

# SASH Adelaide Newsflash

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We hope you enjoyed volume 1 of our SASH Newsflash. This edition features some exciting updates, new team member announcements and another Case Challenge.

As always, we thank you for your continued support and welcome any feedback on future topics for us to cover.

## Did you know?

SASH is the largest majority vet-owned-and-operated specialist and emergency veterinary hospital network in Australia. Together, the team of practicing veterinarian partners hold 70% share of ownership of SASH.

## SASH team update

SASH welcomes the latest additions to our specialist departments.



### **Dr Penny Tisdall BSc(Vet) BVSc MVetClinStuds FANZCVS Specialist in Surgery**

With Dr. Penny Tisdall joining the SASH team, we are delighted to now offer elective surgery consults six days a week. Penny's days will be Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday by appointment. Her professional interests include soft tissue surgery, oncologic and reconstructive surgery, neurosurgery and orthopedics.

### **Dr Dillon Devathasan DVM MS DACVIM Boarded Neurologist & Neurosurgeon**

Dillon is Adelaide's first and only ACVIM-boarded Neurologist & Neurosurgeon. Although he enjoys all areas of neurology & neurosurgery, he is particularly passionate about neurosurgery and cerebrospinal fluid disorders.



Helping pets and their families live their best life

## Internal Medicine Update

We are excited to announce the commencement of our service to provide **Radioactive Iodine treatment**. Radioactive iodine is widely regarded as the gold standard for treatment of feline hyperthyroidism. For more information about radioactive iodine treatment please refer to the article in the following pages.

Our treatment facility has been purpose built to provide a comfortable environment during the patients' hospitalisation. The treatment price is \$2,400 (excluding the initial referral consultation).

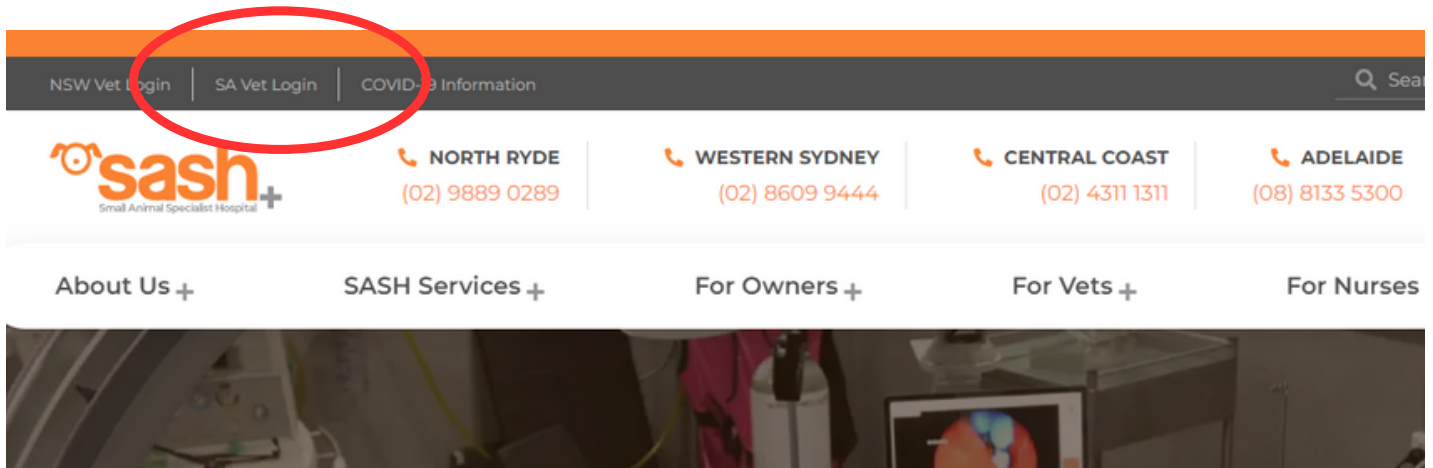
**Internal Medicine Referral lead time for consultations is currently 1 - 2 weeks, with the ability to accommodate urgent referral cases sooner, if needed.** When sending a referral, please include a full history, including bloods. If the case is urgent, please let us know if they are currently hospital dependent.

Once the patient has been seen by SASH, the referring veterinarian will receive a clinical summary.

