

The Positive Pawprint

Sustainability Report 2022



A year in review



1st

Positive Pawprint Clinic Partner award made to Rhyd Broughton Vets, Wales



People



Over

41,000

IVC Evidensia colleagues



300

UK employees qualified as Mental Health First Aiders



107

Local Community Grants awarded across 11 countries



450

graduates from eight countries took part in the 2022 Graduate Academy Congress

Planet



65%

Group electricity from renewable sources



2050

Net-zero target to be submitted to Science-Based Targets initiative



84%

of the packaging used in our own-brand products is recyclable, compostable or reusable



99%

of non-hazardous waste diverted from landfill in the UK and Sweden*

* Veterinary sites and offices only

Pets



Over

8.5 million

animal patients treated annually



2,793

animals treated using the IVC Evidensia Care Fund



770,000

Pet Health Club members in the UK



70%

of clinics with species-specific waiting rooms in Sweden, Germany and Norway



Contents

Overview

- 4 CEO statement
- 5 About IVC Evidensia
- 6 Positive Pawprint strategy
- 7 Materiality and risk
- 8 Stakeholders
- 9 Building sustainability into our business culture

10 Caring for People

- 13 Engaged, supported teams
- 14 Protecting and promoting the well-being of our teams
- 15 Building a strong learning culture
- 17 A diverse and inclusive workspace
- 19 Promoting high standards of health and safety
- 19 Human rights
- 20 Supporting our local communities

22 Caring for the Planet

- 25 Managing our climate impact
- 26 Delivering our greenhouse gas strategy
- 29 Responsible procurement
- 30 Integrating sustainability into our greenfield development
- 30 Resource efficiency
- 32 Promoting biodiversity

33 Caring for Patients

- 35 Caring for our customers
- 36 Leadership
- 36 Governance
- 37 Quality improvement
- 38 Infection prevention and control (IPC)
- 40 Protecting patient welfare
- 42 Encouraging research and innovation
- 44 The Positive Hoofprint

46 KPIs and Targets

About this Report

This is our second Positive Pawprint Report, detailing our environmental, social and corporate governance activities for the year 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022. This report was published in January 2023.

Policies and standards

Details of sustainability policies and standards can be found at the start of each section of this report. Our full suite of policies are reviewed regularly and can also be viewed on our website at www.ivcevidensia.com/positivepawprint.

In this report we reference the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) and the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD). We also report against the SASB metrics for the Healthcare Distributors discipline.

Separate disclosures for TCFD and SASB are available at www.ivcevidensia.com/positivepawprint.

Your feedback

We welcome your comments and feedback on this report at positivepawprint@ivcevidensia.com



CEO statement

Our vision is to build IVC Evidensia into the world's best veterinary group.

That starts with everything we do being focused on our purpose – healthy animals, happy owners. To ensure we deliver our purpose, we work together to keep three, equally important promises – our people promise to be a great place to work; our customer promise of world-class veterinary care, delivered locally; and our sustainability promise to be a force for good, which is what our Positive Pawprint sustainability strategy is all about.

Last year, we were proud to announce our Positive Pawprint strategy, which outlines our commitment to set and share new standards of sustainability in animal health. I'm pleased to report that our strategic approach to this vital area has led to good progress on further embedding sustainability standards across our business and delivering key initiatives to help us progress our commitments around our three pillars of People, Planet and animal Patients.

Our teams are truly passionate about sustainability and want to play their part in helping deliver our Positive Pawprint commitments. Our IVC Evidensia Positive Pawprint Toolkit is designed to help them do just that, and we've already awarded our first 'IVC Evidensia Positive Pawprint Partner' for achieving all the goals set out in the Toolkit. We hope to award many more this year.

“

Without our incredible people, we would not be able to deliver the excellent care we provide to our animal patients. My sincere thanks go to all of them for their incredible hard work and commitment, enabling us to provide world-class veterinary care for millions of animals every year.”

This year we undertook our first global employee survey, giving us valuable insight into where our people feel we're good, and where we can improve, with this feedback forming the basis of action plans aimed at making IVC Evidensia a great place to work.

We know how challenging clinical work can be and supporting the well-being of our teams is a key priority, with well-being programmes in place or in development in all our markets, each tailored to local needs and culture. For example, our Mental Health First Aider and Well-being Champions programmes, already established in the UK and Spain, will now roll out to more countries.

I'm pleased to say that we have made good progress this year with the development of our Group climate strategy. In September 2022, the Group committed to set near-term company-wide emission reductions in line with climate science with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). These have now been submitted to SBTi for validation, but in the meantime we have already started to develop the workstreams needed to deliver our science-based targets.

We will only achieve our near-term targets and our proposed future net-zero target through an active and close partnership with our suppliers, who promote climate action and increase the sustainability of the veterinary sector.

As a world-leading provider of veterinary care, it is our responsibility to be pioneers and constantly improve standards of care for all of our patients, including small animal, farm and equine.

Core initiatives including our Quality Improvement, Infection Prevention and Control, and Welfare programmes are helping us to continually improve our standards. This is enabling us to deliver significant progress, for example reducing surgical site infections, promoting responsible antimicrobial stewardship and reducing patient anxiety through species-specific waiting rooms.

“

Embedding sustainability across a business the size of IVC Evidensia is a challenging undertaking, but one that our Board and people are committed to achieving.”

Our Care Fund continues to be IVC Evidensia's flagship welfare support tool providing critical support to animals, owners and our teams. As well as protecting animal well-being, the Care Fund protects staff and owner well-being, providing support through serious animal illness, which can be enormously distressing and stressful for animals and owners alike. During 2022, the Care Fund has supported life-saving treatment in over 2,700 animals. We were pleased to be able to use the Care Fund as part of our response to the Ukrainian war, enabling our vets across Europe to provide treatment to over 700 pets of Ukrainian refugees.

We're making good progress, but we have more to do as we strive to go beyond becoming just the best veterinary group *in* the world to become the best veterinary group *for* the world as well.

Simon Smith
GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE



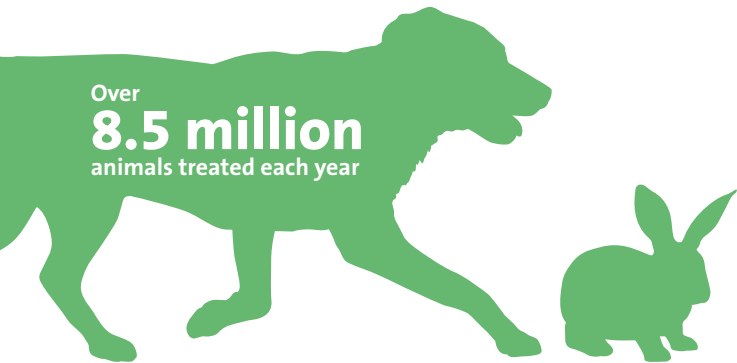
About IVC Evidensia

At IVC Evidensia we are led by our purpose of healthy animals, happy owners.

To deliver our purpose, we keep three promises together: our people promise to be a great place to work, our customer promise of world-class veterinary care, delivered locally, and our sustainability promise to be a force for good.

Whatever role we fulfil – whether working directly with animals or supporting those who do – all our actions and behaviours are guided by our values: we care, we dare, we share.

By delivering our purpose and keeping our promises, guided in all things by our values, we will achieve our visions for IVC Evidensia to be the best veterinary group in the world.



Caring is core to our success

The well-being of the animals we treat is at the centre of everything we do. Our multiple Clinical Boards help our vets and vet nurses to deliver clinical excellence, patient safety, welfare, training, purchasing and disciplinary matters.

From promoting the responsible use of antibiotics, to raising awareness of infection prevention and championing animal welfare issues, our Boards help ensure our clinics continue to meet consistently high standards of care across our Group.

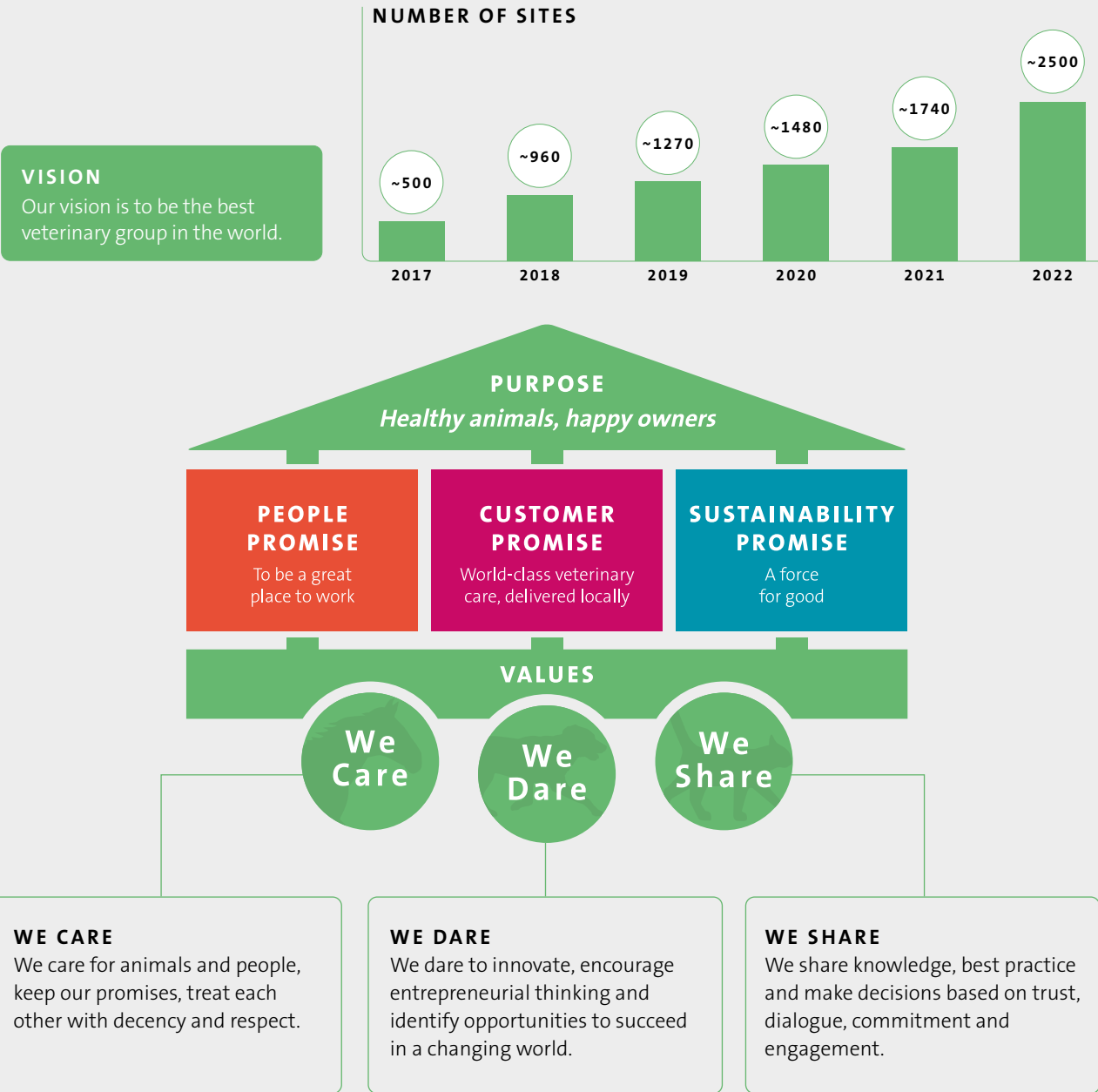
Delivering outstanding care

Founded in 2011, we now operate in some 2,500 clinics and hospitals, and employ over 41,000 people in 20 countries across the world.

We’re committed to our vets and vet nurses having clinical treatment freedom, because it’s our belief that the best veterinary clinics are led by local teams empowered to deliver excellence in care.

We build and implement common core support processes to help support our veterinary teams, ensure Group coherency and transparency, and helping to leave our clinics to focus on what they do best – putting animals and their owners first.

To help our people focus their time on animal care, we also centrally provide support with a broad range of time-consuming non-clinical and administration activities, while investing in premises, equipment, training, guidance and much else, all enabled by our global scale.





Positive Pawprint strategy



“As the IVC Evidensia Group continues to grow, entering new markets and developing new divisions, our Positive Pawprint strategy continues to evolve to ensure clear alignment from our Board to our Executive Committee and through all of our regions and our 2,500 operating units across 20 international markets.

The targets and commitments that underpin our strategy give the framework for every IVC Evidensia colleague to play their part in making our Group a sustainability leader in the veterinary care sector globally, and a powerful force for good.”

At IVC Evidensia, caring is what we do and it’s who we are. We work to protect the health and happiness of customers and their pets, while reducing our impacts to help promote a cleaner and more sustainable environment. Our Positive Pawprint strategy helps us to do this.

Our strategy is based on three pillars: People, Planet and Patients. Our strategy seeks to take us beyond becoming the best veterinary group *in* the world, to becoming the best veterinary group *for* the world.

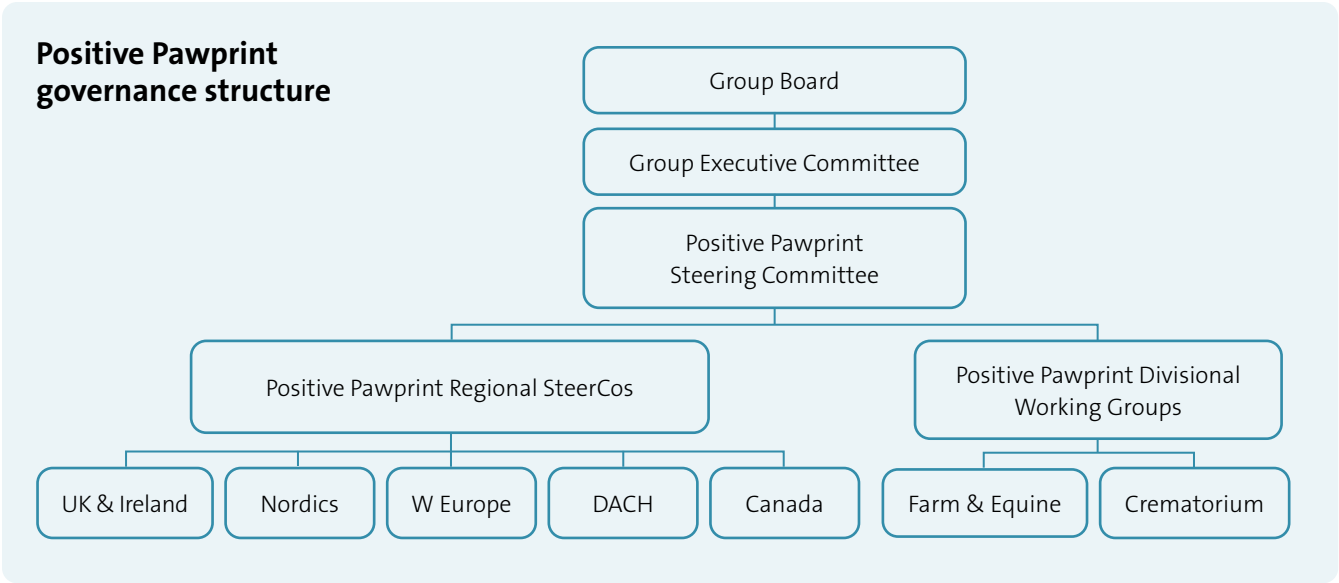
Our strategy is underpinned by KPIs and targets to measure our progress across these three pillars. During the year, we have continued to develop these measures to ensure they reflect all of our key impacts and all activities of our Group, for example, with new KPI measures around health and safety. We have developed policies for the key aspects of our sustainability strategy. These are referenced throughout this report and are published at ivcevidensia.com.

Our Positive Pawprint strategy is led by our Sustainability and ESG Director and the Positive Pawprint Steering Committee (SteerCo). The SteerCo meets quarterly with representation from across the business with leads identified for each of our pillars: People, Planet and Patients. The SteerCo provides regular updates to our Group Executive Committee and to the Group Board. Our Chief Operating Officer holds accountability for sustainability issues at Executive Board level and Non-Executive Director, Jarls Dahlfors, has overall accountability for sustainability on the Group Board. Our ESG performance is also discussed in meetings between the Board and our primary investors.

We have created a number of other working groups to support the implementation of our Positive Pawprint commitments across all regions and divisions of the Group. These working groups will lead activity at regional level, with divisional working groups develop initiatives tailored to the impacts of our Farm and Equine and Crematorium divisions.

