies.

[See video on Timor Leste workshop](#)

Equine assisted reproduction research presented at SIRT 2026

PhD candidate and equine veterinarian Dr Joanne Smith recently represented the School of Veterinary Science at the Society in Reproductive Technology (SIRT) Annual Scientific Meeting, presenting her research to Australia's and New Zealand's leading human embryologists, fertility specialists and assisted reproductive technology (ART) professionals.



Her presentation showcased research from the University of Queensland investigating strategies to improve embryo production in mares undergoing ovum pick-up (OPU) and intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI). The project focuses on enhancing oocyte developmental competence through supplementation of embryo culture systems with growth factors, with the aim of improving reproductive outcomes in equine assisted reproduction.

While the research is centred on the horse, the ageing mare provides an important translational model for reproductive ageing in women due to many shared physiological characteristics. As a result, advances in equine ART have the potential to contribute valuable insights into both veterinary and human reproductive medicine.

"It was an incredible honour to present equine assisted reproductive technology research to a room of Australia's and New Zealand's leading human embryologists," Dr Smith said. "The opportunity to share how advances in equine reproduction may also contribute to our understanding of human fertility highlights the value of collaboration across veterinary and medical sciences."

The presentation generated significant interest and discussion, reinforcing the growing recognition of comparative reproductive research and the important role veterinary science plays in advancing assisted reproductive technologies across species.

Dr Smith's research is being undertaken within the School of Veterinary Science under the supervision of Dr Andres Gambini and forms part of her PhD investigating strategies to improve ICSI success in horses while contributing to the broader field of reproductive biology.

UQ researchers awarded prestigious Perpetual IMPACT Philanthropy grant to advance canine cancer research

Profesesor Chiara Palmieri (School of Veterinary Science) and Dr Halley Ravuri (School of Biomedical Sciences) have secured the Perpetual IMPACT Philanthropy grant for 2026. This project seeks to uncover the crucial link between persistent organic pollutants (POPs)- environmental contaminants that accumulate in ecosystems - and the rising incidence of cancer in dogs. By analysing POP levels in the blood and tissues of dogs with mammary cancer, the study aims to identify environmental risk factors affecting canine health. As dogs and humans share similar environments and pollutant exposures, this research adopts a One Health approach, generating insights that can advance both veterinary and human cancer research while improving our understanding of environmentally driven disease.



We've listened to your feedback regarding School meetings and have worked with central timetabling to block out a time where there are gaps in the timetable to try and enable staff to attend.

The remaining meetings for 2026 have been scheduled as follows:

- Wednesday, 19 August – 12-1pm
- Wednesday, 16 September – 12-1pm
- Wednesday, 28 October – 12-1pm
- Wednesday, 25 November – 12-1pm

Upcoming dates

August

- 9 - 17 August - National Science Week
- 10 August - Royal Queensland Show Holiday (Lockyer Valley Region – Gatton campus closed) – EKKA
- 12 August - Royal Queensland Show Holiday (Brisbane Region – St Lucia, Dutton Park and Herston campuses closed) – EKKA
- 16 August - UQ Open Day (Gatton)
- 28 August - Wear it Purple Day

September

- National Biodiversity Month
- 6 September - Father's Day
- 7 September - National Threatened Species Day
- 10 September - R U OK? Day
- 11 - 13 September - Laidley Spring Festival
- 18 September - 5 October - Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers
- 28 September - Mid-Semester Break

October

14 October - 90th Anniversary of the School of Veterinary Science Celebration

School of Veterinary Science

