

VETERINARY PRESS RELEASES

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VETERINARY IRELAND RESPONDS TO CONCERNS ABOUT

"VETS ON CALL" TV PROGRAMMES

Veterinary Ireland – the representative organisation for the profession – has received some expressions of concern about the portrayal of the Veterinary profession in the 'Vets on Call' programmes being shown on RTE television. The organisation would wish it to be known that it was not involved in any way with the planning for, or making of, the programmes.

The programmes have been billed as "genuine reality TV", but the organisation insists that many of the procedures and practices shown are not really typical of twenty-first century veterinary practice in Ireland.

"While Veterinary Surgeons can be required to operate in less than ideal circumstances, these particular programmes seem to focus extensively on this aspect and highlight the horrendous conditions in which some vets have to operate", according to Veterinary Ireland President, Peadar O Scanail.

Veterinary Ireland surveys have shown that Veterinary Surgeons in practice work an average of more than 57 hours and are on call for a further 52 hours. "In this regard the programmes definitely reflect the reality of a vets life – as it is now", according to the organisation.

It is unfortunate that vets are required in some circumstances to provide services under very much less than satisfactory conditions and over such lengthy working hours. "We are endeavouring to assist our members in getting these working hours reduced through the development of modern practice procedures and structures, and the profession is moving to improve the conditions and facilities under which some members have to work", according to Mr O Scanail.

"The Veterinary Council's Practice Premises Accreditation Scheme is one example of progress in this area and in addition substantial investments have been made by veterinary practices throughout the country to upgrade their facilities for treating the animals under their care. It is our hope that future programmes may better reflect this reality", he said.

In stating finally that Veterinary Ireland would not wish to be drawn further into any public comment on the programmes, Mr O Scanail said that, "the Veterinary Council is the statutory body established for the purpose of controlling the practice of veterinary surgery in Ireland". He stated that "in fairness to everyone concerned Veterinary Ireland would not wish to make any comments or judgements which could be interpreted as interference in any aspect of the Veterinary Council's operations".

END

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