The Positive Pawprint Growing our company as a force for good

Caring for People	Caring for Planet	Caring for Patients
Protect and promote the health and well-being of our teams	Transition our company towards net-zero climate impact	Deliver the highest possible standards of care quality and safety
Offer the highest standards of client care and communication	Minimise our waste footprint through optimal management	Promote and innovate integrated animal health solutions
Create welcoming, diverse and inclusive workplaces	Train all clinicians on applied sustainability in veterinary care	Continually grow our clinical knowledge and skills
Empower clinics to contribute to their local communities	Evolve industry-leading sustainable procurement practices	Continually share knowledge, incidents and best practice
Ensure human rights are respected across our value chain	Practise leading standards of chemical and pharma management	Collaborate with peers to innovate best practice on Antimicrobial Resistance
Governance Management, Transparency and Disclosure		





Materiality and risk

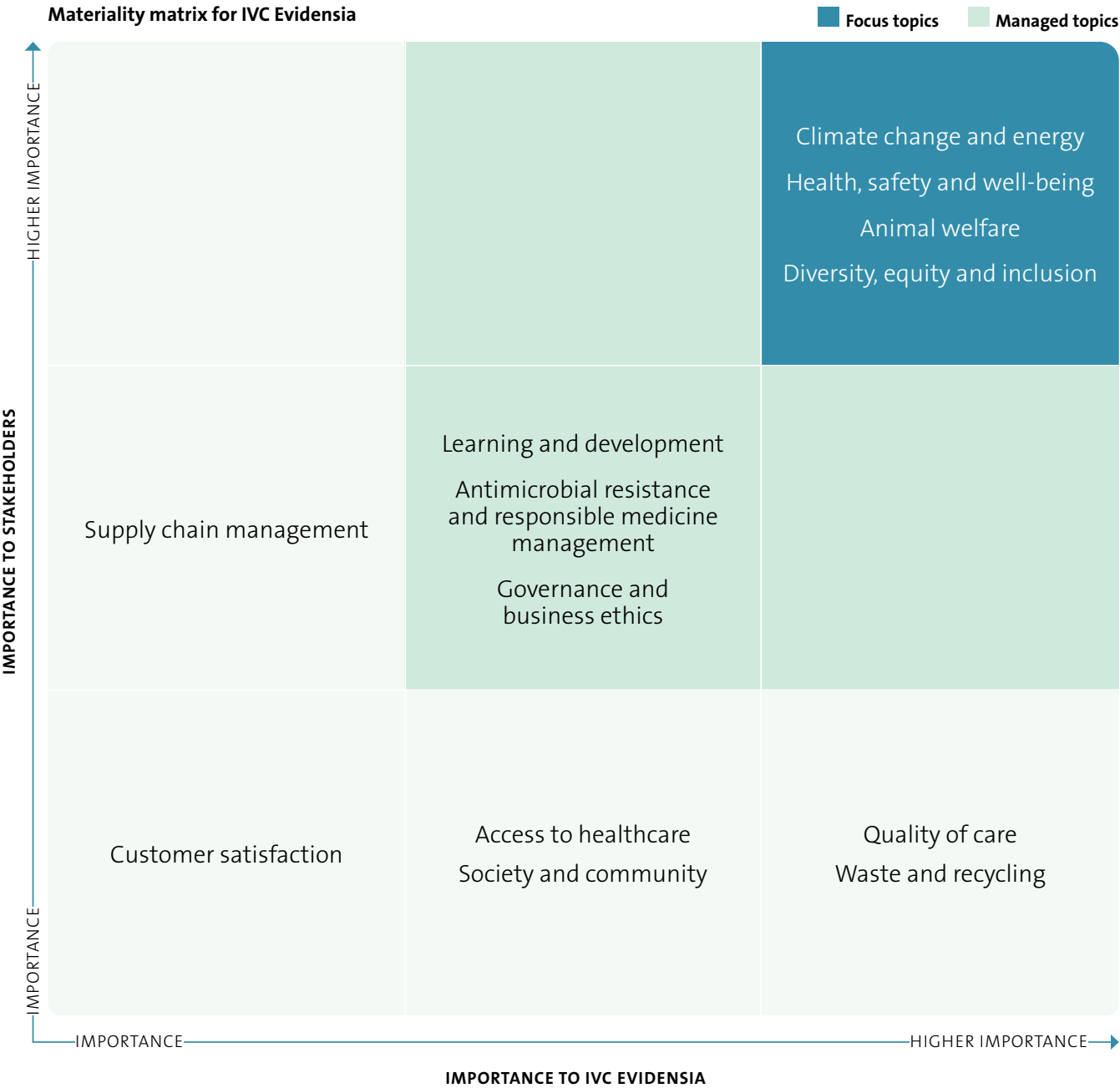
We undertake regular materiality assessments to ensure that our strategy continues to focus on those environmental and social issues of most importance to our stakeholders, and which represent the most important risks and opportunities for the future of IVC Evidensia. Our latest materiality review was completed in summer 2022 by external sustainability consultants who conducted a broad review to understand and identify the potentially relevant Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) topics that might significantly influence IVC Evidensia’s sustainability performance in the next three to five years. This process involved external peer group benchmarking and a review of external frameworks to identify potentially relevant topics. Once reviewed, the topics were discussed with internal and external stakeholders to identify priority topics. Stakeholders consulted included investors, suppliers, industry bodies, IVC Evidensia senior leaders and employees.

We consider all the topics in our materiality assessment to be important. The table shows the stakeholder priorities, with the highest priorities appearing in the top right-hand corner. Climate Change & Energy, Diversity Engagement & Inclusion, Animal Welfare and Health, Safety & Well-being stand out as key priorities.

The findings of the materiality assessment have been reviewed by the Positive Pawprint SteerCo and will be integrated into our strategic plans for 2023 and beyond.

“
Managing emissions right is front and centre from an investment, regulatory, supply chain standpoint – that has to be one of the top priorities.”

External stakeholder
(AS PART OF 2022 MATERIALITY REVIEW)



Outside of the materiality review process, we also consider other emerging issues in the ongoing development of the strategy. Responding to the growth of our Farm and Equine divisions, we are developing sustainability indicators to address the specific impacts of this part of the business, and have renamed the Pets pillar to Patients to reflect the full range of animals we care for. The recruitment and retention of talent continues to be a focus for us and is a key priority within our People strategy. The cost of living crisis will also see us give greater focus to affordability of care and employment terms for our employees and this will be reflected in actions under our People and Patients pillars.

ESG risks are assessed using the Group risk methodology and considered as part of our Enterprise Risk Framework. During the year, we have undertaken climate risk-focused risk workshops with key stakeholders, with representation from country and functional operational teams including Finance and Clinical specialists, to identify Physical and Transitional risks and opportunities. In addition, we have reviewed all internal risk registers to ensure that climate risk and mitigations are adequately captured and mitigations reflected in our operational view of risk. For more information on our approach to understanding and responding to climate risk, and specifically under the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) regulations, see our separate disclosure published at www.ivcevidensia.com/positivepawprint. While the TCFD disclosures are not yet mandatory, IVC Evidensia is working towards meeting the recommendations in full in future reporting years.

The Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) has developed a set of industry-specific sustainability standards. These identify financially material metrics for companies to communicate their sustainability approach and performance to investors. Our Positive Pawprint Report communicates a number of the industry-specific metrics developed by the SASB for the Healthcare Distributors discipline. While this is designed for human healthcare, we feel it is the SASB discipline most closely aligned to IVC Evidensia’s business operations. Our disclosure is available at www.ivcevidensia.com/positivepawprint.



Stakeholders

We identify our stakeholders as those that we affect and those who affect us. Views from our stakeholders are important in helping us to shape our overall approach and individual initiatives and we aim to ensure the issues, concerns and interest areas of stakeholders directly feed into our sustainability strategy and initiatives.

The table details our key stakeholder groups and how we engage with them on sustainability issues. We welcome any stakeholder feedback through our inbox at positivepawprint@ivcevidensia.com. For further detail on IVC Evidensia’s approach to stakeholder engagement, see IVC Evidensia MidCo Annual Report & Accounts 2022.



STAKEHOLDER GROUP	KEY ESG INTERESTS	ENGAGEMENT & OUTCOMES
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of care• Animal welfare• Safety and well-being• GHG emissions• Waste and recycling	We update our employees on the Positive Pawprint at our monthly Connect calls and via updates in regular newsletters. In the Netherlands, we held a sustainability summit and in the UK, we included a dedicated Sustainability Award category in the IVC Evidensia Brilliant Awards. We encourage feedback via email and our sustainability chat forum.
Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of care• Accessibility and affordability of care	We continually look to improve access to care for our customers. The IVC Evidensia Care Fund provides access to life-saving care for the animals of customers who could not otherwise afford it. Our Pet Health Club is focused on ongoing preventative maintenance of animal well-being and helps customers pay for the care their pet needs in a more manageable, affordable way through monthly subscriptions.
Suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waste reduction• Antimicrobial resistance and medicines management• Climate risk and GHG emissions	We partner with our suppliers to achieve our shared sustainability goals. We work with them on human rights, for example around the launch of our Supplier Code of Conduct, and on initiatives to reduce the environmental impact of products and deliveries, specifically waste and carbon footprint.
Investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Climate risk and GHG emissions• Quality of care• Diversity and inclusion• Health, safety and well-being• Business ethics and governance	We share periodic sustainability related updates with analysts, investors and rating agencies, through one-to-one meetings and our sustainability reporting. We work closely with some investors on the development of our greenhouse gas (GHG) targets and climate strategy.
Government and regulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of care• Business ethics and governance	Group Veterinary Medical Board and National Clinical Boards in each market communicate with their respective regulators to ensure we continue to deliver leading standards of care and protect animal welfare.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Animal welfare• Affordability of care	Our vets play active roles in their local communities, and we support this through the IVC Evidensia Local Community Grants. We have strategic partnerships to support national animal welfare, and initiatives such as our Non-Accidental Injury helpline are made available to the wider veterinary community.

Building sustainability into our business culture

We want to ensure that our Positive Pawprint strategy and the principles of sustainability are embedded within the culture of our business. We are working to raise awareness of sustainability across all parts of the Group, with the approach tailored to the needs of each region or division.

At Group level, the Positive Pawprint is a regular item on the agenda for our monthly Group-wide Connect calls and we produce regular Positive Pawprint newsletters to showcase achievements in all parts of the Group. In the Netherlands, we held a sustainability summit for clinic teams. In Finland, our sustainability lead met with every clinic to talk about sustainability and to review opportunities. In the UK, we included a dedicated Sustainability Award category in the

IVC Evidensia Brilliant Awards (for further details [see page 13](#)). Vetrynity, our crematorium business, has appointed dedicated Sustainability Ambassadors at each of their sites.

We are working to integrate sustainability into our training provision, with sustainability modules now included in our Graduate Academy. During summer 2022, we launched the first of a series of Positive Pawprint webinars, each focusing on a specific aspect of the strategy.

Looking forward →

We plan to build a dedicated sustainability area within our Learning Hub so that our teams know exactly where to go to develop their understanding of this important aspect of our business.



Positive Pawprint Toolkit



To help our clinics adopt best practice across the three pillars, we have developed the IVC Evidensia Positive Pawprint Toolkit, which provides clinic teams with simple guidance on the steps they can take to embed sustainability within their day-to-day operations. The Toolkit is based around three checklists – People, Planet and Patients, with a number of performance metrics to be completed, all supported by extensive guidance resources.

Following a trial during Summer 2022, Rhyd Broughton Vets in Wrexham, Wales, became the first clinic to qualify as an 'IVC Evidensia Positive Pawprint Partner'.

Sarah Lewis, Clinic Director, Rhyd Broughton Veterinary Clinic, said: "I am so proud of the team at Rhyd Broughton Veterinary Clinic who work so hard to deliver outstanding care to all of our patients. This award recognises the extent to which the whole team goes above and beyond for our clients and patients, and demonstrates how we're working to lead the way in implementing the rigorous sustainability standards that are so important to our people and our customers."



Looking forward →

The Toolkit has now been launched in the UK and Finland and we hope to extend it to other countries over the coming year – and to welcome many more Positive Pawprint Partners.

Caring for People Checklist

The criteria below show the core standards we hope that every IHC Evidence Clinic should be able to meet as part of their commitment to the Positive Paigwinet strategy.

Please review the criteria below, and check whether your clinic meets them already. If you're not quite there yet, please refer to the guidance and resources to help you develop the necessary policies and procedures.



Caring for Planet Checklist

The criteria below show the core standards we hope that every IHC Evidence Clinic should be able to meet as part of their commitment to the Positive Paigwinet strategy.

Please review the criteria below, and check whether your clinic meets them already. If you're not quite there yet, please refer to the guidance and resources to help you develop the necessary policies and procedures.



Team Engagement & Wellbeing

Any four or more of:

- ☐ You have an informal team meeting once a month to give colleagues time to catch up and talk about how they're doing
- ☐ You offer team building activities at least once every 12 months (e.g. quiz, walk, sporting challenge)
- ☐ You have clear guidance for all team members on how to access mental health support
- ☐ You have an 'ask them and we'll answer them' policy on mental health First Aid (if available in your country)

Learning & Development

All meet or not:

- ☐ You had regular meetings to review cases and discuss learning points
- ☐ 100% of your staff had performance reviews including a discussion on CPD in the last 12 months and development needs
- ☐ 100% of all team members with training had every month (if it is available in your country)

Environmental Impact

Both of:

- ☐ You have undertaken an environmental impact assessment in the last 12 months (see [here](#))
- ☐ You have created or updated an environmental action plan in the last 12 months (see [here](#))

Team Engagement

Three or more of:

- ☐ You have a standing 'Caring for Paigwinet' agenda item

Team Engagement & Wellbeing

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- ☐ You offer team building activities at least once every 12 months (e.g. quiz, walk, sporting challenge)
- ☐ You have clear guidance for all team members on how to access mental health support
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Environmental Impact

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- ☐ You have undertaken an environmental impact assessment in the last 12 months (see [here](#))
- ☐ You have created or updated an environmental action plan in the last 12 months (see [here](#))

Team Engagement

Three or more of:

- ☐ You have a standing 'Caring for Paigwinet' agenda item

Quality Improvement

Standards:

- ☐ All staff with roles and jobs given from each other type of role (e.g. by age, by gender, by experience) 'banned' from the last 12 months
- ☐ QI is a standing item on the agenda of regular team meetings

Options:

- ☐ You have an active QI project to improve an aspect of your service
- ☐ IHC Clinical Audit (action plan) has the intended and expected impact (see below) in the last 12 months with the aim to improve your CPD score

Infection Prevention & Control

Standards:

- ☐ You have completed an Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) assessment, and the IPC ambassador has completed 'Training on Infection Control'
- ☐ You are monitoring your antimicrobial use and are a 'watching' member of your national antimicrobial use group

Options:

- ☐ IPC Clinical Audit (action plan) has the intended and expected impact (see below) in the last 12 months with the aim to improve your CPD score

Caring for People

In this section

- 13 Engaged, supported teams
- 14 Protecting and promoting the well-being of our teams
- 15 Building a strong learning culture
- 17 A diverse and inclusive workspace
- 19 Promoting high standards of health and safety
- 19 Human rights
- 20 Supporting our local communities



We commit to:



Protect and promote the health and well-being of our teams



Create welcoming, diverse and inclusive workplaces



Ensure human rights are respected across our value chain



Continually grow our clinical knowledge and skills, and support our employees to reach their potential



Empower clinics to contribute to their local communities

Relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals



Relevant policies

- Code of Conduct
- Supplier Code of Conduct
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Group Health and Safety Policy
- Modern Slavery Policy

2022 – Key achievements



Launched our first IVC Evidensia Global Employee Survey in May 2022, with all employees across the Group encouraged to participate.



Piloted the IVC Evidensia Artemis Leaders Programme, our first cross-company leadership programme for clinical staff, with 54 participants from eleven countries, 85% of which were women.



IVC Evidensia Local Community Grants awarded to 107 employee-nominated charities across 11 countries, enabling our teams to support the local causes they care about.



Lisa King
GROUP HR DIRECTOR

“

People are the heart of our business. We want IVC Evidensia to be a great place for them to work where they have the support and training they need to deliver outstanding care to animals and their owners.

Veterinary work is highly rewarding but can be physically and emotionally tough, for both our people and customers. It’s our priority to take care of our employees’ health and well-being, and ensure we offer inclusive and flexible workplaces where they have the support to deliver great care, be themselves and flourish as individuals, at the same time benefitting from the opportunities that come from being part of IVC Evidensia’s global community.”

Our Targets

By 2025, to have 50% of senior roles filled by females

By 2025, to have funded 50 vet scholars and 15 nurse scholars from ethnically diverse backgrounds

By 2023, to have established well-being programmes in all our markets

By 2025, suppliers representing at least 95% of centrally contracted spend to have signed the IVC Evidensia Supplier Code of Conduct or provided their own

KPI	Metric	Scope of data	2022	2021
Gender diversity	Percentage of females in senior roles*	Group	45%	44%
Ethnic diversity	Number of vet and nurse scholarships funded for students from ethnically diverse backgrounds	UK	25 vet and 7 nurse students currently receiving scholarships	13 vet and 3 nurse students selected for 2021 scholarship
Well-being	Number of countries with well-being programmes in place	Group	10 markets	6 markets
Clinical and professional development	Number of days of online and face-to-face learning as part of internal L&D programmes	UK, Finland, Sweden	9,168	n/a
Employee engagement	Percentage of employees taking part in annual Global Employee Survey	Group	55%	n/a
Safety	Accident incidence rate per 1,000 employees	Group	74*	n/a
Supply chain standards	Percentage of Group suppliers (by spend) signed up to IVC Evidensia Supplier Code of Conduct (or provided their own equivalent)	Group	80%	n/a
Community investment	Number of IVC Evidensia Local Community grants awarded	Group	107	n/a

* Data for period 1 December 2021 to 30 September 2022



Engaged, supported teams

It is important to us that our employees are fully engaged with our business strategy and objectives and know that their views are heard and taken into account.

As we work towards IVC Evidensia being a great place to work, it's crucial we hear from our employees about what they think works well and where we can improve. We launched our first IVC Evidensia Global Employee Survey in May 2022, with all employees across the Group encouraged to participate, including all clinic and support staff.

The survey covered topics such as engagement, leadership, team efficiency, organisational and social work environment, along with well-being and diversity and inclusion. Over 17,000 colleagues took part across 16 countries (55% of employees at the time of survey).

Following the publication of the survey results, managers in our different markets have worked to develop action plans looking at how to maintain the strengths and positives of the team while also focusing on areas of improvement.

Across the Group, some of the strongest results were around engagement, diversity and inclusion and well-being. We were pleased to see 87% of respondents tell us that they feel they can be themselves at work. Our actions are focusing on areas where there is scope for further improvement, such as strengthening our career development and leadership development, as well as improving communication, in particular around IVC Evidensia's strategic priorities.

Looking forward →

The survey will be run annually to enable us to measure progress in improving employee engagement across all our country teams.

CASE STUDY

Celebrating our inspiring teams through the IVC Evidensia UK Brilliant Awards

The Brilliant People Awards were launched earlier this year to celebrate those UK employees who have gone the extra mile for their colleagues, clients, patients, and the environment. More than 600 nominations were received, with 65 finalists shortlisted across 10 categories.

