



What we do;  
What we should do;  
What we want to do.

## Veterinary Nurses in New Zealand

**Laura Harvey\*** Dip. VN, BSc,

Rebecca Ladyman\* BSc, BVSc

Arnja Dale# BSc, GDipHE, MSc, MSc (Hons), PhD

\*Unitec Institute of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand

#RNZSPCA, Auckland, New Zealand



# Introduction

- Unregulated profession
- No protection of title
- Three qualifications
  - Certificate (1 year of study)
  - Diploma (2 years of study)
  - Bachelor (3 years of study)



# Introduction

- Lack of a guaranteed and standardised skill-based learning,
- Capabilities of veterinary nurses in practice may not be being fully utilised.

We conducted a nation-wide study of veterinary nurses in New Zealand to investigate current clinical veterinary nursing practices.



# Introduction

- Government mandated review
- New qualifications in 2016
  - Except BVetTech
- Voluntary registration from 2016
- Survey prior to qualification change/registration enables differences to be investigated

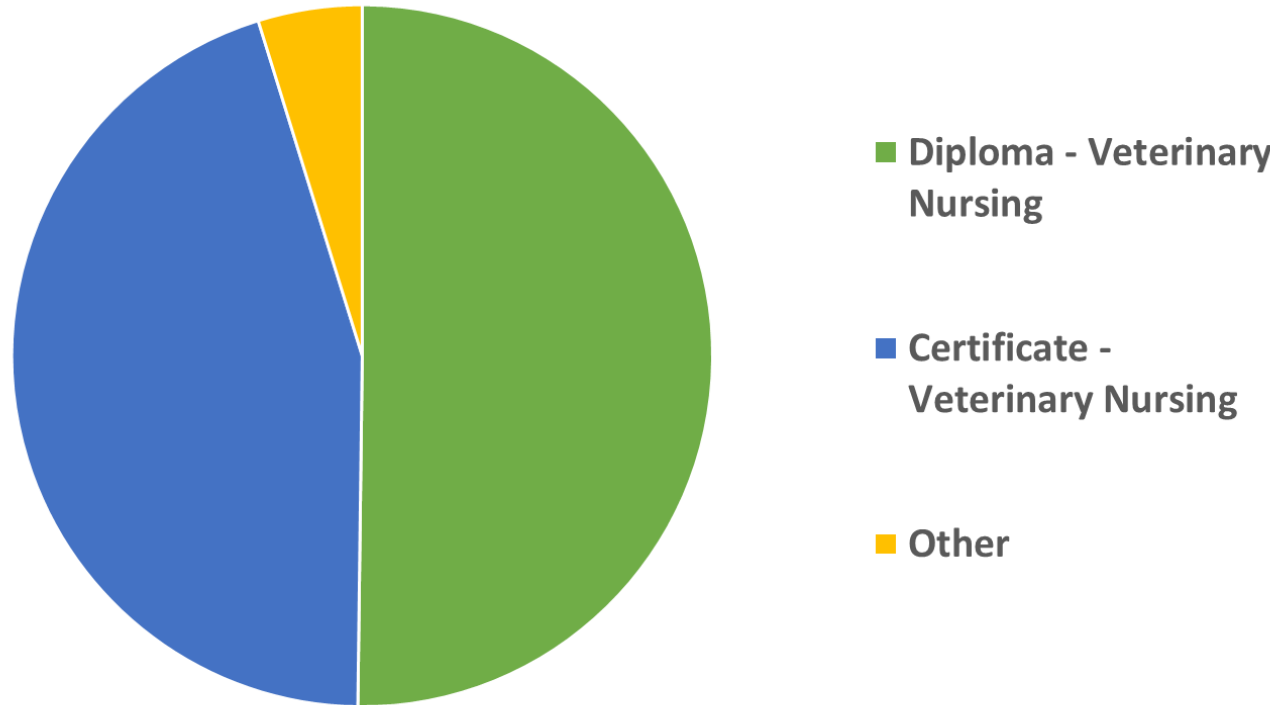


# Methods

- Web-based questionnaire (SurveyMonkey)
- 288 responses (March 2015)
- Response rate: 19% of the New Zealand veterinary nursing population (n=288/1479)
- Distribution:
  - New Zealand Veterinary Nursing Association members via email
  - New Zealand Veterinary Association e-newsletter
  - Social media (Facebook)

