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Vetstream and Computers 4 Africa partner to enable African vets to access online training and development

An initiative to give veterinarians in Africa online access to the latest CPD materials and other educational resources aims to have more than 150 African veterinary practices online in five sub-Saharan countries by the end of 2015. It is called 'Distance Learning for Colleagues in Africa' and is being led by veterinary digital content supplier Vetstream which has partnered with UK-based charity Computers 4 Africa.

The project is also being sponsored by global veterinary supplier KRUUSE, which is working to raise veterinary standards in all parts of the world. Their efforts form part of the wider African Small Companion Animal Network (AFSCAN) project run by the World Small Animal Veterinary Association's (WSAVA's) charitable Foundation, which aims to advance standards of veterinary care across the continent.

Five African countries, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda, are initial participants in the AFSCAN project. This year, 700 veterinarians in these countries, many of whom are unable to travel the huge distances to attend the few veterinary CPD events which take place in Africa and who may not have the resources to travel abroad, are set to benefit. By the end of 2016, Vetstream, Computers 4 Africa and the other AFSCAN supporters aim to ensure that more than 1,200 of them will have online access to the highest quality clinical content

Vetstream is providing its Canis and Felis peer-reviewed multimedia point-of-care encyclopaedias to participating veterinarians. Vetstream is a leading supplier of digital reference content to the veterinary profession. Vetstream Canis and Felis feature content from more than 900 leading veterinary clinicians from around the world, are updated weekly and are accessible via any internet-

enabled device. The North American Veterinary Community (NAVC) and American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) are providing their VetFolio e-learning platform.

To help veterinarians get online, UK-based charity Computers 4 Africa is taking unwanted computers, tablets and smartphones, securely data wiping and refurbishing them before installing software and browser solutions and shipping them to Africa for use by AFSCAN-participating veterinarians. Computers 4 Africa is a charity which aims to help lift Africa out of the poverty trap by equipping the next generation to work in a global environment. It refurbishes donated equipment then sends it to schools, colleges and projects in Africa, including **Distance Learning for African Colleagues**. Its support for this element of the AFSCAN project has been given a boost by the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA), which is calling on members to donate equipment. Those able to do are asked to:

- deliver it to Vetstream's offices near Cambridge
- bring it to a dedicated trade stand kindly provided by BSAVA at its Congress in April 2015;
- contact Computers 4 Africa which will arrange to collect the equipment free of charge for a minimum of ten computers plus other items
- take it to donation centres around the UK -
www.computers4africa.org.uk/appeals/index.php

Additional CPD resources being made available to participating African veterinarians include the full range of content on the NAVC and AAHA's e-learning platform and proceedings from NAVC, AAHA WSAVA congresses.

Commenting, Dr Mark Johnston, Managing Director of Vetstream, said: "While African veterinarians faces challenges in terms of disease prevalence and a lack of diagnostic and treatment resources, the use of technology and, in particular, mobile technology, is exploding across the continent and is playing a key role in supporting development. With our partners at Computers 4 Africa and fellow members of the AFSCAN consortium, we are harnessing the growth in technology to bring world-class CPD resources to veterinarians in participating countries.

"To help us achieve this, we appeal to practices, manufacturers, and practice management suppliers in the veterinary market to get involved in this very worthwhile project and to donate redundant PC's, laptops, tablets and even smartphones, as well as accessories such as keyboards and mice.

Education is a key part of helping our colleagues deliver the best level of clinical care that they can in Africa and we are delighted to be part of the team delivering this transformation."

Sharon Roberts from Computers 4 Africa said: "Providing education is critical to bring equality, overcome barriers and start to bridge the digital divide. Our ambition is to empower and equip all people (regardless of age, gender or ability) by supplying IT equipment for training and humanitarian projects across Africa. In supporting this initiative and repurposing your redundant IT equipment in the UK you will meet the WEEE directive, Environment Agency, Data Protection compliance and decrease your carbon. Once in Africa, the equipment will be used to provide opportunities which will change the lives of veterinarians, people and their animals."

Notes to editors:

About AFSCAN

The AFSCAN project, the first phase of which runs from April 2014 until April 2016, has been developed by the WSAVA Foundation with the backing of the global animal health company Zoetis and a Consortium of other supporters. Its Project Board is chaired by Dr Gabriel Varga, President of the WSAVA Foundation and Director at Zoetis and includes Professor Michael Day (University of Bristol, UK, and WSAVA Foundation); Dr Theo Kanellos and Mr Greg Andrews (Zoetis); Dr Remo Lobetti (referral practitioner, South Africa) and Dr Alex Thiermann (OIE).

Other supporters and sponsors of AFSCAN include the OIE, the North American Veterinary Community (NAVC) and veterinary digital content provider Vetstream; veterinary charity Worldwide Veterinary Services and its Mission Rabies Project; global veterinary equipment supplier KRUUSE; the Morris Animal Foundation; healthcare advertising agency Circa Health; the University of Veterinary Medicine in Kosice and the WSAVA.

About Vetstream

Vetstream offers a range of online clinical resources for the veterinary profession including its point of care reference resources Canis (dogs); Felis (cats) Equis (horses) and Lapis (rabbits). Its Vetacademy e-learning service offers e-learning modules and online videos from some of the world's leading veterinary CE providers, including The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Medicine, Elsevier and Improve International.

About Computers 4 Africa

Computers 4 Africa transforms communities across Africa, by accepting working redundant PC's and IT equipment from individuals, corporates and organisations in the UK. Once securely data wiped, the computers are shipped out to schools, colleges, libraries, clinics and specific projects in Africa.

For further information:

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