The awards were aligned to IVC Evidensia's values, We Care, We Dare, We Share and recognised the work of both clinical and non-clinical teams. Award winners included Adele Walker, Clinical Director of Taylor Vets, who won the clinical We Care category for her unrelenting dedication to her colleagues, clients and patients. Receptionist Victoria Willshire,

of Emerson's Green Veterinary Surgery, won the non-clinical We Care category for 'making a massive impact' on the mental health and well-being of her fellow staff. Clinical Director Claire McCabe, of Craemill Veterinary Clinic, won the clinical We Share award, for passing on her in-depth veterinary knowledge to school pupils, students and colleagues. The Sustainability Award went to Marie Davy of Crossway Vets for constantly looking for ways to reduce her clinic's carbon footprint. Team of the year went to the brilliant Highfield Veterinary Centre with Ruth Parker, Georgina Haynes and Sergiu Petru being recognized for their compassionate use of the IVC Evidensia Care Fund.



CASE STUDY

Promoting engagement and well-being in the Netherlands – Evi op Koers

With an ambition to encourage clinics teams to connect and share knowledge and support colleague well-being through exercise, our colleagues across the Netherlands undertook a country-wide 365-day cargo bike relay, known as Evi op Koers. The project saw more than 600 employees cycling to other neighbouring clinics, meeting their colleagues and building links which they can use in the future when support is needed. The initiative also raised over €21,000 for three Dutch charities which share our commitment to animals and people.



Protecting and promoting the well-being of our teams

Clinical work is rewarding and challenging at the same time. All staff in a clinic need high levels of medical skills, with advanced people skills around listening, accuracy, empathy and dedication often required. Tight-knit teams that work well together where everyone knows what to do for the best outcome is the foundation for healthy animals and satisfied customers. This underlines how vital it is to maintain the well-being of our people to enable the delivery of quality care day after day.

This year we launched a Well-being Index as part of our global employee survey. The highest scores were on a meaningful job and strong relationships at work, with areas to improve including stress levels and physical health. The index gives us valuable insight where to focus our continued efforts.

Our objective is to establish well-being programmes in all our markets by 2023 and we’re on track to achieve this. The approach varies country by country, with programmes tailored to local needs and culture. We encourage our teams to share best practice between countries so that they can learn from each other as they develop their own programmes. Read on for some examples of the different country initiatives.



As part of our commitment to destigmatise mental health, our UK business now has almost 300 employees qualified as Mental Health First Aiders. A network of 600 Well-being Champions support well-being issues across our teams.



Our Spanish clinics appointed Well-being Champions to undertake the six-month Mental Health Certificate training developed by AVEPA. To date, 15 employees have been trained with 10 more planned for 2023. Additionally, Spain ran the Sleep Better, Work Better project, offering access to experts in resting methods and therapies. The project supported 23 employees during 2022, helping to reduce sick leave and resignation risks.



In 2021, Cobequid Animal Hospital team member Aleksander Kristensen lost his battle with depression. To honour his memory, VetStrategy launched Aleks’ Promise, a national programme to address mental health, encouraging customers and team members to bring Aleks’ values – grace, empathy and patience – into our clinics.

In 2022, each VetStrategy clinic was provided with mental health and well-being resources with strategies that can be actively implemented every day. A plaque honouring Aleks’ memory will be featured at Cobequid Animal Hospital and clinics across Canada received an Aleks’ Promise poster to be mounted in their waiting areas. The words of Alek’s promise are to the left.



In the Netherlands, our Work pressure & Work happiness programme offers a tool which gives insight into workload and well-being at an individual level. By understanding employee motivation and stress factors, HR and the Clinic Director can support employees to create a plan to improve individual happiness and create a work environment where individuals can manage work pressure. More than 80 employees went through the pilot, and more than 300 employees in 50 clinics will have attended the programme by the end of 2022.



In Finland, we have been working in partnership with ‘Auntie’ professionals to provide flexible and easily accessible well-being support, tailor-made to the needs of the individual employee.




We know veterinarians and nurses can get emotionally stressed by unexpected events during a day. To prevent mental health issues there is a policy in Norway that the veterinarian in charge must gather the team and have a short debrief before they leave work to try and reduce stress by sharing challenges. In 2023, our Norwegian team plan to establish Well-being Ambassadors as well.

IVC Evidensia support for Vetlife

Recent years have brought unprecedented challenges for the veterinary community in providing for the health and welfare of animals. As the UK’s principal support charity for the veterinary community Vetlife has also seen similarly unprecedented demands on its services.

In recognition of the invaluable support Vetlife provides to IVC Evidensia vets and to the veterinary community across the UK, we were pleased to be able to make a donation of £100,000 to fund the development of their online resources library which will be accessible to all.

Thanking IVC Evidensia for the donation, Vetlife President Graham Dick said: “This donation by IVC Evidensia is both welcome and timely. It helps us to replenish our Vetlife resources, which have been drawn upon to meet the range of challenges we have faced over the last couple of years. Such generosity further strengthens our ability to provide the future support needs of the veterinary community we serve.”

Vetlife Helpline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on: 0303 040 2551 or via  anonymous email at <https://helpline.vetlife.org.uk/>

Looking forward →

Promoting the well-being of our teams is a core priority within our Positive Pawprint strategy. Going forward we will continue our work to develop and strengthen well-being programmes in all of our markets. We will focus on improving communication of our well-being programmes to ensure our employees are aware of the support available and sharing best practice between countries. Our Mental Health First Aider and Well-being Champions programmes, which were initiated in UK and Spain, will now roll out to more countries.

Aleks’ Promise

Keeping Aleks’ Promise means making sure everyone who walks through our doors is met with grace, empathy and patience. It means bringing each other up, so our practice remains a safe and supportive place for all. It also means we cannot tolerate any actions that break his promise. Together, we can honour Aleks’ life by bringing kindness in tow, wherever we go.

In memory of Aleksander Kristensen

Clinics across Canada received an Aleks’ Promise poster.

Building a strong learning culture

Giving our people access to leading education opportunities is a key priority for the Group, and underpins our learning and development (L&D) strategy.

Across the Group, our clinical teams comprise people at all stages of a veterinary career, from those who have recently graduated all the way through to experienced general practitioners, highly qualified nurses and internationally renowned specialists. A common theme is a desire to continue learning, so we work to support their growth as individuals, which also helps us to continually develop the care provided to our patients and customers. We understand the importance of a strong learning culture for a long and enjoyable veterinary career, and are investing in both our learning systems (including our online Learning Hub) and our people and programmes to support both our clinical and support team functions.

Over

27,000

employees have access to our Learning Hub

Our L&D offering is delivered through the IVC Evidensia Academy, which has a presence in all our markets. While learning is tailored to in-country needs, we are increasingly working to share best practice and learning opportunities internationally. Through our country Learning Academies, we are able to offer a wide range of learning opportunities to all IVC Evidensia employees. Diverse delivery methods are

used, including face-to-face, online, on-demand and blended learning, focusing on theory as well as practical skills. Coaching and mentoring in clinics is emphasised. Well-being is one of our top priorities and was a focus for 2022, including support with client communication, stress management and resilience.

Our online training is now hosted on the Learning Hub (our Learning Management System) which we piloted in Sweden early in 2022 and subsequently rolled out to the UK, Ireland, Norway, Spain, Portugal, Finland, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Latvia and Estonia. Over 27,800 employees now have access. We're aiming for the Learning Hub to be live in Canada, the Netherlands, Belgium and Poland by June 2023. Training courses cover both clinical and non-clinical topics such as leadership, client care, health and safety and data security and are available for all IVC Evidensia employees. Clinical training includes our extensive three-year dental programme, and nurse-focused orthopaedic and anaesthesia programmes.

Leadership training is a key focus for the coming year – during 2022 we introduced bite-size leadership programmes on the Learning Hub to complement our face-to-face leadership training. 1,600 learners have accessed the training since launch. We also piloted the IVC Evidensia Artemis Leaders Programme, our first cross-company leadership programme for clinical staff, with 54 participants from eleven countries.

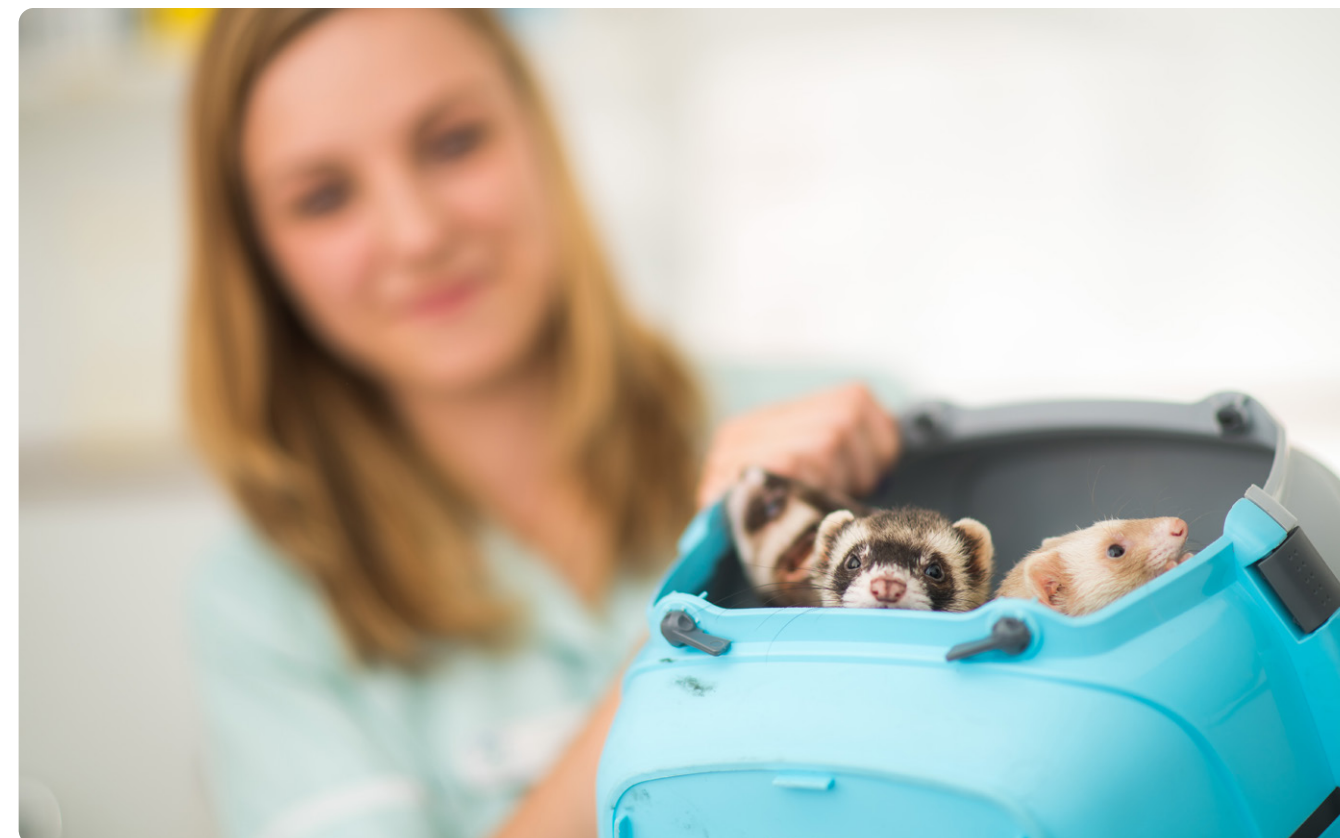
2,488

Total number of IVC Evidensia Academy delegate days in 2021/22

During 2023, we will launch our leadership framework, providing our clinical and non-clinical teams with a clear learning structure supporting career pathways into leadership roles.

The IVC Evidensia Nurse Academy in the UK offers a structured, blended learning programme to provide the best possible start for newly qualified RVNs. The programme runs via four modules across one year, providing a range of valuable and engaging learning opportunities that support, develop and promote nursing excellence. Other courses are available for nurse development in Sweden and Finland.

For those who have completed the Graduate and Nurse Academies, there are many ongoing opportunities for all our small animal, farm and equine colleagues in both clinical and non-clinical topics. Our first Equine Symposia focused on colic and we delivered two farm animal symposia, which helped develop and share knowledge, as well as providing networking opportunities with record attendance of 90 vets at the farm animal symposia this year. Feedback from these sessions both on the content and networking opportunities have been excellent. The Academies also offer a blended programme entitled Exceptional Receptionist in the UK for those who are passionate about offering exceptional customer care. This year, 690 receptionists completed the live workshops. There is also an accredited course available for receptionists in Finland combining clinical and business training.



Strengthening IVC Evidensia’s global referral community

With over 350 specialists and residents (specialist in training) across the Group, we recognise the value of investing in and bringing our global referral community together. During 2022, we more than doubled the number of residents and we continue to support their on-site training through our research fund and regular provision of international online teaching rounds in eight different disciplines.

During 2023, we plan a further focus on our internship programmes providing consistent high-quality support and the opportunity to learn from the expertise available across the Group.



Further, we provide two Referral Summits a year that provide professional skills and non-clinical development topics open to all our referral clinicians. Delivered online with external speakers who are inspiring and extremely knowledgeable in their field, these enhance our commitment to developing our referral community. Our 2022 Spring Referral Summit was held in May and focused on well-being and resilience. Over 120 clinicians and residents from 18 countries took part. IVC Evidensia Autumn Referral Summit will take place in October 2022, focusing on communication skills.

“
One of the best online CPDs I have ever attended, thank you.”

2022 Spring Referral Summit attendee

Looking forward →

In the year ahead, we will continue to develop and improve our L&D support to help our employees reach their potential. Priorities include further improving the accessibility of CPD, primarily by providing greater flexibility over online versus in person training to ensure that more of our clinical teams can take part in training without necessarily having to travel when work or home commitments make that difficult. Recognising the importance of the general practitioner, we are taking our first cohort through a newly developed GP training pathway giving a clear career route and framework for veterinary surgeons to develop their careers in this crucial area of expertise.

CASE STUDY

International Graduate Academy: helping build the next generation of clinicians

The IVC Evidensia Graduate Academy is core part of our goal to deliver exceptional veterinary care by supporting new graduates as they join the profession. Since starting in the UK in 2014, the Academy has grown each year with participants now from eight of our countries.

Graduates are offered a blended learning approach with practical, taught (both face to face and online), mentored and peer to peer learning. Content is tailored to support diverse career paths with small animal, farm and equine streams.

In June 2022, we welcomed 300 graduates in-person, and nearly 150 online, to our Graduate Academy Congress. The attendees reflected IVC Evidensia’s reach across Europe, with vets at the very start of their careers from the UK, the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Belgium, Ireland and France. Graduates not only found out what the early stages of their veterinary journey would look like, but also met their future colleagues in the industry. In total there were over 50 lectures from more than 40 speakers joining from the UK, Sweden, the Netherlands, Canada and the USA.



A diverse and inclusive workspace

As a diverse business spread over 20 countries, we are passionate that diversity in all its forms – gender, disability, ethnicity, views, beliefs, sexuality and socio-economic background – is key to the strength of our business success and the long-term sustainability of IVC Evidensia. We are committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive workplace.



The team at Campbell River Veterinary Hospital in Canada mark Pride Month.

83 out of 100
Diversity and inclusion score in
2022 IVC Evidensia Global Employee Survey

One of the ways we measure our progress is through the Diversity and Inclusion index within our Global Employee Survey. In the 2022 survey, we were encouraged to see a score of 83 (out of 100). While this gives us confidence that we are on the right path, we know this is the beginning of a journey and we will continue to develop our strategies to improve diversity. The creation of a Diversity & Inclusion working Group will help us share best practice between countries and help coordinate initiatives to promote all forms of diversity across our Group.

Gender diversity

It is our goal to have women in half of all senior roles* by 2025. We are developing strategies to deliver this objective and ensure that our female employees feel they have the right level of support to progress their careers within IVC Evidensia.

In order to work towards our objective, we ensure that Group-level committees all have female representation and our recruitment policy for senior roles is to have at least one woman among the final candidates.

During 2022 we launched a pilot of the IVC Evidensia Artemis Leaders Programme, our first cross-company leadership programme for clinical staff. The objectives are to help meet our aspirations for gender balance in critical roles and to ensure a pipeline of future leaders. The gender of participants should reflect the gender split in the company, and therefore support our objective to give more women the opportunity to develop their careers within the Group. For participants, the programme seeks to help them develop a more robust network with colleagues and open more career opportunities. We are delighted that 54 participants were nominated from across 11 countries and are participating this year, 85% of which are women.

In Canada, VetStrategy introduced a Women’s Leadership Group. This non-hierarchical mentorship program aims to create opportunities for women to reach their full potential. The collective goal is to create and support relationships that help the members thrive by tapping into their greatest

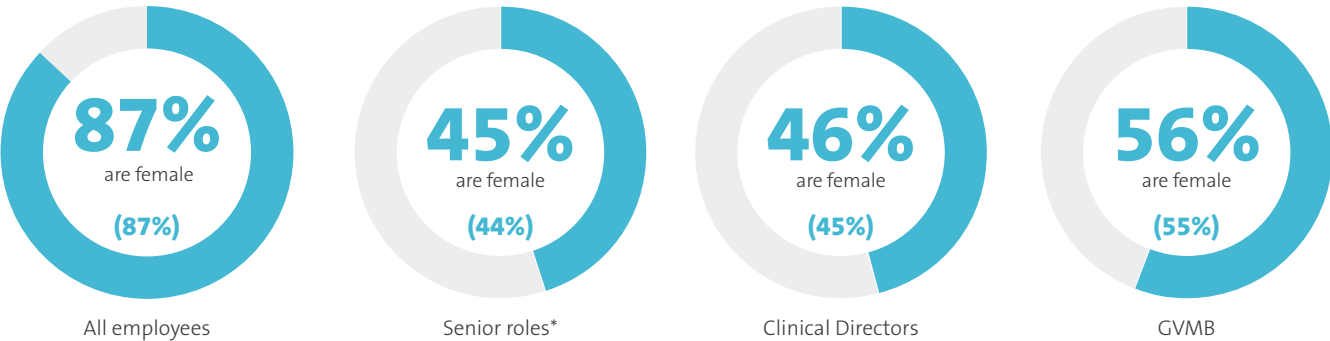
strengths, learning from each other, and being deliberate and strategic about goal setting. In 2022 we had 12 partnerships across Canada, including from clinic and central support roles.