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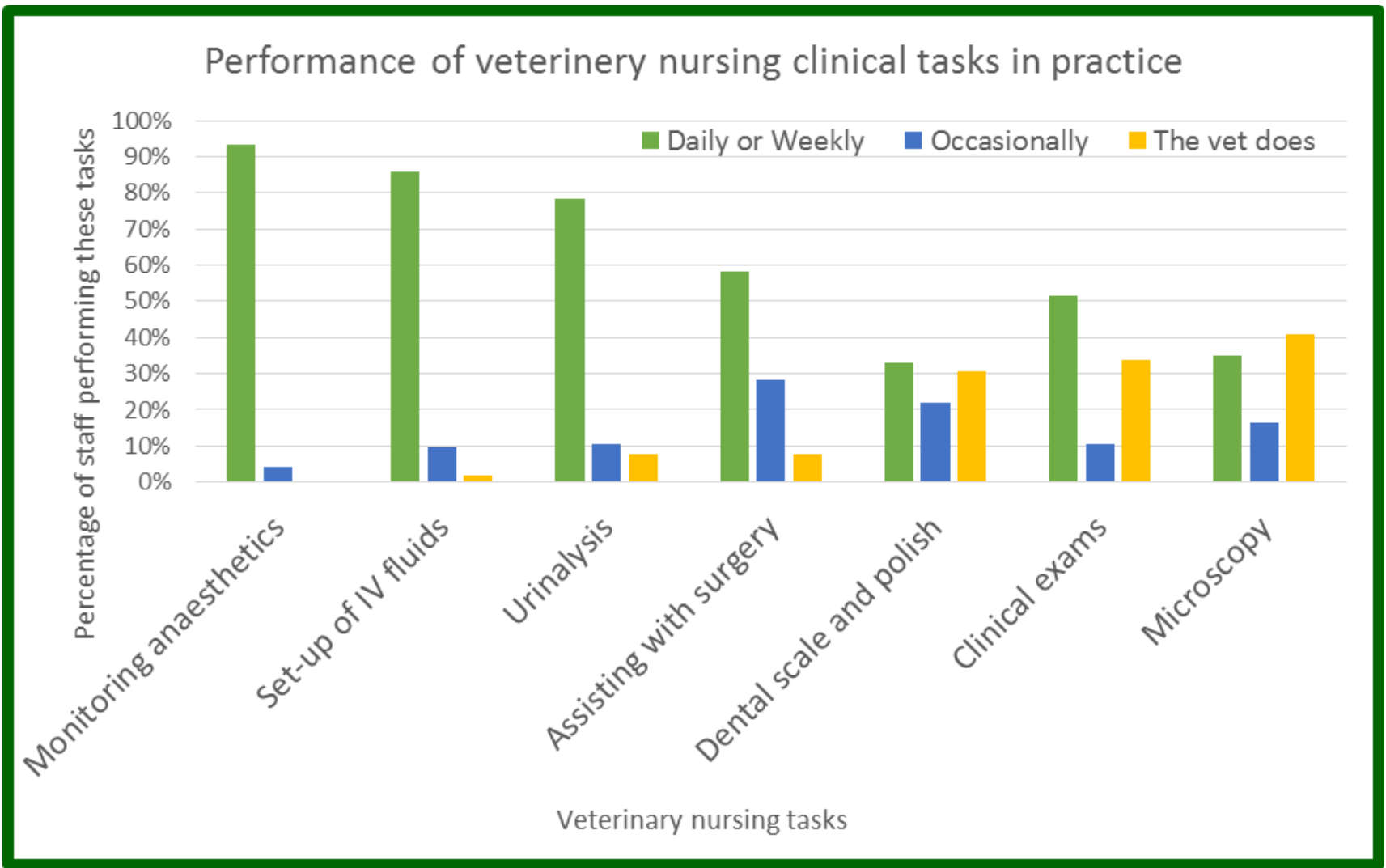
## Distribution of Veterinary Nursing Qualifications



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97% of respondents held a minimum of a one-year vet nursing qualification

