

Message from Incoming President of the Commonwealth Veterinary Association.

As the newly appointed President of the Commonwealth Veterinary Association (CVA), I extend warm New Year's greetings to all colleague veterinarians and associated professionals across the Commonwealth. May 2024 be for all of us a year of progress and achievement.

The last four years (2020 to 2023) saw the CVA under the Presidency of Dr Olatunji Nasir. My first words must be one of gratitude on behalf of all the members of the CVA for his outstanding leadership during that time. We thank him for his active engagement with the international veterinary community and keeping the CVA active on the world stage. We fervently praise his focus on the next generation of veterinarians and continued engagement with all regions particularly during the isolation of the Covid pandemic. I look forward to his continued participation on the Executive Committee as the Immediate Past President as we chart a course to implement critical initiatives to the benefit of all our members.

As we work to ensure that the CVA is visible and relevant to its delegates, national veterinary associations, partner organisations, veterinarians and interested people we will focus on strengthening our communications within and between our regions. 2024 will see a change in the administration of the regions by a change in the way we select, appoint, and engage with our Regional Coordinators. We hope that this move will help to strengthen intra-regional planning and cooperation as well as to provide a platform for inter-regional exchanges.

We will continue to expand and promote the work of the established CVA programs:

- *Rabies Awareness*, advocacy and building diagnostic capacity through the work of the KVAFSU/CVA-WOAH Reference Laboratory for Rabies.
- *Animal Welfare* research and training through the KVAFSU/CVA Animal Welfare Centre.
- *Book and equipment program*, to provide veterinarians and veterinary institutes material support through donated veterinary textbooks, veterinary equipment and other resources.
- Provide access to high quality continuing *professional development* both on-line, face-to-face, and through regional conferences in conjunction with partner organisations.
- The funding of *small projects* proposed by member associations in keeping with their specified aims and objectives.

At the same time we hope to be able to focus on some new initiatives developed in the past years.

- Targeting veterinary sustainability and climate action including disaster risk management and preparedness.
- Engagement with our young people through the International Veterinary Students' Association to encourage innovative approaches and renewed energy for sustained growth and development.
- Working within our regions to identify ways to strengthen the functioning of national veterinary associations and promoting the formation of such where none exist

Our objective is to improve the lives of our veterinarians, animal owners and animals , through purposeful and sustained cooperation that result in the delivery of high-quality health and welfare programs.

I am heartened by the tangible evidence of what our collective action and determination has already achieved. I remain confident that the ongoing and new initiatives being implemented will help to make the CVA visible and relevant to all its members

I am honoured to have been selected to lead this venerable organization for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 Dec 2027 .

Call to Action

The commitment to doing will be a theme during 2024, as such, I will leave you with the below immediate steps for your engagement:

1. Review of Key Documents

During 2023, the Executive Committee spent some time reflecting on the past administrative period. We reviewed the Constitution and by-laws and prepared a new strategic plan. We invite our delegates to visit the renewed CVA website and review these documents.

[CVA-Constitution Amended-July-2023.pdf \(commonwealthvetassoc.com\)](#)

[CVA-Strategic-Plan-2023-2026-1.pdf \(commonwealthvetassoc.com\)](#)

2. Training and Awareness Building

We invite national veterinary associations to identify their priorities for training and awareness so that together we may find relevant partnerships and support advancement in these critical areas.

3. Small Projects

Please start conceptualizing any small projects you would like to accomplish. We look forward to submissions from across the member associations.

I wish you all a peaceful and prosperous 2024.



Sarah Wilkinson-Eytle BSc, DVM
President
Commonwealth Veterinary Association