We are committed that IVC Evidensia should offer a workplace where employees can combine family and work.

In 2022, we undertook a full review of family friendly policies in UK. This included the launch of enhanced maternity pay, shared parental pay and adoption pay. We also introduced paid fertility leave for employees either receiving or recovering from fertility treatment, or supporting their partner.

As a business where the majority of employees are women, it’s crucial we support women of all ages during their careers. Research has shown that as many as one in 10 women leave work because of symptoms of menopause (The Menopause and the Workplace report by the Fawcett Society, 2022). Consequently, we want to support our employees and decrease these retention risks. We have trialled a number of menopause support initiatives during 2022 and are preparing to launch these more widely in 2023.

Gender Diversity across the IVC Evidensia Group (2021 in parentheses)



*Senior roles defined as Board, Executive Committee, Group Veterinary Medical Board (GVMB), Country Managers and direct reports, Executive Committee direct reports and Clinical Directors



Participants in our 2022 Artemis Leaders Programme.

Promoting ethnic diversity within the veterinary profession

In 2020, we launched our Ethnic Diversity Scholarship scheme and, across IVC Evidensia and VetsNow, we are now supporting a total of 32 undergraduates in the UK, of which 25 are vet students and 7 are nurse students. Our Ethnic Diversity Board support with mentoring and support for student societies.

We want to inspire schoolchildren from all backgrounds to consider careers in our profession. Many of our clinics have relationships with local schools and colleges, providing school children and students with the opportunity to learn about animal welfare and the veterinary profession. Our clinics routinely offer work experience placements to students, and we also hold other events specifically aimed at reaching out to the local community. One example was a recent surgery for cuddly toys at Orangeville Animal Hospital in Canada. The community was invited to come in for a free toy animal surgery appointment to learn about veterinary care.



Children have an opportunity to learn about veterinary practice at Orangeville Animal Hospital in Canada.

During the year, we joined forces with the Animal Aspirations team at the University of Bristol to produce a video available for anyone to download and share, or present, to school or college pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. This video aims to drive awareness of the opportunities within the veterinary professions for teenagers who are weighing up career options.

Tim Parkin, Head of School, Bristol Veterinary School, University of Bristol, commented on the partnership, “Bristol Vet School aspires to be fully inclusive, and we are committed to increasing the diversity of our community. We want to ensure that the potential to embark on a veterinary career is available to school and college pupils from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible. As Head of School, I am passionate about equity and am determined that no one be prevented from access to our brilliant professions through lack of opportunity. Our students and staff have worked with the IVC Evidensia team to create this fabulous video for use in a variety of settings, and we hope it will inspire many young people to consider veterinary careers.”

Looking forward →

During 2023, we plan to launch scholarships across all the Canadian veterinary schools, and we will continue to look for opportunities to extend the scheme to other countries within the Group.



Mandisa Greene
CHAIR OF IVC EVIDENSIA
ETHNIC DIVERSITY BOARD &
MEDICAL DIRECTOR, VETS NOW

“The IVC Evidensia Ethnic Diversity board is leading the way within the veterinary industry by acknowledging and actively trying to address the ethnicity imbalance that exists within the veterinary profession. The RCVS/BVA Vet Futures report, *Taking charge of our future: A vision for the veterinary profession for 2030*, had as one of its key recommendations to explore how we can encourage a more diverse profession (in relation to ethnicity, socio-economic background, gender etc).

IVC Evidensia recognises there can be inherent intersectionality of these underrepresented groups. As the Vet Futures report identified, diversity is a key factor to the sustainable future of our professions.

The need for these scholarships is evidenced by the high proportion of ethnic minority students with an offer to pursue a veterinary degree who also apply for our scholarships. This is our second year awarding IVC Evidensia Ethnic Diversity Scholarships and we have consistently been told we will make an enormous impact on applicants’ ability to study without having to take multiple jobs and also in getting to Extra-Mural Studies placements during the holidays. This will mean a real difference in their ability to enjoy and successfully complete the course.

Our partnership with Animal Aspirations, to communicate to schoolchildren the opportunities of a veterinary career, responds to another key recommendation of the Vet Futures project. The commitment to this is with a view to enabling a long-term shift within our professions and as a Board we will support this wherever possible and keep connected with our scholars as they navigate their veterinary careers. In time we would hope to see an increase in the number of vet school/ scholarship applications and in the support for ethnic diversity offered throughout our industry.”



Promoting high standards of health and safety

We want everyone working for IVC Evidensia and visiting our clinics, crematoria and offices to go home safe and healthy at the end of every working day. We're committed to providing a consistent standard for health and safety across our Group. This work is led by our Group Health and Safety Manager who works directly with the Health and Safety representatives within each country/business to help ensure each part of the Group meet the same standards.

During 2022, we launched a new Group Health and Safety Policy, with all countries and businesses aligning to the Group policy to help ensure consistency of standards within the Group while ensuring that local policies meet local regulations.

To track our performance, we report against five Group Health and Safety KPIs monthly to the Group Executive Committee. These include accident reporting, occupational health referrals, liability claims, health and safety monitoring activity (audits and inspections) and the completion of health and safety training. As the process for collating such data across the Group evolves, we intend to extend the level of detail within each KPI.

In the UK, we have implemented a risk management platform across all our clinics which allows us to collate all our statutory health and safety documentation, ensuring consistent reporting on statutory compliance. In the year ahead, we plan to implement a Group-wide risk management and reporting platform, tailored to the statutory requirements for each country. A Group accident reporting module will allow all accidents and incidents to be reported through a single portal.

Between December 2021 and September 2022 there were a total of 2,648 accidents reported across all parts of the Group. We use this data to calculate an incidence rate based on the number of accidents per 1,000 employees to allow a direct comparison of the accidents within each country regardless of head count. Across the Group the accident incident rate per 1,000 employees for this period was 74.

We analyse the causes of accidents to understand how we can improve our procedures to reduce risk. The most frequent cause of injury is dog and cat bites. One direct way that we are helping to reduce this incidence is through our work to introduce species-specific waiting room facilities, described in Patients on [page 40](#).

Looking forward →

Training will be a focus during 2023 through the development of a single health and safety module. The objective is to raise awareness of the key risks that we face, but more importantly build understanding of the controls we have available to mitigate those risks. This module, which covers crematoria, offices as well as vets, will be available in 15 languages to ensure the key messages are accessible to all of our colleagues.



Human rights

We operate in an increasingly international business environment with complex supply chains and take seriously the associated potential for human rights implications in various territories. Our success can be achieved only when we treat everyone, both our employees and our customers, suppliers and business partners in a way that respects the human rights and dignity of individuals.

Following the launch of our Supplier Code of Conduct in late 2021, suppliers representing around 80% of our contracted spend have signed up (or provided their own equivalent), agreeing to partner with us on this important collaborative commitment. By 2025, we aim for suppliers representing over 95% of all spend across the Group to have committed to our Code of Conduct.

During the last year, we have rolled out a Human Rights Policy and Global Code of Ethics, communicating these to employees and suppliers. Next year we aim to roll out our Global Whistleblowing Policy to our suppliers.

These policies will be at the heart of our new supplier due diligence process being launched in 2023. This should provide better visibility and awareness of the actions that our suppliers are taking, helping us to make informed decisions when selecting preferred suppliers and forming the basis of ongoing supplier engagement.

IVC Evidensia publishes a Modern Slavery Statement in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, available at www.ivcevidensia.com/positivepawprint.



Supporting our local communities

Our veterinary clinics, hospitals and crematoria play an important part in thousands of communities, both urban and rural. We want to support the communities in which we operate – caring for patients, their owners, and also supporting our teams to play an active part in the wider community – something which we know is important to their sense of well-being. One of the key ways we care for pets and their owners is through the IVC Evidensia Care Fund, which provides emergency funding for life-saving treatment. For more details, [see page 41](#).

Our clinic and central teams also provide support for a wide range of charities, both at a national and a local level. To further support these charity partnerships. In December 2021, we launched the IVC Evidensia Local Community Grants Fund. Each veterinary group, crematorium or central team can apply for a Local Community Grant each year to support a local cause they care about. During the year, we have been delighted to provide grants totalling £104,000 to 147 charities and non-profit organisations nominated by 107 different teams across eleven countries. The grants have been well received by our community partners, but have also been well received by our teams, who value the contribution to staff well-being from being supported to undertake this kind of community engagement.

In France, clinics can invite customers to make small charity donations when they pay by bank card, with 44 clinics already using the system. Each clinic chooses the charity they would like to support. Since January 2022, over 7,000 euros have been raised for charities including the Société Protectrice des Animaux, Chien guide d'aveugle (Guide Dogs for the Blind) and Vétérinaire Sans frontières (Vets Without Frontiers).

Just a few of the local community charities our teams have supported during 2022



The Canmore Trust – Grant application made by Avondale Vets, Strathaven, Scotland. This charity supports families affected by suicide.



Hulphond (Domingo House) – Nominated on behalf of the Evi op Koers project in Evidensia, Netherlands, offers animal assisted therapy.



Dyreværnet – Animal Welfare in Denmark, nominated by the IVC Evidensia Marketing Team in Denmark, helps animals in need.



Cynofamily 74 – Nominated by Clinique Vétérinaire Hel'Vet, France, supports police and other working dogs in France when they retire.



The team from Kleintierzentrum Gotha in Germany present their community grant to Street Tiger, a charity that cares for 'street cats', ensuring they are neutered and offered veterinary care.



Kattakuten – Grant application made by Evidensia Djurkliniken Öjebyn, Sweden, cares for feral cats in freezing conditions.



Bremerhavener Haustierversorgung e.V. – Grant application made by TA Bremerhaven, Germany, support elderly or ill people and their pets.



Dyrevenn Vestfold – Grant application made by Sandefjord Dyreklinikk, Norway, rescues and rehomes local cats.



Périkus – Grant application made by Vicalcan, Spain, offers abandoned animals a second chance in life.



Employees from Veternity Les Chat'Oyantes present a community grant to their local animal rescue charity.



WSPCA – Grant application made by O'Shea Bramley Breen, Ireland, promotes responsible pet ownership to help prevent cruelty.



Mannerheimin lastensuojeluliitto – Grant application made by IVC Evidensia Lohja, Finland, supports children who are victims of bullying.



Fondation Zarabella – Grant application made by Bureau Vétérinaire Saint-Amable, Canada, helps people who are homeless or low income by supporting their pets.



StreetVet – grant application made by UK Retail & Supply Chain team. StreetVet delivers free essential veterinary care to the pets of homeless people in the UK.



Looking forward →

In the year ahead, we will continue to offer Local Community Grants to enable our teams to play an active role supporting good causes in their local area, especially those non-profit organisations providing direct support for humans or animals impacted by the cost of living crisis. We also aim to improve our measurement of the support that our teams across the Group give to charities, both in cash and also in-kind, through the provision of veterinary advice and care.

Using our veterinary expertise to support animal welfare charities

Some of the most valuable support we can give to charities is through our veterinary skills. We work closely with animal rescue charities often providing free or heavily discounted treatment to animals in need and first aid treatment to wild or stray animals. In many cases, our clinic teams will even support with rehoming strays.

In the UK we are in regular dialogue with the key animal welfare charities, to ensure that we understand their priorities and where we can best provide support. This includes education projects, welfare-led initiatives and optimising our service provision. We have worked with Guide Dogs for the Blind to ensure that when one of their dogs needs an emergency referral that they are able to access our network without concerns over financing. We have also worked on a large project hosted by the Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA) aimed at expanding the knowledge of the veterinary profession when dealing with situations where animal welfare is compromised and action needs to be taken.

Our teams provide direct assistance to charities, by donating their time and their veterinary expertise.

Veterinarians from Dundas West Animal Hospital, Canada, travelled to Ecuador to support the Paws Elon project. Over 120 dogs and cats were spayed and neutered in just 2 days. The hospital team plans further visits to support the project. In Denmark, we are working to establish a trap, neuter and release scheme for feral cats who would otherwise be trapped and euthanised.

We regularly use our veterinary skills to support wildlife. In July 2022, a collective team of 50 vets and nurses from across the UK completed the British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) training to become 'marine mammal medics'. Supported by volunteers, BDMLR is a charity dedicated to the rescue of marine wildlife. These volunteers devote their time throughout the year to attend call-outs involving injured or stranded marine animals such as whales and dolphins.

Looking forward →

In the year ahead, we plan to partner with the Fire and Rescue Service to train our vets in emergency care for animals in road traffic incidents, again so that our vets can offer expert support when needed by the emergency services. This was trialled at our Donnington Grove Vets in Newbury, who provided training for 30 of their team, and we now hope to extend this to more of the UK Farm and Equine teams.



In July 2022, a collective team of 50 vets and nurses from across the UK completed the British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) training to become 'marine mammal medics'.

Response to the war in Ukraine

Following the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February, our teams across the Group wanted to provide support to people and animals whose lives had been thrown into turmoil and hardship by this appalling situation.

One key area we provided assistance was by giving access to veterinary care for the large number of pets being displaced by the war in Ukraine.

We immediately broadened the scope of our Care Fund, expanding it into Estonia and Latvia, and widened the support that the Care Fund can provide by meeting the costs of any vaccination, blood sampling and certification that may be required to legalise a pet in a new country. To date, we have

provided treatment to over 700 pets, primarily in Finland, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland. Any animal accompanying a refugee that was on chronic medication was provided with supplies of that medication along with the necessary monitoring of their condition to ensure they remained stable following their arduous journey. We also provided free veterinary care to any Ukrainian refugee's pet that had become ill or sustained an injury while they fled from the war. Our online veterinary advice provider, PawSquad, offered free consultations with translation services to support pet owners either in Ukraine or fleeing the war.

Teams across the Group also held local fundraising events to raise funds for the national and international charities providing essential support to people and animals affected by the war. In addition, the Group made a donation, on behalf of colleagues, of £100,000 to the International Red Cross to support their vital humanitarian work in Ukraine.



Caring for the Planet

In this section

- 25 Managing our climate impact
- 26 Delivering our greenhouse gas strategy
- 29 Responsible procurement
- 30 Integrating sustainability into our greenfield development
- 30 Resource efficiency
- 32 Promoting biodiversity



We commit to:



Transition our company towards net-zero climate impact



Minimise our waste footprint through optimal management



Train all clinicians on applied veterinary sustainability care



Evolve industry-leading sustainability practices



Practise leading standards of chemical and pharma management

Relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals



Relevant policies
• Environmental Policy

2022 – Key achievements



Group committed to set greenhouse gas reduction targets to achieve net-zero by 2050



Energy upgrades across UK clinics on track to cut electricity consumption by over 30% at a typical site



Consumables review has seen 1.8 million syringes replaced with models which use 30% less plastic, saving 1.3 tonnes of virgin plastic

The effects of climate change, resource depletion and environmental pollution threaten the well-being of people and animals and are the primary cause of global biodiversity loss. We recognise that we have a responsibility to reduce the environmental impact of our business and operations and to improve our environmental performance as an integral part of our business strategy and operating methods.

Our targets

By 2030, reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 50%, and Scope 3 emissions by 30%

By 2050, reduce Group emissions to net-zero

By December 2023, at least 85% of electricity purchased to be from renewable sources

By 2025, in the UK, achieve zero waste to landfill and increase our recycling rate for non-hazardous waste by 50%

By 2023, complete waste reviews in all core markets as the basis for Group waste targets.

Note: Scope 1 and 2 targets are aligned with a 1.5°C science-based rate of decarbonisation and have been submitted to SBTi for validation. Targets measured from a 2022 base year.

KPI	Metric	Scope of data	2022	2021
GHG emissions	Group Scope 1 carbon emissions	Group	34,887	n/a
	Group Scope 2 carbon emissions (market-based)		11,010	n/a
	Group Scope 3 carbon emissions		1,387,310	n/a
	Percentage of renewable electricity purchased	Group	65%	55%
Waste	Percentage of waste diverted from landfill*	UK, Sweden	99%	71%
	Percentage of non-hazardous waste recycled*	UK	33%	30%

* Veterinary sites and offices where waste is managed directly by IVC Evidensia

As a growing business made up of thousands of historically independent sites, it means that data measurement for many of our Planet indicators has historically been at a local level, so we are working to improve the quality of data reported at Group level. Our initial focus has been our largest markets; the UK, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden, France and Canada, which together account for the largest part of Group turnover.

The Planet leads in these markets have played an invaluable role collecting environmental KPI data. In the coming year, we plan to appoint Planet leads in more of our markets to support our work to improve the way we measure and also manage our environmental impact. As we improve our data, we will extend the scope of our environmental KPI reporting and targets, with the ultimate objective to report our impacts across the full IVC Evidensia Group.

Alongside the measurement of our impacts, we have also started on the journey of embedding sustainability into our daily practices and procedures to reduce our environmental impact. We are working to increase efficiency across our operations: producing less waste, recycling more, reducing the energy we use in our clinics and crematoria, making sure we manage medicines appropriately and working in partnership with our suppliers to deliver shared environmental objectives. This is led by our Group Sustainability team that supports and advises the country Planet leads. Our largest markets have developed their own plans for local environmental initiatives which ultimately feed into our Group strategy and objectives. More detail on the core workstreams and initiatives is detailed below.

We know that many of our clinical teams are passionate about sustainability and want to play their part in helping to reduce our environmental impact. To help them understand what actions they can take to have the most impact, and support Group- and country-level initiatives, we have developed the Positive Pawprint Clinic Toolkit with extensive advice on the actions which can be taken locally, on everything from energy efficiency, to waste recycling, to reducing single-use plastic, to biodiversity. For more information, [see page 9](#).