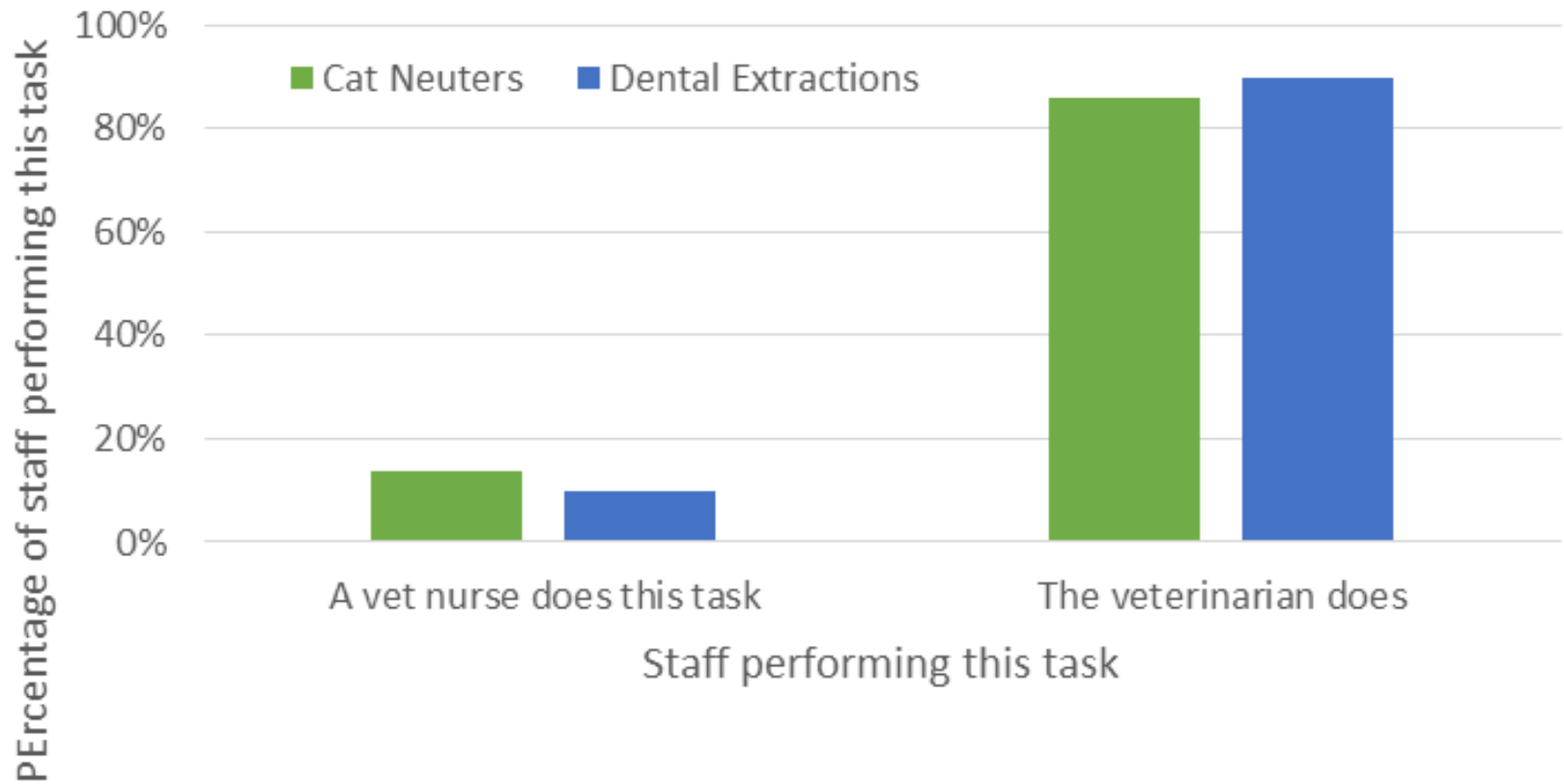
52% held a two or three year vet nursing qualification



Monitoring anaesthetics – 100% VN

Microscopy – 50% VN

## Performance of 'veterinary only' tasks in practice



Cat Neuters – 14% VN

Dental Extractions – 10%





# Conclusions

- Wide variation in roles of veterinary nurses
- The number of veterinary nurses performing these tasks on a regular basis was lower than expected, based on qualification
- A number of tasks are being performed only by veterinarians in some practices
- Job satisfaction/economic implications
  - Vets doing vet nurse tasks
- Reduces improvement of clinical practice
- Impact on statutory regulation



# References

1. Richardson, F. (2013). Rationalising animal care qualifications. *VetScript, June, 10-11.*
2. New Zealand Veterinary Nursing Association. (2012). Regulation. Retrieved from <http://www.nzvna.org.nz/regulation.html>