

Building a business case for evidence based veterinary medicine (EBVM)

The purpose of this research project is to research the business case for EBVM by identifying its non-clinical benefits to UK veterinary practices. This is a research project being led by Dr. Elizabeth Jackson, Lecturer in Business, at The Royal Veterinary College (RVC ethics approval: URN 2015 1457). You are invited to participate in this research project because you are a practicing veterinary professional who can provide invaluable input into the 'real world' of veterinary business. Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate in this research survey, you may withdraw at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you withdraw from participating at any time, you will not be penalised.

The procedure involves filling an online survey that will take approximately 10 minutes. Your responses will be confidential and we do not collect identifying information such as your name, email address or IP address. No information provided will be used to identify you or your veterinary practice. The survey questions will be about your attitudes to evidence based veterinary medicine and how its commercial benefits can be extended to the UK veterinary community.

We will keep your information confidential. All data is stored in a password protected electronic format. To help protect your confidentiality, the surveys will not contain information that will personally identify you. The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes only and may be shared with Royal Veterinary College representatives involved with the project. If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Dr Elizabeth Jackson on 0170 766 6661 or eljackson@rvc.ac.uk.

By continuing from here, you are voluntarily participating in this survey which means that:

- you have read the above information
- you voluntarily agree to participate
- you are at least 18 years of age

If you do not wish to participate in the research study, thanks anyway, please decline by clicking [here](#).

The survey

Thank you for helping us out. Let's set the scene with some definitions:

Evidence based medicine was first discussed in the human healthcare literature in the 1990s, and was defined as: "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" (Sackett *et al.*, 1996, p. 71).

More recently, RCVS Knowledge has adapted this definition to the provision of veterinary medicine and defines evidence based veterinary medicine (EBVM) on its web site as: "...evidence-based decisions combine clinical expertise, the most relevant and best available scientific evidence, patient circumstances and owners' values."

With these definitions in mind, let's begin the survey with some basic questions about you.

1. What is your profession?

- Veterinarian
- Vet nurse/vet tech
- Other (please specify)

2. What is your main area of practice?

- Small animal
- Farm animal
- Equine
- Mixed practice
- Other (please specify)

3. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to answer

4. What is your age?

5. In which year did you graduate from University?

6. Which of the following best describes the area you work in:

- Urban
- Sub/semi urban
- Rural

7. What is your current level of employment:

- Full time
- Part time
- Not employed
- Unemployed
- Prefer not to say

8. What best describes your current role in veterinary practice:

- Employee
- Joint partner
- Owner
- Other (please specify)

9. To give us an idea of the size of your practice, including yourself, how many veterinarians work in your practice?

10. Which of the following best describes your work environment:

- Independent veterinary practice
- Corporate veterinary practice
- Academia
- Other (please specify)

11. Do you practise Evidence Based Vet Medicine?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

12. When did you last perform a literature search in order to influence your clinical practice?

- Less than one month ago
- 1-2 months ago
- 3-6 months ago
- 7-12 months ago
- Over 1 year ago

13. Approximately how many hours per month do you spend researching the literature?

- I don't research the literature
- Less than 1 hour per month
- 2 – 5 hours per month
- 6 – 10 hours per month
- 11-20 hours per month
- more than 20 hours per month

14. Have you ever actively contributed to scientific research?

- Yes
- No

15. Have you actively contributed so scientific research in the past 12 months?

Yes

No

16. Do you attend journal club(s) or any type of discussion forum about scientific research?

Yes

No

17. Do you have access to scientific publications via platforms (such as Pubmed)?

Yes

No

18. Defining EBVM: Please read each statement below and indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Middle ground	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I practise veterinary medicine in a way that is supported by published evidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clinical practice is based on current research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I was taught how to practise EBVM at university	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being a veterinary professional, I actively seek out opportunities to learn about EBVM	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Understanding the benefits of EBVM: Please read each statement below and indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement (please answer even if you are currently not practicing EBVM/are unsure).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Middle ground	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Practicing EBVM provides a competitive advantage over other practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Practicing EBVM provides the best value to the customer	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Practicing EBVM saves the client money	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Practicing EBVM builds trust with clients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clients are less likely to seek out a different practice if they know a vet is practicing EBVM	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clients appreciate an evidence based approach	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clients are unaware of EBVM	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clients are more invested in the treatment choice through EBVM	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Clients appreciate when I put in extra work researching their specific case	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
EBVM helps overcome the unknown	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

20. Understanding EBVM and employee engagement: Please read each statement below and indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement (please answer even if you are currently not practicing EBVM/are unsure).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Middle ground	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
Practicing EBVM makes me feel like I have provided the best medical care for my patient	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I frequently share research and clinical experience with colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
EBVM gives me more confidence in clinical decision making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Practicing EBVM provides me with an inspiring, intellectual challenge to my job as a vet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

21. The barriers to using EBVM: Please read each statement below and indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement (please answer even if you are currently not practicing EBVM/are unsure).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Middle ground	Disagree	Strongly disagree
There is not enough time to practise EBVM	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information is not freely available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clinical practice is often based on anecdotal evidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The evidence available is often of low quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clients do not want lengthy, diagnosis laden treatment options	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Eminence</u> based veterinary medicine is <input type="checkbox"/> taught at vet schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Application of EBVM ignores clinical experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
EBVM is impractical	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Through EBVM my clinical autonomy is lost or reduced	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have received sufficient training to find evidence to solve clinical problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am confident in evaluating scientific evidence to make reliable clinical decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vet nurses/techs should play a greater role in undertaking clinical research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Finished!

Thank you so much for your participation. Your responses are invaluable to this research and we sincerely appreciate your time.

If you have any questions about this survey or the research project as a whole, please contact Dr Elizabeth Jackson.