Managing our climate impact

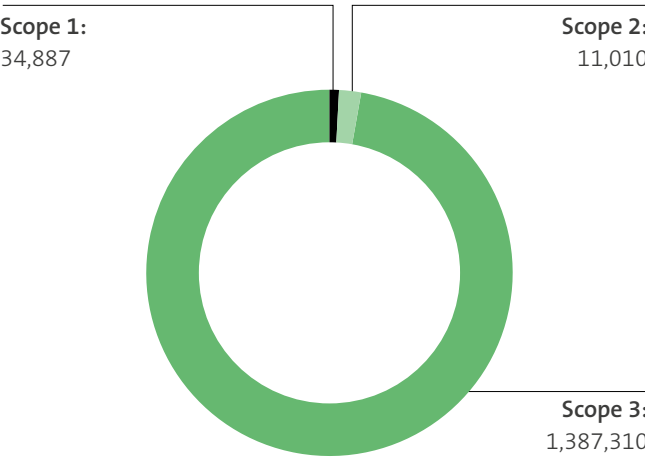
The global healthcare sector, covering both human and animal health, is responsible for an estimated 4–5% of the world’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. As one of the largest veterinary groups, we have a responsibility to use our scale and influence to reduce GHG emissions and improve standards of sustainability, both within our own operations, and then more widely in the veterinary profession.

As well as managing the impacts of our direct and indirect operations, we are working to better understand the impact that a changing climate may have, specifically what this will mean for animal health, the choices owners make for their animals and also our business and supply chain. This year, we have undertaken analysis of the risks and opportunities associated with climate change and this work will continue in the year ahead, helping us to further develop our strategy. This is discussed on [page 7](#) and in our reporting under the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) regulations (published at www.ivcevidensia.com/positivepawprint).

Our carbon footprint analysis of the full IVC Evidensia Group was carried out for the year 2021/22, looking at our operational emissions (Scope 1 and 2) and also our downstream emissions (Scope 3). This analysis has enabled us to identify the parts of our operations which have the greatest climate impact and to start to scope out a plan to cut our emissions.

In September 2022, the IVC Evidensia Group Executive Committee agreed to set near-term company-wide emission reductions in line with climate science with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). Our proposed targets are, by 2030, to reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 50% and Scope 3 emissions by 30% (from a 2022 base year). These targets have been submitted to the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi) for validation, and in the meantime we have already started to develop the workstreams needed to deliver the goals. This is detailed overleaf. In the coming two years, we will develop net-zero targets and submit these to the SBTi for validation. We are targeting to be net zero by 2050.

Total Group Greenhouse Gas Emissions 2021/22 (tonnes CO₂e)



Methodology

IVC Evidensia have calculated our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in line with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. We report emissions where IVC Evidensia have Operational Control and report emissions in tCO₂e.

Scope 1 includes direct emissions from sources owned or controlled by IVC Evidensia. It includes emissions associated with our managed locations including natural gas and kerosene and fuel utilised by our vehicle fleet. Data is collected from invoices, telematics, fuel cards and other documentation for UK, the Netherlands, France, Sweden and Finland and logged in an Emissions Reporting Tool. Defra Conversion Factors for greenhouse gas reporting are used to convert to CO₂e.

IVC Evidensia greenhouse gas targets

By 2030

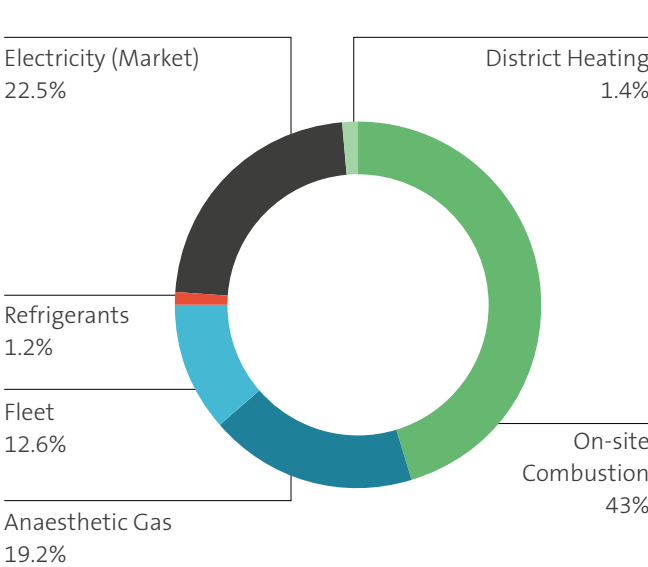
reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 50% and Scope 3 emissions by 30%

By 2050

reduce Group emissions to net-zero

Note: Scope 1 and 2 targets are aligned with a 1.5°C science-based rate of decarbonisation and have been submitted to SBTi for validation. Targets measured from a 2022 base year. We will submit our net-zero emissions target to the SBTi for validation within the next 24 months.

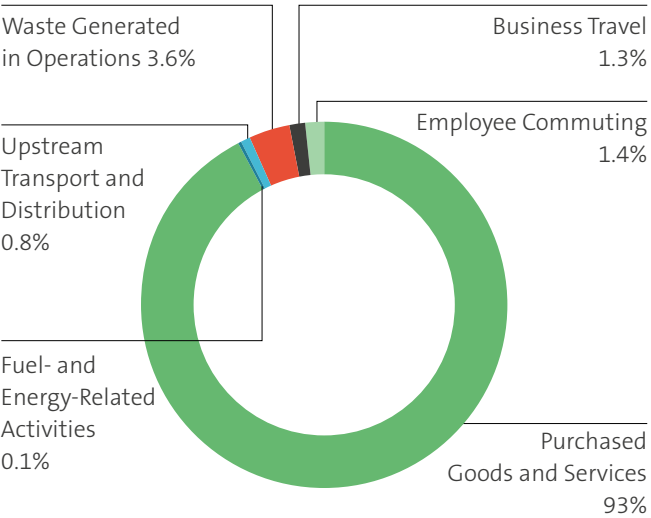
Combined Scope 1 and 2 emissions



Scope 2 includes indirect emissions associated with the purchase of electricity which is consumed at our locations. Data is collected from invoices and other documentation. Where data is not directly available, extrapolations are made based upon the average electricity consumption per full-time employee (FTE) and allocated (at a country or global level).

Scope 3 includes indirect emissions associated with our value chain. IVC Evidensia utilises company data from several different sources to facilitate the calculation of Scope 3 emissions. Category 1 Purchased Goods and Services, Category 4 Upstream Transport and Distribution, Category 5 Waste Generated in Operations and Category 6 Business Travel

Scope 3 emissions



are calculated using a spend-based approach and the associated Quantis emission factors. In some instances, Scope 3 data for the Canadian market has been extrapolated based on known European data.

Note: The Group publishes separate GHG reporting for our UK business in accordance with the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) regulations. This is available in the IVC Evidensia Acquisition Midco Limited Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements.

Delivering our greenhouse gas strategy

In order to deliver our near-term emission reductions in our Scope 1 and 2 emissions, we are focusing on a number of key impact areas.

Building energy efficiency is a priority for all of our markets, and is in sharper focus due to global concerns over energy pricing and supply, which has meant that the environmental and commercial business case for investment is stronger than ever.



Cutting our Scope 1 and 2 emissions

Focus area	Key objectives
Building energy efficiency	→ Implementation of energy efficiency initiatives to reduce consumption of electricity and natural gas across our sites
Fleet	→ Moving our vehicle fleet towards lower carbon solutions (including electric vehicles)
Anaesthetic gases	→ Adopting new techniques and technologies for anaesthesia which have reduced GHG emissions
Energy procurement	→ Procurement of renewable energy where available
Crematorium technology	→ Utilising alternative technology to remove reliance on natural gas and burning oil

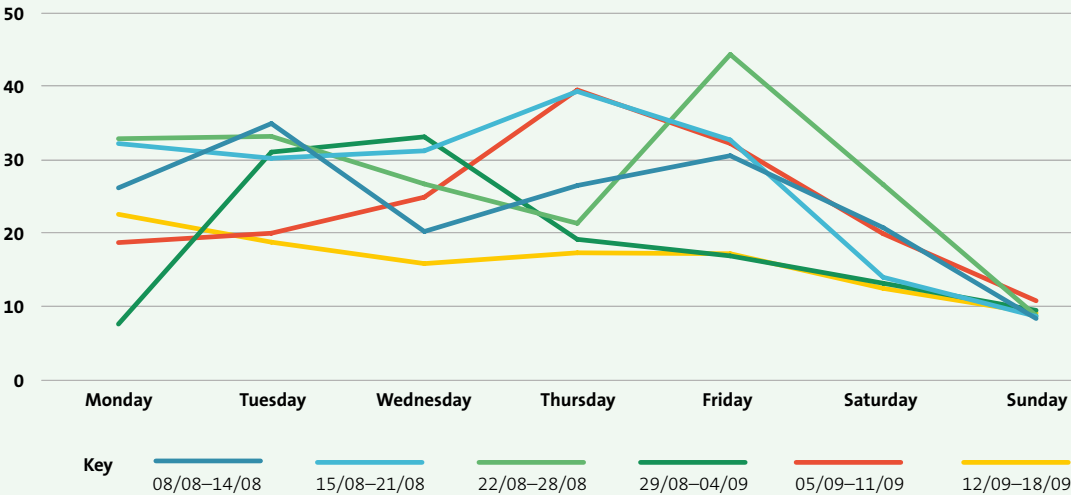
CASE STUDY

Improving energy efficiency in our UK clinics

Energy efficiency has been a focus for our UK business during 2022, and also by the climate of rapidly increasing energy prices. Site audits found that there was potential to make material savings to energy consumption by improving the way heat and light are used. The project will see energy upgrades across the majority of UK clinics, with work focusing on two areas: the installation of LED lighting, which will not only cut electricity consumption,

but also provide better lux levels for clinical work; and building management systems to automate heating and lighting systems and reduce waste. Central monitoring will also enable us to spot any spikes in energy consumption quickly and take action to address the cause. The project is estimated to deliver savings of over 30% in electricity consumption at a typical clinic site.

Energy savings in practice: Grove Vets, Barrow-in-Furness



BEFORE

- Lights left on in empty rooms or after hours
- Some air conditioning left running after hours
- Boiler running alongside air conditioning
- No LED lighting

AFTER

- LED lighting with dimmer switches – better lux level for clinical work
- Lights controlled with movement sensors
- Heating set at 20–23 degrees
- Heating and lighting timed to turn on during open hours

In the Netherlands, we are working with our landlords to improve the energy efficiency of our buildings and explore opportunities for on-site renewable power generation.

Clinic teams are using an energy app to capture data on energy consumption and existing insulation, heating and lighting systems. This information will enable us to prioritise a work programme during 2023 to deliver targeted energy reductions. We are exploring opportunities for on-site renewable power generation. Photovoltaic cells have been installed at Dierenuitvaartcentrum Nootdorp and Dierenartsenpraktijk Bodegraven, and we hope to roll out a similar model to more sites during the year ahead, supporting our goal to use only renewable electricity.

In Finland, energy efficiency is a priority when refurbishing existing buildings. Measures taken include the installation of LED lighting, better insulation for rooftops and walls, heat recovery on ventilation and improved control systems on HVAC systems.

Looking forward →

Building energy efficiency will remain a focus in the year ahead. Energy audits are planned for our French sites, and work will continue in all markets to embed good energy housekeeping practices and evaluate further opportunities to improve building infrastructure and controls.



Photovoltaic cells have been installed at Dierenuitvaartcentrum Nootdorp, The Netherlands.

Delivering a lower carbon fleet

While most of our animal patients are treated at our clinics, our vets are routinely needed to travel to carry out patient visits. This is particularly the case for our farm vets who can sometimes cover hundreds of miles in a day, especially in rural areas, such as parts of Canada, Wales or Sweden. In the medium term, there may be opportunities to use digital consultations to eliminate some of this travel and this is an area we continue to investigate. However, in-person consultations will always be a core part of the care we provide, so we are working to reduce the environmental impact of the journeys we make.

One way to reduce the impact of our travel is by adopting lower carbon fuel vehicles.

In Sweden we have adopted a new policy for all new company vehicles to be electric or hybrid.

In the Netherlands, a trial of electric and hybrid vehicles is underway to understand their suitability for use by our Farm

vets. The results are encouraging, especially as electric vehicle technology develops to provide longer ranges. We hope to extend the electric vehicle policy across more of our vehicle fleet in The Netherlands during 2023. In 2021, Swedish and Dutch vehicle fleets accounted for over 700 tonnes of CO₂e. In the year ahead, we will continue to review opportunities to move more of our fleet to electric vehicles, with a focus on larger markets like the UK.

Another way to reduce the impact of our fleet is to reduce fuel consumption of existing vehicles. During 2022, VetSpeed, our UK crematorium business, has trained drivers on fuel-efficient driving techniques and is now measuring driver behaviour to record hard braking, excess acceleration and average speed, all of which have an effect on fuel consumption. By making drivers aware of their driving style, we have been able to change behaviour and increase fuel efficiency. During 2022, average fuel consumption (mpg) has improved by over 6% compared to the last six months of 2021. VetSpeed will continue to work with drivers to make further improvements during 2023.



Anaesthetic gases

Our veterinary teams rely heavily on anaesthetics for providing clinical care, but the waste anaesthetic gases release as part of these procedures have a significant environmental impact. Emissions from waste anaesthetic gas represent over 19% of IVC Evidensia’s Scope 1 and 2 emissions and are therefore a priority area as part of our GHG reduction strategy. The first step we are taking is to train our clinical teams on techniques to reduce the volume of anaesthetic gas we use. The simplest is the use of ‘low flow’ anaesthesia when using circle breathing systems, a technique which is safe for our patients and just as effective at maintaining general anaesthesia. In addition, we can balance anaesthesia by using appropriate pre-medication, reducing the reliance on volatile anaesthetic agents and improving the overall safety and quality of an anaesthetic.

Equipment maintenance and testing can also identify leaks and consequent loss of anaesthetics into the atmosphere, reducing environmental pollution in addition to occupational exposure.

Looking forward →

Training will be rolled out during 2023, starting with the UK as our largest market, and then extending to other countries. In addition to the adoption of low flow techniques, we are also looking at opportunities to move away from the use of the higher polluting anaesthesia gases, switching instead to less polluting gas like sevoflurane. Some of our clinics in the Nordics have already made the transition and we will evaluate opportunities to make a similar change in other markets.



Reducing the impact of crematorium operations

IVC Evidensia’s crematorium operations account for around 55% of the Group’s Scope 1 and 2 emissions. Researching and investing in more efficient and lower emission crematorium technologies will be a key part of achieving our GHG commitments.

In the short-term, employee training can play a significant role in improving the efficiency of existing equipment. In the UK, VetSpeed has introduced KPIs on a shift by shift basis. Over a period of six months, VetSpeed has increased fuel efficiency on individual cremations by 23%. This work will continue in the year ahead to drive further savings.

Looking forward →

While these short-term efficiencies represent important progress, cutting both our emissions and also our operating costs, we know that a major reduction in our crematorium emissions will only be achieved through the adoption of alternative technologies using less carbon intensive processes, and we have already started to evaluate the various options available.

Working with our suppliers to reduce our shared climate impact

97% of global GHG emissions from IVC Evidensia’s business come from our supply chain. We will only achieve our net-zero objectives through close partnership with our suppliers, who we know are as committed as we are to reducing our shared climate impact.

Over the coming years, we will work with suppliers to promote climate action and increase the sustainability of the veterinary sector.

Looking forward →

Over the coming years, we will work with suppliers to promote climate action and increase the sustainability of the veterinary sector. As well as seeking to raise awareness of the importance of setting GHG targets, we will be encouraging the use of renewable energy, the promotion of circular materials in own-brand and other products and life cycle assessment analysis, and data sharing to facilitate the selection of lower carbon intensity products. As part of this engagement, we will be encouraging our key suppliers, especially suppliers of pharmaceuticals, consumables and nutrition products, to set their own science-based GHG targets. We are already engaging with suppliers on this topic to understand current progress in managing their environmental impact and GHG emissions.



Responsible procurement

We choose to buy products that best help us care for the animals we treat at our clinics and hospitals. However we also recognise that our supply chain is an extension of our environmental impact, and it’s our intent to purchase from suppliers who share our values and to work with them to protect the environment.

In addition to our engagement with suppliers regarding our climate goals (discussed above), we want to work in partnership with our suppliers to reduce resource use, waste and pollution associated with the products we use. During 2022, this focus has led to a number of projects reducing the impact of core products used every day in our clinics.

Our clinics and hospitals across the UK and Europe use over 7 million syringes every year. During the year, we have been able to transition 1.8 million syringes to BD Emerald syringes, which use 30% less plastic than other syringes, as well as using non-toxic materials, providing a high-quality medical consumable, and with reduced environmental impact. So far, the change has saved approximately 1.3 tonnes of plastic, and we expect further savings next year.

We have also carried out a full review of the chemicals used as part of our infection prevention and control protocols. Following the review, we will be making the transition from using eco-toxic chemicals as the foundation of environmental cleaning processes. This will see the launch of a training schedule and procurement profile to transition to material science cleaning using low microplastic-shedding microfibre cleaning products in appropriate areas of the clinic and replacing single use wipes with microfibre cloths. This transition will achieve a material improvement in the environmental impact of our cleaning processes.

Our aim for 2023 is for 200 UK clinics to convert to a chemical-free cleaning process with a target reduction of 8,000 litres of environmental cleaning products in the first year.

During the year, we have completed a sustainability review of IVC Evidensia’s own-brand product ranges, working closely with our suppliers to review current sourcing practices and opportunities to improve. Our initial focus has been on packaging, and we have agreed a target for all the packaging used in our own-brand products to be recyclable, compostable or reusable by 2025. As of September 2022, 84% of our packaging met this standard. In the year ahead, we will be working with our suppliers to improve performance against this metric and also agree a set of Own-Brand Responsible Sourcing Principles for all the materials used in our own-brand products.



CASE STUDY

One million vehicle miles saved from UK veterinary wholesaler deliveries

Since January 2021, our UK business has been working in partnership with MWI Animal Health UK with an objective to remove vans from the road by reducing delivery frequencies. This project has enabled MWI Animal Health to remove one million vehicle miles over the last year, reducing their veterinary supply chain carbon footprint by 319 tonnes of CO₂ per year. As a strategic partner, IVC Evidensia has played a significant role in this

achievement by moving the majority of their clinics in Great Britain to two wholesale deliveries a week instead of daily deliveries. Working in partnership in this way has improved the environmental footprint of both businesses, and demonstrates that collaboration is key to tackling green issues and climate change.



