

Streamlining Compliance and RCVS PSS Preparation: How Cockburn Vets Utilises Training-Progress for



Success



Introduction

Cockburn Vets is an award-winning, independent small animal practice in Leicestershire, led by co-owner Diane Storer. With a team of nine vets, ten nurses, and a dedicated support staff. The practice strikes the perfect balance between offering a traditional, family-oriented service while providing highly skilled, forward-thinking veterinary care.



The practice is committed to continuous improvement, both in patient care and environmental impact, as reflected in their numerous accreditations, including iCatCare and Dog Friendly certifications. As part of their ongoing efforts, co-owner Martyn Storer is investigating additional ways to reduce the environment impact of the business.

While Cockburn Vets has been RCVS-accredited for some time, changes in their workforce and post-COVID work patterns made communication systems less reliable. Managing standard operating procedures (SOPs) and documentation had become an administrative burden, taking significant time and effort. Elaine, the accounts manager, did a fantastic job in the lead-up to the previous PSS inspection, uploading all the documents to Stanley, the RCVS's IT system, but it was a lot of hard work. Diane sought a solution to streamline their processes, improve compliance tracking, and reduce the workload associated with maintaining up-to-date documentation. That's where Training-Progress came in.

The Challenge

Achieving and maintaining RCVS Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) accreditation is important to Cockburn Vets as it provides a structured framework to ensure best practices.

“PSS accreditation is the minimum of where you should be. The core standards are in fact minimum legal requirements. I think every practice should strive to achieve it. Using the PSS as a framework is a great way to ensure you are ticking all the necessary boxes and keeping everything up to date – which ensures the best care for our patients and the wellbeing of our team. Without a system in place, it’s easy to overlook things.”



Before implementing Training-Progress, Cockburn Vets stored their SOPs and practice manual on a Teams SharePoint, with no way to track who had read or acknowledged them. To compensate, paper copies were kept in the office, each had a grid on the back requiring a manual signature from each team member, whenever an update was made. This process was inefficient and time-consuming, particularly during a full-scale review ahead of PSS inspections. Diane shudders at the thought of managing the distribution and return of 35 documents to be read and signed. In addition to the signed copies, that were filed away as proof of training, further copies were needed for induction booklets, PSS folders, and health and safety documentation. This increased the risk of document divergence—where multiple versions of a document exist leading to conflicting content.

Diane described the situation as “a logistical nightmare.” Gathering and updating documentation, ensuring every team member had signed off, and managing paper trails before an inspection was overwhelming. The entire process was labour-intensive and so took valuable time away from patient care. The reams of paper did not sit comfortably with their sustainability values either.

Training Progress

The Solution

Diane was recommended Training-Progress and was impressed by its innovative approach.

"It's a novel and intuitive programme for the veterinary industry. I've seen similar systems in other sectors, but this was the first I'd come across designed specifically for veterinary use."

The ability to store all SOPs in a single, version-tracked location was a game changer for Cockburn Vets. With Training-Progress, Diane could track who had read and acknowledged documents, ensuring team-wide compliance and eliminating the need for physical signatures. New policies could be uploaded, reviewed, and distributed seamlessly, making information readily available to all team members, including new employees.

To support their transition, Cockburn Vets also purchased the Training-Progress Health and Safety start-up package:

"I wanted to be sure we had everything correctly documented, and the package was really helpful in getting us set up."

Implementation and Experience

Setting up Training-Progress required an initial investment of time, as Cockburn Vets had a large volume of existing SOPs and health and safety documents to upload. However, Diane found the platform easy to use:

"It's pretty intuitive. It was a big job to get everything on there, but once we set clear targets, the process became manageable. The system also made it easy for others on the team to contribute, which will make future updates far less overwhelming."

The Training-Progress team provided support throughout the setup:

"The support team was really helpful in keeping me on track. It's easy to lose enthusiasm with big projects, but having guidance along the way made a huge difference."

Diane also noted that it is not necessary for practice owners to upload all the content themselves. If documents are already up-to-date then Training-Progress provide a cost effective and reliable service to upload the content on your behalf, giving your Training-Progress journey a boost to get started.

The Results

With all SOPs organised, up-to-date, and accessible in one place, preparing for the latest PSS inspection was significantly smoother. Instead of scrambling to collect documents, Diane and her team used Training-Progress' search function to pull up the necessary files and submit them directly.

"Having everything in one place made it easy to find what we needed and delegate tasks. My admin assistant was able to handle much of the document submission, which was a huge time-saver."

The system also made it easier to implement and track updates following the inspection:

"There were a few minor changes to SOPs required after the inspection, and Training-Progress made it simple. We updated the documents, sent them out to the team, and had proof of reading to send off almost immediately."



Beyond PSS accreditation, Training-Progress has also been invaluable for other certifications, such as iCatCare and Dog Friendly accreditation. The platform provides tangible proof of training and compliance, which is crucial when applying for and maintaining industry recognitions.

Additionally, Cockburn Vets is exploring ways to improve their sustainability efforts, and Training-Progress will play a key role in keeping the team informed about new initiatives as it is simple to change SOPs and use the reporting systems to check that all team members have read and acknowledged the changes – moving the whole team along the sustainability journey together.



Impact on the Team

One of the biggest benefits of Training-Progress has been improved communication and team cohesion. With a growing team and more flexible working arrangements, ensuring consistent messaging had become a challenge. Training-Progress helped unify the team by providing a central hub for information, making sure they whole team was singing from the same hymn sheet.

Diane shared a powerful example of how Training-Progress supports her team:

“Recently, a new client demanded antibiotics for a GI issue – something we don’t agree with. Our less experienced vet was able to confidently stand their ground, knowing our agreed SOPs supported their decision to protect antibiotic usage. When the client asked to speak to a more experienced vet, they received the same response. Having clear, agreed-upon protocols ensures consistency, protects our team, and reassures clients.”

New employees also appreciate having an accessible reference library, reducing their reliance on senior team members for answers – which saves everyone time!

Personally, Diane also feels she can take a break from the practice as there is no longer such reliance on her knowledge.

“At first, I had to remind them to look in Training-Progress for information, but now they know to look there first before asking me”

Looking Ahead

Diane is confident that future PSS inspections will be even easier now that Training-Progress is fully integrated into the practice’s workflow:

“The initial setup took time, but now that everything is in place, reviews and updates will be ongoing rather than a last-minute rush. Training-Progress has saved us from the exhausting pre-inspection document scramble.”

They will also be using the system to gain the acclaimed PSS award in Client Service. An award Diane feels the team deserves as she is full of admiration for her client support advisors, who do an amazing job liaising with their well bonded clients. For Diane and the team at Cockburn Vets there are always improvements to be made which will benefit the patients they care for and the people they work with. Diane relishes the opportunity to keep developing.

Diane encourages other practices to consider Training-Progress:

*“There’s work involved in setting it up, but the benefits far outweigh the effort. **Training-Progress** helps us look after our team, ensures compliance, and provides proof of training and policy changes. It’s been a fantastic addition to the management of our practice.”*

Take Action

If you want to learn more about how Training-Progress can take the headache out of compliance with the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme **BOOK A DISCOVERY CALL TODAY!**

