BVA governance issue consultation

Thank you for responding by 28 March 2022.

https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/X7WXSPX

Introduction and background
This consultation concerns who is able to be President or take up other officer roles in the specialist and territorial divisions and who is able to represent specialist divisions on BVA Council.

The current BVA Articles of Association stipulate that certain role holders in specialist and territorial divisions (President, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary and Public Relations Officer) must be BVA members [Article 24 (ii)]*, who are defined in the Articles as veterinary surgeons (MRCVS) and students [Articles 8 and 9]**.

BVA is primarily an organisation for veterinary surgeons, although we do have a small number of non-MRCVS associate members whose membership is ratified by BVA Council. Some divisions have a much wider membership, and they actively promote membership to RVNs and other allied professionals. Recently, a small number of divisions have sought to allow their RVN and other allied professional members to assume officer roles including the role of President. This contravenes the BVA Articles of Association as they are currently set out, so we are exploring options to address this.

Through initial discussions at BVA Council we know there will be a range of views – from those who feel BVA and its divisions must primarily be for veterinary surgeons and those who think a wider pan-profession membership is more desirable.

We believe that the veterinary profession is strongest when it forms consensus views and speaks with one voice and so our overarching aim is to keep the veterinary family together. If we don't make any changes, we risk some divisions choosing to no longer be divisions of BVA and to work completely independently of BVA. However, we are also mindful of the role of BVNA as the representative voice of veterinary nurses on BVA Council and we are keen not to undermine that role.

We want to hear your views on all of these issues, which will help to shape any proposals that are made to change the Articles at the AGM in September. If you have any questions or additional comments please email Amelia Findon, Head of Policy, Public Affairs and Governance at ameliaf@bva.co.uk

Respond: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/X7WXSPX

*Article 24: Every Division shall: (i) appoint from time to time and shall at all times have an Honorary Secretary and shall give the Secretary of the Association notice of such appointment and (ii) elect as its officers only such persons as are Members. The officers of a Division shall include the President, the Honorary Treasurer, the Honorary Secretary and the Public Relations Officer.

** Article 9: The persons eligible for election as Members of the Association shall be:
(1) any member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and any person whose name is entered on the Supplementary Veterinary Register kept in accordance with Section 8 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966;
(2) any holder of such other qualification in veterinary medicine and/or surgery as the Council shall from time to time approve; and
(3) any student at a university veterinary school studying for a degree entitling the holder to membership of
the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons or a degree in the process of accreditation by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (in either case referred to in Article 26 as student Members).