Integrating sustainability into our greenfield development

As part of our Customer Promise to provide world-class veterinary care delivered locally, we continue to invest in more innovative and integrated animal health solutions, including state-of-the-art new hospitals. As well as providing leading animal care, we also want these new hospitals to reflect our sustainability principles and we are working with our construction and design teams to embed sustainability standards into the construction and specification process.

Gothenburg Animal Hospital, Sweden

Evidensia's flagship animal hospital in Gothenburg, Sweden has been built to high environmental standards with LED lighting and energy-saving windows to maintain a stable temperature, waste recycling facilities, and a green roof concept on the terrace with bee- and insect-friendly planting.



Blaise Hospital, Birmingham, UK

Due to open in summer 2023, Blaise is set to be one of the largest, multi-disciplinary referral hospitals in the UK. It will include state-of-the-art equipment, pioneering treatments and specialist-led extended clinical services. Sustainability has been at the heart of the design with LED lighting throughout, all electric heating and cooling using air source heat pumps, heat exchanger systems to provide up to 75% heat recovery, and photovoltaic cells for rooftop power generation.

Low carbon transport will be encouraged with a range of electric vehicle charging points and a green travel plan to promote public transport and cycling. The design also promotes staff well-being, with a focus on natural daylight with dedicated well-being and relaxation spaces.



Artist's impression of the new Blaise veterinary referral hospital, due to open in summer 2023.

Resource efficiency

We are committed to reducing the waste generated through our activities. The nature of our business means that our waste profile is complex, with some of the waste from our clinical operations classified as hazardous and therefore governed by strict requirements and responsibilities over its disposal. For our non-hazardous waste, our immediate focus is on working with our waste contractors to ensure that waste is diverted from landfill wherever possible, and then supporting our clinics, often working in partnership with our suppliers, to recycle more of the waste we generate to ultimately achieve an overall reduction in waste generated per employee. Our non-hazardous waste includes a high proportion of plastic, much of which is used to ensure equipment is sterile as part of our infection prevention and control protocols. Some of these plastics can be hard to recycle in conventional waste streams, and require us to source specialist contractors.

The way non-hazardous waste is managed varies across our different sites and different countries. In some places, the UK for example, we have one national waste contractor who manages waste from most of our sites. In other countries, for example France, waste is managed locally by local waste contractors or municipal authorities. Then in other sites, particularly where we share buildings with other organisations, our waste is managed by the building owners.



Waste recycling at the Animal Hospital Veter Tampere, Finland.

In order to develop an effective strategy for waste reduction, our first priority is to review waste management services, collect data on volumes and look for opportunities to consolidate where appropriate. In 2021, this exercise was completed in the UK and a national contractor was appointed to consolidate waste management and ensure that more waste is diverted from landfill. In the year ahead, we plan to undertake waste recycling audits focusing on the locations with the lowest recycling rates to help make improvements. The UK business is now working towards a target of zero waste to landfill by 2025 with 50% of that waste recycled.

During 2022, we have carried out waste management reviews in Canada, Sweden and the Netherlands, which have enabled us to better measure waste volumes and begin to embed improved recycling systems across those country networks.

Our clinic teams are passionate about reducing waste and we are committed to supporting them by extending the waste streams we can recycle. One such initiative is the October 2023 launch of a recycling programme for medical blister packs and nutritional supplement syringes. This will be open to all UK clinics. Our recycling partner, ReWorked, focuses on low mileage processing methods and may be able to use the material collected to produce items for our clinics such as waiting room fittings and pharmacy shelving.

We have collaborated with a number of suppliers to target reduction of packaging of some of our major high-use products and services to reduce use of virgin materials and improve shipping pallet quantity, improving distribution efficiency and reduction of emissions. In the UK alone this work has equated to a 130,000 product carton packages being eliminated per year from our supply chain.

We are also reducing waste through better stock control to ensure that pharmaceuticals, nutrition products and other stock items are used before they go out of date.

99%*
non-hazardous waste diverted
from landfill in the UK and Sweden

* Veterinary sites and offices where waste is managed directly by IVC Evidensia



We have been trialling a markdown service for nutrition products in 150 UK clinics. Products are marked down to half price a month before the end of their life. If a product is not sold, then we are developing a process whereby clinic teams can donate the product to a local animal rescue charity. To date, around 530 products in 103 locations have been sold at a discount or donated to charity, rather than wasted. Going forward, the data from the trial will also enable us to improve our product ordering to further reduce waste.

Looking forward →

As part of our commitment to reduce pharmaceutical waste, in spring 2023, we will be introducing scanner technology and a waste app to provide clinics with a quick and efficient tool to help them track waste due to out-of-date pharmaceuticals. The data collected by the app will then enable us to improve the way that stock is managed and help us develop actions to cut unnecessary waste and then monitor their success. In the year ahead, we will also aim to carry out waste management reviews in more of our markets to help us set a baseline for Group waste reduction and recycling targets for our directly-managed waste.

Reducing waste in our crematorium business

Veternity commissioned a laboratory to test its scatter urns, looking at heavy metals/fluorine, biodegradability, ecotoxicity and any residues of heavy metals or fluorine. The study confirmed that the urns are 100% biodegradable, so customers can bury the urns in their gardens without fear of polluting. In the UK, VetSpeed also offers two designs of biodegradable scatter urns and a biodegradable coffin, with these three items making up 37% of all orders placed.

During 2021, VetSpeed has been running a trial to use paper sacks instead of plastic to reduce waste. VetSpeed uses over 450,000 plastic sacks every year, 40% of which are for individual cremations. In December 2022, the plastic sacks will be replaced by new design with a mix of paper and recycled plastic, which will reduce the plastic content by over 80%. Early market testing suggests that these bags will be greatly received so that in time we can remove all plastic bags for cremations.



Memorial garden at Veternity's Étampes site.

Promoting biodiversity

Our care for animals reaches beyond just the patients we treat, but is also part of a much wider commitment to protect and support wildlife, biological diversity and natural habitats. The loss of biodiversity can also represent an increased disease risk, which we know could pose a threat to the well-being of our patients.

We impact biodiversity at a local level through the way we manage the land around our clinics and hospitals, but also through the advice we give to our clients and through the responsible use of (eco-toxic) pharmaceuticals. This work applies across all parts of our business. Initiatives focused solely on our farm business are described on [page 44](#).

In the coming years, we plan to develop these initiatives into a wider strategy to manage nature-related risks and opportunities.

Responsible use of eco-toxic chemicals

Parasite control is an important area for companion animal practice. Our Clinical Board takes the responsible use of parasiticides very seriously, with three clear aims: protecting our animal patients and maintaining high welfare standards, protecting public health where zoonotic disease potential is apparent and protecting the environment from unnecessary exposure to eco-toxic chemicals. As a result, the UK Clinical Board is focusing on a benefit-risk assessment programme for small animals and is working with subject field experts to ensure that the Group is committed to the three areas of responsible parasiticide stewardship, while maintaining excellent welfare standards for pets.

Promoting biodiversity locally

Most of our clinics and hospitals, even those in urban locations, can enhance local biodiversity. This can vary from the very simple such as providing water and food for birds all year round or perhaps a planter with an insect-friendly flowering plant growing, to the larger clinic with land which could home a wildflower meadow. These habitats, even the smallest ones, can provide an important lifeline to wildlife. Improving the natural environment around the clinic can also enhance staff well-being, especially if they can enjoy it during breaks. Our Positive Pawprint Toolkit encourages clinics to take action around their local environment. In addition, we have a number of country-level initiatives to promote biodiversity.

In Sweden, clinics were invited to participate in ‘Project Bees’ during summer 2022. 50% of clinics took part and received plants, seeds and insect hotels to start. Each clinic appointed a biodiversity lead and they were challenged to come up with the best space for biodiversity and team well-being with photos shared across the country teams as inspiration for others.



In 2022, 50% of Swedish clinics took part in ‘Project Bees’.

In the UK, over 100 clinics signed up to be bee-friendly through our partnership with the British Bee Veterinary Association.



Participating clinics were supplied with seeds to plant bee-friendly flowers around the clinic grounds, and communication materials to help them talk to clients about the best ways to support the more than 270 species of bees in the UK.

Teams across Veternity’s business are working to promote biodiversity around the crematorium sites. At Faulquemont in France, the Sustainability Ambassador has led a programme to introduce beehives, chickens and an insect hotel. Sheep grazing around the site are responsible for keeping the grass down.

In the Netherlands, we will be launching a biodiversity initiative during 2023 with clinics invited to choose their biodiversity starter pack from a menu of different options, including bird boxes, insect hotels, plants and seeds. The aim is to give the clinics the support they need to start to promote biodiversity in their local area.



UK clinics received wildflower seeds as part of their commitment to become ‘bee friendly’.

CASE STUDY

Enhancing biodiversity at Lakeview Vets, UK

Lakeview Vets in Northamptonshire, UK, decided to play a small role in improving their local environment to show how a veterinary clinic can play a positive role in enhancing biodiversity and habitats. Part of the clinic garden was turned into a wildlife meadow with local plants. The team then adjusted the garden plants to add greater variety and focus on more butterfly, bird and insect friendly plants. By having a diverse array of planting, this also meant that nutrition was available for wildlife, both in summer and in winter. The team then created new wildlife habitats for birds, insects, bats and hedgehogs with the support of the local wildlife trust.



Caring for Patients

In this section

- 35 Caring for our customers
- 36 Leadership
- 36 Governance
- 37 Quality improvement
- 38 Infection prevention and control (IPC)
- 40 Protecting patient welfare
- 42 Encouraging research and innovation
- 44 The Positive Hoofprint



We commit to:



Deliver the highest possible standards of care quality and safety



Promote and innovate integrated animal solutions



Offer the highest standards of client care and communication



Continually share knowledge, incidents and best practice



Collaborate with peers to innovate best practice on antimicrobial resistance

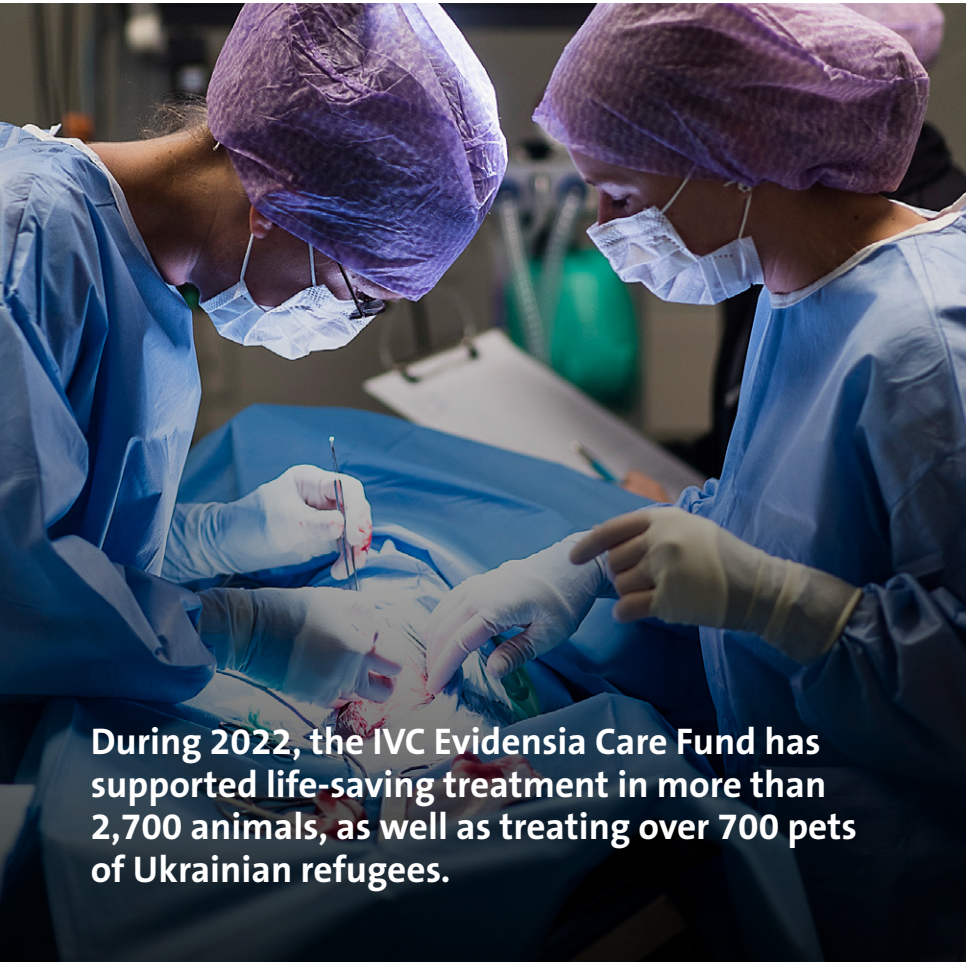
Relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals



Relevant policies

- IVC Evidensia Ethical Statement

2022 – Key achievements



During 2022, the IVC Evidensia Care Fund has supported life-saving treatment in more than 2,700 animals, as well as treating over 700 pets of Ukrainian refugees.



IVC Evidensia launched Group Quality Improvement programme, building a culture of improvement, where asking, “What could we do to improve?” becomes part of the management of every patient contact.



Species-specific waiting room facilities are now in more than 70% of sites in Sweden, Germany and Norway.



“
IVC Evidensia combines the passion and skills of our 25,000+ clinical colleagues and non-clinical support staff to create a powerful collective driving force for good. Together, we are constantly improving standards of care for all our patients, whether small animal, farm or equine, while also giving our clinical teams the opportunity to innovate and achieve professional excellence in the care they provide.”

KPI	Metric	Scope of data	2022	2021
Access and affordability	Number of patients treated using the IVC Evidensia Care Fund	Group	2,793	881
Complications and outcomes	Total number of surgical site infections of dogs and cats neutered	UK, Sweden, Netherlands	3.4%	n/a
Experience of the animal	Percentage of sites with species-specific waiting room facilities	Group	52%	25%
Antibiotic use	Number of antibiotic treatments and prescriptions as percentage of total outpatient consultations	UK, Sweden, Netherlands, Norway	9.9%	n/a
Infection prevention and control	Percentage of sites with a Hygiene Ambassador	Group	17%	5%

Our targets

- To treat 2,500 patients per year, using the IVC Evidensia Care Fund by 2025
- To reduce the total number of surgical site infections as a percentage of dogs and cats neutered to 5% by 2025
- To ensure that 50% of our clinics have species-specific waiting room facilities by 2030
- To reduce the total number of antibiotic prescriptions to 5% of total outpatient consultations by 2030
- To appoint a dedicated Hygiene Ambassador to 75% of our clinics by 2025

Our commitment to animals and their owners is to provide world-class veterinary care, delivered locally. Our focus on areas such as governance, quality improvement, infection prevention and control (IPC), animal welfare, research and innovation enables us to provide world-class standards of care, benefitting all our patients and their owners. We are proud of the progress we’ve made towards the targets we laid out in 2021. While we continue to improve the way we measure performance, as we introduce additional country data, we expect our performance to fluctuate. Those elements that specifically benefit our farm and equine patients are described separately on [page 44](#).

Caring for our customers

Caring for our customers is integral to our purpose of healthy animals, happy owners. Often our teams see customers at their most vulnerable, so while providing pets and animals with exceptional care, we are also committed to treating our customers fairly and with respect.

We track customer satisfaction using the Net Promoter Score (NPS) which measures the willingness of our customers to recommend our services to others, helping us to understand our performance, and then see where any improvement actions need to be focused. NPS measurement is currently in place in the UK, Ireland, Finland, Sweden, Norway and the Netherlands. For 2022, taking a weighted average from those markets that collect NPS data on a similar basis, we had an overall NPS score of 81.3. The Netherlands operates a slightly different approach to NPS measurement to other markets,

so has been excluded from this average. In the year ahead, we will review the NPS measurement in the Netherlands to make it consistent with our other markets, so it can be included in our Group reporting going forward, and we also plan expand NPS measurement into France.

One of our key initiatives to support our customers is our Pet Health Club which has over 770,000 members, with over 500,000 dogs and nearly 200,000 cats on the plan in the UK. The Club is focused on ongoing animal well-being by promoting improved compliance with preventative care. Vaccinations against deadly diseases are included, as are regular flea and worm treatments and six-monthly health checks and screening, which aids early diagnosis and treatment, and leads to healthier pets. By allowing owners to spread the cost of care, it provides a more affordable solution, and by focusing on maintaining ongoing well-being it helps to avoid sudden, unexpected treatment costs. Trust Pilot reviews of the scheme cite the value for money and peace of mind the Pet Health Club provides them. The Pet Health Club is currently available in the UK, Ireland and Belgium with Dier en Zorg available in the Netherlands.



“A great saving to be made in these penny-stretching times and peace of mind that your pet, companion and best friend will benefit from the excellent care.”

★ Trustpilot

As part of our ambition to make high-quality veterinary care more accessible to pet owners, IVC Evidensia offers telephone and online veterinary consultations through PawSquad and Video Vets Now in the UK, and Evidensia Djursjukvård and Evidensia MinVeterinär in Sweden. These services take considerable pressure off out-of-hours emergency provision by enabling the possibility of more convenient and immediate initial assessment, enabling us to streamline our service to benefit even more pets in need and ultimately reduce the cost of some of the care and advice we provide. In addition, we launched our new digital smartphone app and website platform in the Swedish and UK market, enabling pet owners to book appointments (in-clinic and video) online or through their devices. We will continue to grow digital innovations across our markets to ensure we deliver on our promise of healthy animals, happy owners.

>50,000

telemedicine consultations performed
in the UK and Sweden in 2021

Leadership

We consider all our colleagues to be leaders, providing vital direction and feedback, and ensuring at all times that animal care is at the beating heart of our business. Our veterinary professionals and team members are encouraged to share ideas within clinic forums, and also into our network of Clinical Boards, which have been created in all our markets. We listen carefully to our vet and vet nurse teams, with many of our best and most successful national and global projects, initiatives and improvements drawn from the experience of those in practice.

