

Evidence-based practice is a developing concept in veterinary nursing and is considered fundamental to improving veterinary nurses' approach to patient care (Banks, 2010). Models of nursing and care planning—A care plan

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holistic nursing appearing with increasing frequency since 2000 (Welsh and Wager, 2013). Terms such as holistic nursing, nursing process and care planning are now widely recognised by veterinary nurses although Welsh and Wager (2013) also question whether practices and systems associated with care plans per se, are actually being implemented in clinical practice.

Historically, a number of authors suggest that veterinary nursing had originally followed a medical approach, which put emphasis on the physiological reasons for illness and created a disease-orientated approach to care (Jeffery, 2006; Pullen, 2006). This

for structure of the different stages leading to the care plan document. This model's primary goals of understanding the patient's individual needs, addressing potential problems and taking measured, appropriate action (Welsh and Wager, 2013) were aligned to the author's objectives when using an NCP. During the design process three stages were created which incorporated the OJAM: a client interview, patient assessment; and care planning. These three stages also broadly incorporated the five continuous phases associated with the human nursing process as described by Murry and Atkinson (1994): assessment; nursing diagnosis; planning; implementation and evaluation.

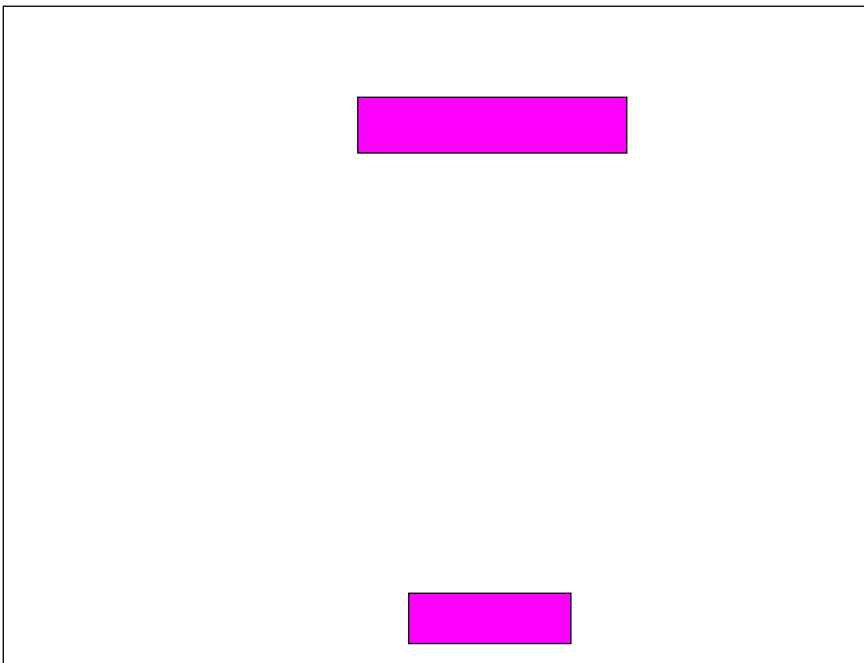
The NCP was created for a 3-year-old German Shepherd dog named Jess. Jess was admitted to the hospital following a period of anorexia and intermittent vomiting. The veterinary surgeon (VS) noted pain on abdominal palpation and signs of dehydration on clinical examination. Jess was admitted for stabilisation and diagnostic investigation to establish whether a gastrointestinal foreign body was present.

Client interview

The first stage of creating the NCP was to carry out an interview with the client. This initial assessment stage can be an important time to gain input from the owner which allows the veterinary nurse (VN) to understand the normal routines of the patient enabling

specific care considerations to be made (Main, 2011a). Research by Lue et al (2008) and the findings of Lock (2011) suggest that communication plays a key role in creating a strong relationship between the client and the veterinary professional, which ultimately can impact positively on the care a veterinary patient receives. Further to this, Welsh and Wager (2013)

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a completed, patient assessment plan provided by Turner et al (2011). Adaptations included the inclusion of a 'Lifespan' diagram taken from the Roper Logan Tierney Model (RLTM) (Roper et al, 2000) to allow the patient's age to be plotted and easily noted. To ensure a specific plan of care could be created for the patient, visual and physical assessments were carried out by the VN. These assessments included

the assessment of the parameters of the patient's vital signs eg t d A g



Figure 2 continued. Nursing care plan

Patient Name: JESS pg 1b VET:KG NURSE: DN Reason for Hospitalisation: Stabilisation, xrays, poss/ FB						
Date	Activity	Problem	Short Term Goal	Nursing Intervention	Review Date	Evaluation
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place in a team, confidence and self-esteem improved (Stapleton et al, 2007; Bradbury-Jones et al, 2011; Brown, 2012). The use of the NCP had a positive effect on the nursing care provided by the SVN's in

the practice, as it allowed the nursing team to form detailed discussions regarding care planning

In contrast to the opinions of the SVN's, the qualified VN in the author's clinic expressed anxiety and



Evaluation and 'ref lection on action' is an important process in professional development (Carlson et al, 2008) and so an important question to ask is: 'Did the NCP have an effect on the care given to Jess?' In the author's opinion the NCP did have a positive effect on her care. The VN-led admission allowed the author to understand important aspects of her behaviour and

