

BVU Inaugural Conference – A Momentous Event

Well-being of veterinary professionals was the main theme of the inaugural professional Conference of the British Veterinary Union in Unite (BVU) held on 18th June at Unite headquarters in London.

Addressing the Conference, Head of the Health sector in Unite, Sarah Carpenter, explained how BVU members can work together to address issues facing the profession and assured Unite's full support to all initiatives in this direction.

Focussing on high levels of stress experienced by veterinary professionals, in his key note address BVU chair Dr Shams Mir argued that mental health issues were tip of the iceberg of stress. He said it was wrong to downplay the problem of stress on unfounded grounds of avoiding the profession being 'over-identified' with stress. He added that the BVU will keep this issue in limelight and will work to address root causes of stress in the profession.

Reporting on BVU's journey so far, Dr Jan van Dijk, Secretary BVU, described it as a 'tough walk through a desert' but said that even if BVU were to alleviate the problems of a single member, it would have been worth it. He detailed the important milestones of this journey, the progress made and highlighted the benefits of being part of Unite.

Dr David Bartram, specialist in UK veterinary professional welfare and a key speaker at the Conference, discussed scientifically validated methods of enhancing personal well-being.

Speakers from a range of specialities discussed topical developments in the field dermatology, ophthalmology, soft tissue surgery and applied animal behaviour.

Mrs Jane Beach, BVU's Lead Professional Officer, expressed pleasure in that a number of delegates offered to get actively involved in supporting BVU.