

POCUS for Nurses & Technicians

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Do you want to solve questions such as ‘does this patient has free abdominal fluid?’, ‘is this patient cardiogenic or non-cardiogenic?’ and ‘does this patient have an intact bladder?’ POCUS can help!

A sensitive and specific tool, POCUS is an extension of the traditional physical examination which can be used in the emergency setting, the ward and in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). While useful in stable patients, POCUS provides invaluable information in the unstable patient especially when repeated over time. POCUS is a helpful tool to easily make repeated assessments of patients because of the non-invasiveness, bedside availability and simplicity of ultrasound.

This wet lab will address the benefits of ultrasonography to the veterinary nurse, the basics of how ultrasonography works, and how to identify normal structures with practical hands-on experience. The lab will demonstrate how to perform a POCUS of the abdomen and thorax, both in triage and through the hospital stay, to monitor patient condition by following simple protocols which combine ultrasound views with straightforward, binary questions. These binary questions will assist in the identification or exclusion of critical factors in ECC scenarios. While POCUS is not intended to replace radiography or ultrasonography performed by an imaging or cardiology specialist, it can provide the veterinary technician or nurse with the skills to recognise and score patterns in respiratory disease, cardiac disease and urinary output.

The core objectives of this lecture are for the veterinary technician or nurse to feel confident with the use of ultrasonography. In summary, this wet lab will teach:

- The basics of an ultrasound machine.
- To ask and solve binary questions.
- How to perform an abdominal POCUS:
 - Four standard views.
 - The ability to find the bladder, spleen, liver, gallbladder, kidneys, intestinal loops and vena cava caudalis.
- How to perform a thoracic POCUS:
 - How to find the heart (and basic assessment of the La: Ao view.)
 - How “normal/healthy” lungs appear and identification of B-lines and Z-lines.
 - The ability to look for signs of pneumothorax, pleural effusion and estimate their.