Our Clinical Boards, made up of practising vets and nurses, help guide senior clinical management to ensure we work effectively to develop programmes and initiatives that continually reflect the evolution of practice. A critical link to the senior clinical leaders within sites, the Clinical Boards advise on quality programmes, IPC, welfare topics, support our research objectives and bring innovative ideas to the fore for consideration.

In our largest markets we have also chosen to introduce discipline-specific leadership on areas such as internal medicine, surgery or dentistry at a national level.

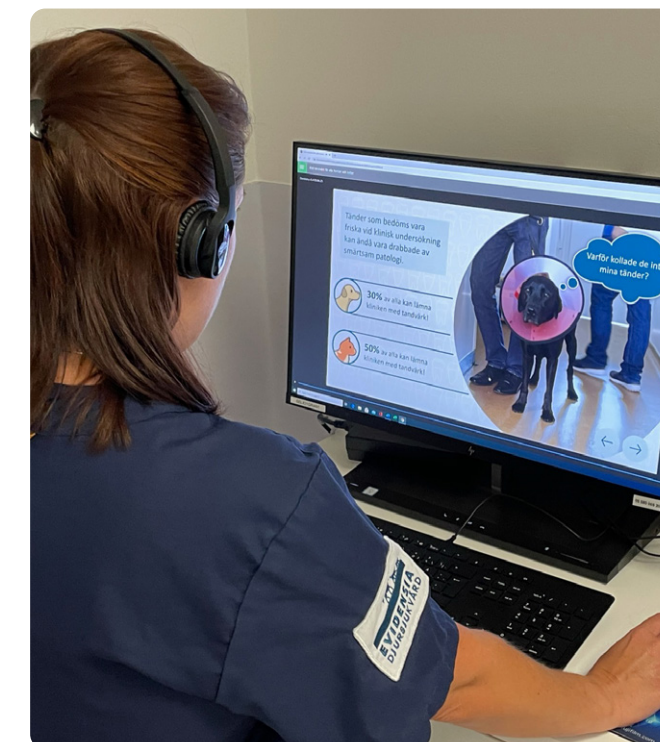
We have invested in senior leadership at Group level focused on strengthening our strategies around learning and development, veterinary professional development, quality improvement and animal welfare. These roles join our team of Country Medical Directors (CMDs) within the Group Veterinary Medical Board (GVMB), at global leadership level. The GVMB take responsibility for development of our overall clinical strategy, ensuring priorities meet the needs of individual markets, or where appropriate bring benefit to the Group as a whole.

In 2021, Chief Medical Officer, Amanda Boag, was appointed to the Group Executive Committee, marking the appointment of a clinical representative to the highest level of leadership within the organisation. This is a statement of intent that we are committed to always consider the importance of the clinical foundation of our company, and keep our purpose of healthy animals, happy owners at the centre of everything we do.

Governance

As the employer of over 25,000 veterinary professionals, it is crucial that our culture and the structures flowing from this support our veterinary professionals in fulfilling their core professional regulatory requirements.

To promote that understanding we have created Group educational resources in the following key areas: Controlled Drugs, Prescribing and Dispensing, and Firearms. Each of these key areas is supported by a policy tailored to each individual market; during 2023, we will launch e-learning modules across all markets delivered through our learning management system to support our veterinary professionals in these important areas. This approach, focused on key area of risk, supports not only the safety of our patients but also the personal safety of our teams.



Quality improvement

“
Quality improvement is ‘the combined and unceasing efforts of everyone...to make the changes that will lead to better patient outcomes (health), better system performance (care) and better professional development (learning).’”

Batalden and Davidoff
BMJ, 2007

Our global network of over 2,500 clinics share the ambition to provide the highest quality care, tailored to the needs of individual patients and the wishes of their owners. However the definition of quality doesn’t stand still. It changes with time, evidence and advent of new approaches and technologies.

Under the leadership of our Group Quality Improvement (QI) Director Laura Playforth, we have created a strategy for improvement. That strategy is firmly underpinned by both the ability for us to learn from the outstanding work being performed in our clinics, and the opportunity to leverage our scale to deliver initiatives into countries and clinics faster than would otherwise be possible. Laura is supported by dedicated QI leads in a number of our markets.

The culture of QI

Our aim is to fuel a culture of improvement, where asking, “What could we do to improve?” becomes part of the management of every patient contact. To achieve this, learning tools, will be available in all markets, targeted at existing staff, and also new team members where a QI module will become part of the onboarding procedure. We are also creating a sharing platform where individual colleagues and whole teams can find inspiration and provide insights into their own QI ideas and projects. Both of these tools will be available through a QI Hub which will be launched later this year.

Psychological safety

Delivering the highest standard of patient care is only possible if we create an environment in which our teams feel confident, happy, empowered and safe. Staff well-being is therefore at the heart of both our people strategy and also our clinical strategy. We want to create a workplace where team members feel confident to share ideas, ask questions and share concerns, and feel reassured that they will be valued for speaking up and encouraged, rather than blamed, for sharing where mistakes have been made.

Some of our markets have Significant Event Reporting (SER) systems, which enable colleagues to record any unexpected or unintended events, some of which could lead to harm to one or more patients. The system encourages transparency and starts a conversation within clinics and amongst peers, where learning can be discussed in a constructive and supportive forum. This ‘just culture’ approach helps ensure that colleagues feel confident to share their experiences and allows others to learn – driving overall awareness of the issue in hand and reducing the chances of any incident being repeated.

“
The team at Holly House uses an evidence-based way of reducing the stigma of talking about the emotional impact of practice, named Schwartz Rounds. Trained facilitators regularly support the team to reflect on the emotional and social aspects of working in healthcare.

Following implementation, the team feels more supported in their roles, increasing well-being and reducing staff turnover; Holly House regularly has a waiting list of people who want to work there!

We use Schwartz Rounds to reflect together on the joy and difficulty of veterinary work. It is the best thing we have done to care for each other.”

Amy Martin
CLINIC DIRECTOR, HOLLY HOUSE LEEDS, UK

CASE STUDY

Benchmarking to support treatment of ear inflammation

Around 11% of all dogs presenting to our clinics have ear inflammation which may be leading to irritation and discomfort. For many years the approach to this condition has been to use antibiotic medication, on the basis that a number of these cases will involve bacterial infection. More recent studies have highlighted that simple ear cleaning or the use of topical steroid medication can be just as effective, where treating the inflammation assists the body’s own immune system to deal with any infection. This approach will often be successful, but relies on the knowledge that there are no problematic bacteria present which would require specific antibiotic treatment – that is where our benchmark comes in. By measuring the number of ear swabs (a test to examine the cells in the ear) being performed within our clinics, we can assess the increasingly responsible approach to this condition across our teams. Many of our clinics are just beginning

this journey, others are already achieving swab rates of 6% and above with a firm plan in place to reach towards the full 11% of cases we know could benefit from that simple procedure. This example demonstrates the power of benchmarking to drive quality and safeguard key responsibilities such as the reduction of antibiotic resistance in both human and animal health.

In Sweden, uncomplicated acute otitis has for many years been treated empirically and successfully with a non-antibiotic approach where recovery is instead supported by cleaning, local corticosteroids and, when there are signs of pain, additional painkillers. Approximately 1% of all patients seen in Sweden were treated with local antibiotics compared to almost 4% in the UK and 7% in the Netherlands the past year.



Benchmarking

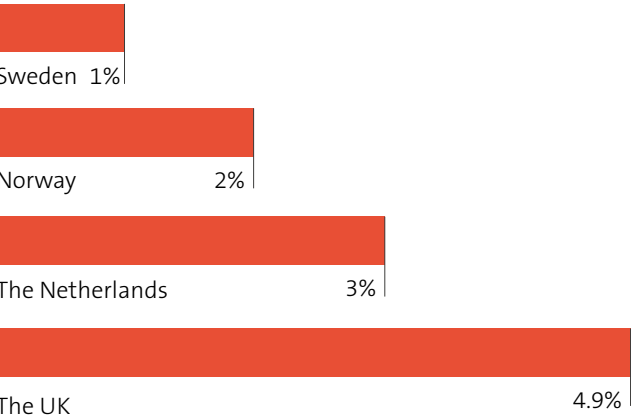
Using the evolving evidence both within our clinics and the veterinary industry globally allows us to create benchmarks reflecting best practice for common clinical conditions. These benchmarks inform local teams and support our clinical leadership in improving quality of care driven by education, resources and reflection.

Existing benchmarks operating within our Group include our approaches to ear inflammation (otitis externa) in dogs, blood pressure measurement in cats, obesity and dentistry. In each of these cases we use epidemiological data on disease prevalence and practical information from our clinical teams to create benchmarks and review the level to which we engage.

Surgical site infection rate is influenced by many factors including clinic IPC levels, anaesthetic and surgical techniques, pain management and post-operative care. In our Swedish clinics, the country leadership team has developed engaging post-operative care instructions, issued to every pet undergoing a procedure. By educating owners about their key role in a successful recovery alongside excellent IPC standards, the Swedish team has been able to drop their surgical site infection rate to the lowest within our group of countries.

Surgical site infections in neutered dogs and cats

(% of total number of neuterings yearly)



Preventative healthcare

More recently the veterinary sector has seen a move towards prevention of disease, in addition to the management of illness. This follows the trend in human healthcare, enabled by increasing awareness around what is possible, and also through technology. This approach fits well with our ambition at IVC Evidensia to lead the way through innovation and by challenging existing thinking.

Looking forward →

As we move into 2023 we will broaden our preventative approach, through the launch of a wellness testing programme, initially in the UK. This new service will be offered to all adult dogs and cats and will invite them to a regular annual blood sample performed within one of our clinics. Wellness testing works on the principle that a proportion of apparently healthy animals will have an emerging abnormality, identifiable on routine blood work. By identifying this change early we can improve the likelihood of successful management through alterations to lifestyle, nutrition and medical treatment, forming an important part of the holistic approach to complete patient well-being.

Importantly, in addition to quality improvement, wellness testing holds the potential to reduce the overall cost of veterinary healthcare for owners, avoiding costly future interventions once a disease process has taken hold.

Dentistry is another key area where, in addition to treatment of disease, we can prevent future problems. Dental disease is present in 80% of dogs and cats globally but less than 20% of those patients are treated. Awareness, and routine preventative dental brushing alongside regular examination and where necessary scaling and polishing is a key preventative measure if we are to improve those statistics.

By building the capability of the treating vet and nurse teams we are giving them the confidence and the skills to intervene where needed. Our Swedish teams have combined an educational programme through the IVC Evidensia Academy with a tiered system of clinic competency, allowing clients to access the right level of care for the patient and the problem. The minimum standard includes dental radiographs in all cases, which we know will uncover hidden disease in 30% of dogs and 50% of cats. We hope to learn from this approach as we look to continuously improve the standard of dental care being offered in the Group, with Ireland already looking to build something similar.



Infection prevention and control (IPC)

Infections caused by microorganisms are an important cause of morbidity and mortality in both animals and humans. As a world-leading provider of veterinary care, it is our responsibility to be pioneers and actively work to prevent and control infections. This is not only important for our patients but also for their owners, our staff and the health and safety of the wider public.

First-rate clinical work requires excellent IPC standards. To meet that need we developed the IVC Evidensia IPC programme to encompass everything from hygiene to veterinary care associated infections and antibiotic use.

Education

To ensure a consistently high level of IPC across our Group, we have developed a set of e-learning courses where clinic teams can select what level of information best meets their needs providing learning around microorganisms and infections, as well as different ways to prevent transmission in everyday work.

Everything needed to create a full-scale IPC programme for a clinic is now available through our intranet based ‘IPC Hub’ where we are growing a community around IPC, sharing ideas and learnings, and creating a thriving conversation around this critical topic.

“It is important that everyone has a contact person when it comes to hygiene and disinfection. This ensures everyone knows where to go when they have questions. And that’s where this position is fun! Togetherness is very important.”

Katharina, IPC Ambassador
TIERÄRZTE GELNHAUSEN IVC EVIDENSIA, GERMANY

Antibiotic stewardship

Antibiotics are an essential treatment for many conditions in humans and animals. Antimicrobial resistance is a world-wide health threat and we must use antibiotics with great respect to ensure they are available and effective when needed. The United Nations predicts that infections with antimicrobial resistant bacteria could be responsible for ten million human deaths per year around the world by 2050. Antibiotic Stewardship is therefore a key priority for us.

A prerequisite for a successful and effective ASP programme is to regularly monitor the use of antibiotics in practice. Through digital innovation, we can now collect automated antibiotic usage data in several of our countries.

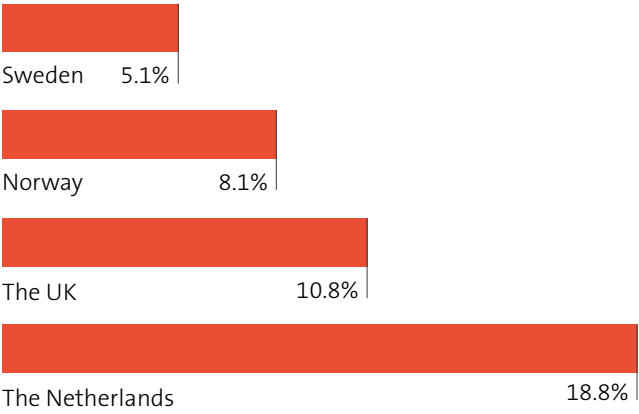
In-depth e-learning courses guide our teams on the responsible use of antibiotics, forming the basis of our Antibiotic Stewardship Programme (ASP). Additionally, we have created in clinic posters in both the UK and DACH, providing quickly accessible, ‘on the ground’ advice on how to deal with differing antibiotic selections in each country, together with the epidemiology of a particular infection within that population and the drugs available. While Antibiotic usage in small animal clinics in Germany has already decreased considerably over recent years, the in-clinic posters have helped all our staff as a constant reminder which antibiotic to use, when and for how long.

Across the UK, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, antibiotic use has reduced from 17% to 9.9% year-on-year.

Looking forward →
In the coming year, we aim to produce antibiotic stewardship posters for many more countries, to provide that high level of support to all teams.

Local and systemic antibiotic treatments in outpatient care

(% of total number of annual patient visits)



Leadership

Local leadership plays a huge role in driving improved IPC standards across our clinics. The appointment of motivated team members to the role of IPC Ambassador underpins our local leadership strategy. Ambassadors complete a series of advanced training courses and take responsibility for planning, implementing and monitoring the IPC activities in everyday work, while building a culture of awareness within their clinic.

Our goal is that 75% of our clinics have an appointed IPC Ambassador by 2025. This goal has already been accomplished in Sweden, Norway, Finland, Germany and Switzerland with other countries making great progress over the past year.

The work of our IPC Ambassadors is supported by our national IPC Managers, acting as the link to our Group IPC Director Anna-Maria Andersson. This dedicated role is now a feature of many of our countries, facilitating and improving IPC implementation, encouraging education and providing vital support to any clinic experiencing particular challenges.

“Becoming an IPC manager opened my eyes to quality in general, and it is improving the infection preventive work in my everyday work in small animal clinic, but it also gives me the opportunity to encourage and guide other clinics in the Netherlands wanting to do the same.”

Tessa Bruinen
IPC MANAGER OF THE NETHERLANDS

Assessment and awards

For those clinics with an IPC Ambassadors, we have developed a set of self-assessment tools, which, enable teams to interrogate every aspect of their clinic, highlight their strengths and uncover all the ways in which they could improve their standards. This support is intended to benefit all our clinics and drive improvement.

In addition to regular self-assessment, clinics can choose to be assessed by an IPC Manager, with those successful clinics receiving an award. Launched just recently, this IPC award has already been presented to 14 clinics across Finland, the UK, the Netherlands and Sweden.





Protecting patient welfare

Protecting the welfare of our patients, within our clinics and at home is a cornerstone of the work we do. We have previously shared our ambition to lead in this area, and in the last year, we have taken significant strides towards that goal.

The animal environment

We know that visiting a veterinary clinic can be a stressful experience for pets and their owners. The anxiety of a visit can directly impact the health of that pet or make it less likely that an owner will choose to seek veterinary care when needed.

In addition, driving down anxiety in our patients improves the ability of our teams to perform effective examinations, investigations and treatments. The result is a team with higher job satisfaction and importantly, a reduced likelihood of bite or scratch injury.

In 2021, we set a target to increase the number of clinics providing species-specific waiting room facilities to 50% by 2030. We have made excellent progress, especially in Sweden, Germany and Norway, which now have facilities in more than 70% of sites.

Through the last 12 months we have been piloting a ‘pet experience programme’ in the UK, France and Sweden. This programme provides teams with the education needed to improve the clinic visit further including an understanding of animal behaviour, the realities of transport to the clinic and advice with animal handling during consultations and procedures. In addition to the obvious impact on patients, this pilot has confirmed significant benefits to our teams including an overall sense that animal welfare is better managed within our clinics, an increase in job satisfaction, increased confidence when handling patients, improved relationship with animal owners and a significant increase in vet and vet nurse team well-being.

While most pets find a loving and caring home, others find themselves subject to welfare challenges including physical abuse. There is a well-documented link between violence in humans and animals, meaning the same abusive behaviour, known as non-accidental injury, can threaten the safety of some of the people in that home.

Our UK-based Non-Accidental Injury (NAI) 24-hour helpline provides support for IVC Evidensia clinics and other veterinary professionals who have concerns over injury patterns in pets or warning signs amongst their owners. We provide guidance on how to handle situations to ensure the correct steps are taken, including intervention wherever necessary. In the past year we have seen a gradual increase in the numbers of calls received. While all calls relate to concerns for an animal, at least half of the calls also relate to concern for a person. Fortunately, the support that we can offer includes advice on referral mechanisms for reporting concerns for children and vulnerable adults, and a number of such referrals have been made as a result of these calls.

Looking forward →

As we approach 2023, we have ambitious plans to expand our Non-Accidental Injury support outside of the UK. We will also explore ways in which we can open access to pet experience programmes across Europe and Canada to share that benefit as widely as possible.

Members of IVC Evidensia’s animal welfare team are regularly called to support animal welfare investigations and prosecutions across the whole of the UK responding to allegations of serious animal neglect and abuse.

During the past year the team has worked on more than 150 cases, providing expert knowledge and skills from the beginning of the investigation right through to giving

evidence in Court. They have tackled cases involving organised dog fighting, badger baiting, sexual abuse of animals, non-accidental injury and the illegal pet trade. While undoubtedly these cases are harrowing, we believe it is important that our welfare team contribute their expertise to support government and welfare charities in eradicating animal abuse. The team also gives lectures in the UK and further afield to raise awareness of these issues, and provides support to any of our clinics faced with cases involving animal welfare concerns.

CASE STUDY

Supporting veterinary teams manage cases of non-accidental injury

An IVC Evidensia clinic contacted the NAI hotline regarding a client who had presented with a dog with significant blunt force trauma injuries. It was intimated during the consultation that the injuries had been deliberately inflicted by a vulnerable person who had recently moved in with the family.

On discussing the case with the clinic, and conducting a review of the clinical history of both the animal presented and the other animals owned by the family, further episodes of unexplained blunt trauma were identified which predated the reported arrival of the vulnerable person.

Reports were therefore immediately made to the RSPCA and the duty inspector spoke to both the clinic and the NAI team. Due to concerns for the welfare of the people at the location, the issue was escalated through senior management of the RSPCA using the links established by the NAI team for just this sort of situation and a referral was made to the out of hours social work team.

The dog was admitted to the clinic and hospitalised so as to ensure its safety while an investigation was conducted. We were later informed that there had been other reports regarding the safety and well-being of people at the address and that the referral from the veterinary clinic provided the missing piece of the jigsaw that allowed steps to be taken to safeguard individuals.



CASE STUDY

Dr Francis Arsenault of Riverview Animal Hospital in Canada jumped to action in August to save a young 11-month-old Great Dane called Doc, after he was struck by a vehicle. Sadly, his owners were unable to afford the costs of the extensive surgery required to save his leg and the family were looking at having to euthanise Doc. However, thanks to support from the Care Fund, Dr Arsenault was able to contribute \$1,000 towards Doc’s treatment allowing Doc to have the life-saving surgery he required.

The clinic team was extremely invested in Doc from his initial presentation through his aftercare, and finally his discharge back to his family. All of this was possible only due to the Care Fund.

To date, the Care Fund has helped over 130 patients and families in Canada, and at a time with so much hardship and uncertainty, it is wonderful to be able to help and have a positive impact on our people, patients and clients.



The IVC Evidensia Care Fund

The Care Fund continues to be our flagship welfare support tool providing critical support to pets, owners and our teams. The fund provides each of our vets with an annual allowance that can be used to support the care of an animal where the prognosis is good and the treatment is available, but where the cost of treatment is beyond the pet owner’s reach. In many cases euthanasia, on welfare grounds, may have been the only alternative. We consider that the support offered through the Care Fund will be valuable in the coming months as our pet owners, particularly those in low income households, face an increase in the cost of living, and feel reassured that this support will help our teams navigate this challenging time.

As well as protecting animal well-being, the Care Fund protects staff and owner well-being, providing support through what we know to be an immensely stressful process.

We know that access to the fund has improved our teams’ feeling of control and well-being when faced with these situations by over 90%. During 2022, the Care Fund has supported life-saving treatment in over 2,700 animals. We were pleased to be able to use the Care Fund as part of our response to the Ukrainian war, enabling our vets across Europe to provide treatment to over 700 pets of Ukrainian refugees.

In response to the Ukraine War, we also broadened the scope of the Care Fund, immediately making this available for the treatment or legalisation of displaced pets. More information on this response is available on [page 21](#).

Recognising the value that the Care Fund brings to pets, owners and our teams, we have revised our target for annual Care Fund cases with an objective for the Care Fund to support the treatment of at least 2,500 patients each year.

Just a few of the 2,793 animals saved by the Care Fund during 2022



Encouraging research and innovation

The research of today is the evidence of tomorrow and 2022 has seen us take enormous strides to ensure we remain leaders in this area.

This year we doubled the number of grants provided through the Group Veterinary Medical Board (GVMB) Research Fund, taking the total number of projects funded using this support to over 40. These projects join the collective efforts of vets and vet nurses in specialist, referral and general clinics, with active research projects currently in excess of 120.

While most of these projects are conducted within individual clinics, we have also seen the level of collaboration growing, with research teams making increasing use of our vast network of high-quality centres across Europe and Canada. Additionally, the breadth of research topics has grown to include both clinical topics and other topics of professional importance such as education and well-being in practice.



In August 2022, we announced our pledge to assist individuals and teams looking to publish original research by covering the costs of publication in a peer-reviewed scientific paper.

In providing this assistance, we can remove that final barrier often encountered by researchers when the costs of communicating their results is challenging. In the short time since this availability, we have funded seven projects.

Furthermore, should an individual be invited to present research at national or international conferences, we have now committed to assist with travel costs. This benefit for working within IVC Evidensia has already been called upon by 15 researchers.

“Since 2021, seven research projects at the CHV Frégis in France, have been supported by the IVC Evidensia research fund. Some of these projects would not have been possible without the financial support of IVC Evidensia, and they will allow Frégis to continue to be recognised as an exceptional clinical research centre in France and beyond, also allowing the veterinarians involved to validate their research with a view to becoming specialists in their disciplines.”

Guillaume Ragetly
CLINICAL DIRECTOR OF FRÉGIS HOSPITAL



Innovation

Innovation is a vital part of how IVC Evidensia will remain a leader in the global animal health sector. We will continue to partner with existing innovators while also looking at where we can develop our own concepts and ideas.

We want to create a culture of innovation driving positive change for animal well-being.

We are excited to consider innovative technology, as well as novel ways of approaching challenges and new ways of working.

Excitement culture

Nobody knows opportunities for innovation like our clinical teams. Everyday our colleagues in clinics experience those elements of clinical work that could be approached differently or improved with technology. As such, we aim to create a

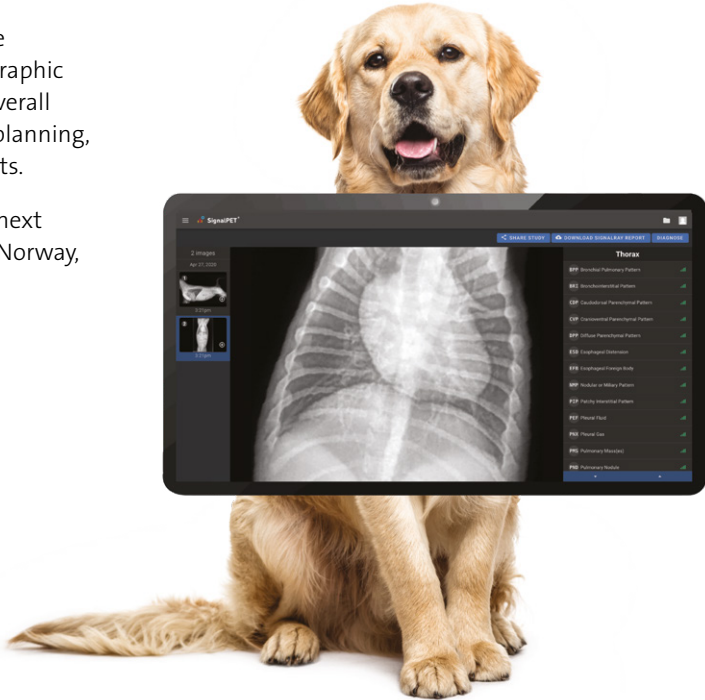
transparent sharing platform where all teams can monitor progress around key projects through regular updates, but also throw in ideas for consideration. Ultimately, we want to aim for a culture of innovation driving positive change for animal well-being and ensuring those in our teams bringing entrepreneurial ideas forward can thrive.

SignalPET

In the Summer of 2022, we announced the roll-out of a new technology into our general clinic network, to support vets when reviewing radiographs (X-rays). SignalPET uses artificial intelligence to identify abnormalities in X-rays, providing a report to the treating vet instantly. We expect this to become an important piece of the diagnostic jigsaw alongside patient history, clinical examination findings, a vet or specialist’s opinion of the images, and any additional diagnostic test findings. Importantly, we also expect this to work as a complement to our existing radiologist teams, driving the whole-team conversation around radiology.

A UK pilot showed that the technology boosted the confidence of clinical teams when making a radiographic diagnosis. The speed of the report allowed faster overall decision making with more immediate treatment planning, less requirement for hospitalisation and repeat visits.

Our roll-out plan targets 450 UK clinics within the next 12 months alongside additional clinics in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Germany and Switzerland.



The Positive Hoofprint



With over 400 farm and equine veterinarians working across the UK and Europe, IVC Evidensia Farm Vets and Equine Vets is a vibrant and knowledgeable community. While many of the core principles of our sustainability strategy apply equally to farm and equine, there are some specific areas where our impacts are different and therefore require their own focus.

Livestock farming is at the heart of rural life, and with the widest farm clinic footprint in the UK, our farm teams are woven into the fabric of these communities. With over 10,000 farms, estates and small holdings under our care, they are our colleagues, not customers, and we're part of their team. As trusted partners to these businesses we look after the health of 14% of the cattle in the UK (nearly 1.5 million cattle) and 10% (over 2.5 million) sheep.



Our mission is to offer excellence in all areas of farm animal health, welfare and food safety. We strive to support farmers with sustainable production that improves animal welfare by utilising new technologies, efficiencies and solutions in preventative healthcare.

Our approach in the farm sector is to recognise our unique position as trusted advisors. As farm vets, we have a privileged role within the food production sector and are using this position to advise our clients on how to develop a sustainable food and farming enterprise.

British agriculture accounts for around 10% of the country's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, equal to about 46 Mtonnes of CO₂ equivalent per year. Improving efficiency and reducing waste caused by disease can reduce the GHG emissions per kilogram of meat or litre of milk produced. This will help meet the needs of a growing population, combat climate change, and safeguard animal welfare, while at the same time maintaining and securing rural livelihoods.

In 2021, IVC Evidensia Farm Vets set up a Sustainability Working Group, reporting regularly to the Farm Animal Clinical Board. This Group has developed links with Vet Sustain to share experience and develop our knowledge of best practice. Four members of the working group are now enrolled on the Vet Sustain Sustainability in Food and Farming course, in order to better understand the role our vets can play in sustainability in agriculture regarding production animals. This training will provide an essential foundation as we develop our sustainability strategy across our farm business. Similarly, our Equine Vets are also developing sustainability KPIs which will form the basis of workstreams going forward.

As farm vets, we have a privileged role within the food production sector and are using this position to advise our clients on how to develop a sustainable food and farming enterprise.



There are a number of areas where we are already working with our farm clients to make improvements. These include:

Quality improvement

Audit of Lambings and Caesareans – An audit was performed looking at the clinical outcome of caesareans over the 2022 lambing season. Both Category C (Caution) and Category D (Prudent) antibiotics are routinely used in these operations. There was no significant difference in clinical outcome between the two categories of antibiotic, and so the recommendation from the audit is to use Category D as the routine choice.

Welfare

As regular visitors and trusted advisors on our clients’ farms, we are in a strong position to advise, support and advocate for improvements in animal welfare.

IVC Evidensia Farm Vets over the past year have provided training in Stress-free Cattle Handling and Cow Flow to our vets and vet techs, to empower and enable our team to have those discussions with our clients and give practical advice that will make an impact. We have also rolled out BARTA (British Animal Rescue and Trauma Care Association), training to learn how to work closer with the fire brigade and other emergency services when dealing with emergencies involving large animals. This training is improving the outcome and reducing suffering that occurs in large animal emergencies.

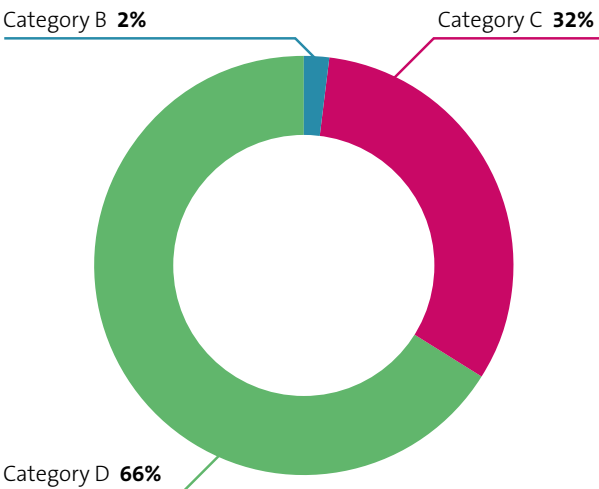
Antibiotic usage

We continue to monitor and educate around the responsible use of antibiotics in food production, to guard against antimicrobial resistance and thereby also protect human health.

With reference to the European Medicine Directive and Veterinary Medicines Directorate classifications (see image 1), in 2021 we again reduced our use of Category B (Restrict) 3rd and 4th Generation cephalosporins and fluoroquinolones by a further 23% (compared to 2020), and this now equates to less than 2% of the antimicrobials used on UK farms.



IVC Evidensia Farm Vets: Antibiotic usage by volume 2021



Category A

AVOID

- Antibiotics in this category are not authorised as veterinary medicines in the EU
- Should not be used in food-producing animals
- May be given to companion animals under exceptional circumstances

Category B

RESTRICT

- Antibiotics in this category are critically important in human medicine and use in animals should be restricted to mitigate the risk to public health
- Should be considered only when there are no antibiotics in Categories C or D that could be clinically effective
- Use should be based on antimicrobial susceptibility testing, wherever possible

Category C

CAUTION

- For antibiotics in this category there are alternatives in human medicine
- For some veterinary indications, there are no alternative belonging to Category D
- Should be considered only when there are no antibiotics in Category D that could be clinically effective

Category D

PRUDENCE

- Should be used as first line treatments, whenever possible
- As always, should be used prudently, only when medically needed

Looking forward →

During 2023, we plan to focus on raising awareness of sustainability among our Farm teams, through discussion at our Farm Vets Clinical Board, at symposiums and through training. We plan to consult with our veterinary teams and also external groups like Vet Sustain to develop a set of Farm-specific sustainability KPIs tailored to the specific impacts of our work, which will form the basis of action plans going forward.





IVC Evidensia Sustainability KPIs and Targets

The data reported below covers IVC Evidensia’s financial year to 30 September 2022 and all of our owned operations, unless otherwise stated.

KPI	Metric	Scope of data	Target	Our Performance	
People				2022	2021
Gender diversity	Percentage of females in senior roles*	Group	By 2025, to have 50% of senior roles filled by females	45%	44%
Ethnic diversity	Number of vet and nurse scholarships funded for students from ethnically diverse backgrounds	UK	By 2025, to have funded 50 vet scholars and 15 nurse scholars from ethnically-diverse backgrounds	25 vet and 7 nurse students currently receiving scholarships	13 vet and 3 nurse students selected for 2021 scholarship
Well-being	Number of countries with well-being programmes in place	Group	By 2023, to have established well-being programmes in all our markets	10 markets	6 markets
Clinical and professional development	Number of days of online and face-to-face learning as part of internal L&D programmes	UK, Finland, Sweden		9,168	n/a
Employee engagement	Percentage of employees taking part in annual Global Employee Survey	Group		55%	n/a
Community investment	Number IVC Evidensia Local Community Grants made	Group		107	n/a
Supply chain standards	Percentage of Group suppliers (by spend) signed up to IVC Evidensia Supplier Code of Conduct (or provided their own equivalent)	Group	By 2025, suppliers representing at least 95% of centrally contracted spend to have signed the IVC Evidensia Supplier Code of Conduct or provided their own	80%	n/a
Safety	Accident incidence rate per 1,000 employees	Group		74*	n/a
Planet					
GHG emissions	Group Scope 1 carbon emissions	Group	By 2030, reduce absolute Scope 1&2 emissions by 50% and Scope 3 emissions by 30% By 2050, reduce Group emissions to net zero**	34,887	n/a
	Group Scope 2 carbon emissions	Group		11,010	n/a
	Group Scope 3 carbon emissions	Group		1,387,310	n/a
	Percentage of renewable electricity purchased	Group		65%	55%
Waste	Percentage of waste diverted from landfill***	UK, Sweden		99%	71%
	Percentage of non-hazardous waste recycled***	UK	By 2025, in the UK, recycling at least 50% of non-hazardous waste	33%	30%
Patients					
Access and affordability	Number of patients treated using the IVC Evidensia Care Fund	Group	To treat 2,500 patients per year, using the IVC Evidensia Care by 2025	2,793	881
Complications and outcomes	Total number of surgical site infections of dogs and cats neutered	UK, Sweden, Netherlands	To reduce the total number of surgical site infections, as a percentage of dogs and cats neutered to 5% by 2025	3.4%	n/a
Experience of the animal	Percentage of sites with species-specific waiting room facilities	Group	To ensure that 50% of our clinics have species-specific waiting room facilities by 2030	52%	25%
Antibiotic use	Number of antibiotic treatments and prescriptions as percentage of total outpatient consultations	UK, Sweden, Netherlands, Norway	To reduce the total number of antibiotic prescriptions as a % of total outpatient consultations to 5% by 2030	9.9%	n/a
Infection prevention and control	Percentage of sites with a Hygiene Ambassador	Group	To appoint a dedicated Hygiene Ambassador to 75% of our clinics by 2025	17%	5%

* Data for period 1 December 2021 to 30 September 2022

** Scope 1 and 2 targets are aligned with a 1.5°C science-based rate of decarbonisation and have been submitted to SBTi for validation. Targets measured from a 2022 base year.

***Veterinary sites and offices only, where waste is managed directly by IVC Evidensia.



Everyone has a role in helping us build **The Positive Pawprint** at IVC Evidensia.

We welcome your comments and feedback on this Sustainability Report. Please email
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