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Referrals can be submitted by the [Ref Vet portal](#) on sashvets.com or by emailing [info@ashvets.com](mailto:info@ashvets.com)





## Radioactive iodine therapy for feline hyperthyroidism

Radioactive iodine (I-131) therapy is recognised world-wide as the gold standard treatment for hyperthyroid cats.

Radioactive iodine concentrates in the thyroid gland after administration and destroys the hyperplastic/adenomatous thyroid tissue via emission of beta particles, sparing the rest of the body. A single treatment is curative in over 90% of cats with almost no specific side-effects of treatment; around 2% of cats may show temporary mild discomfort when swallowing.

### Reasons to choose radioactive iodine treatment for your patients

1. Over 90% of treated cats are cured by a single treatment single treatment of radioactive iodine medication
2. Radioactive iodine has virtually no side-effects
3. In most cases radioactive iodine offers a more cost-effective long-term solution than daily medication or surgery
4. Relapse rates following successful treatment are very low (below 5%)
5. The average life expectancy of hyperthyroid cats treated with radioiodine is four years, roughly twice as long as cats treated with daily medication
6. Over 90% of cat owners reported they were satisfied with their decision to treat their hyperthyroid cat with radioactive iodine
7. **Treatment cost was not considered by owners to be the major factor in their ultimate choice of treatment**
8. Radioactive iodine is the recognised gold-standard treatment for feline hyperthyroidism



### Radioactive iodine treatment for cats

While radioactive iodine is considered the best treatment overall for cats with hyperthyroidism, individual circumstances may mean that it is not the best choice for your patient. Before scheduling treatment, a consultation with our Specialist is required to review your patient's condition, discuss all treatment options and advise the specific requirements of radioactive iodine treatment. Treatment selection may be influenced by the presence of any comorbidities, life expectancy, patient demeanour, acceptance of confinement and litter tray usage and willingness to bear treatment cost.

**Minimum requirements to assess the suitability of an individual cat for treatment are:**

- routine haematology and biochemistry including SDMA
- total T4
- urinalysis ± urine protein:creatinine ratio
- blood pressure measurements

**Additional testing for individual cats may include:**

- echocardiography
- abdominal ultrasound
- CT scan if thyroid carcinoma is suspected

If your Client elects to proceed with radioactive iodine treatment, treatment can generally be performed soon afterwards. Antithyroid medications and Hill's y/d® diet should be withdrawn for a short period of time before radioactive iodine treatment; please check with the Specialist for specific recommendations.

## Radioactive iodine therapy for feline hyperthyroidism

Cats should be fasted overnight before admission to SASH for treatment. Cats are administered safe combinations of sedatives and an anti-emetic injection prior to oral administration of the radioactive iodine capsule.

After treatment, cats are housed individually in large cages suitable for long-term stays for one week in our radioactive iodine treatment facility. Our treatment facility is quiet and air-conditioned and is intended to provide the best possible environment possible for cats staying away from home by incorporating feline-friendly design, "Feliway" diffusers and soothing music chosen especially to calm cats.



Once discharged, additional isolation and special handling (including litter) are required under the terms of our Environmental Protection Authority Radiation Waste Management Plan.

### A note about the kidneys

There is a complex interaction between the kidneys and thyroid function and any treatment for feline hyperthyroidism may impact kidney function. Cats with known pre-existing kidney disease may not be suitable candidates for radioactive iodine treatment.

Long-term hyperthyroidism is damaging to the kidneys, however this may be masked by the abnormally increased blood flow to the kidneys caused by the hyperthyroid state. While cats are screened carefully for kidney disease before treatment, no screening test is completely reliable. After successful treatment for hyperthyroidism some cats may have a decline in kidney function and require ongoing care for kidney disease.

Low levels of thyroid hormone can occur after treatment and may also impact kidney function. Recent studies show that lower doses of radioactive iodine may be as effective as higher doses in treating feline hyperthyroidism whilst decreasing the risk of low levels of thyroid hormone. We follow this approach and administer lower doses of radioactive iodine to maintain an optimal balance between the thyroid and the kidneys.

After treatment, thyroid hormone and kidney function are monitored carefully. If thyroid hormone becomes too low and is impacting kidney function, thyroid hormone replacement tablets or liquid are required until normal thyroid function returns.

### Follow-up visits after radioactive iodine treatment

- six weeks after treatment
  - six months after treatment
  - 12 months after treatment
    - o physical examination
    - o blood pressure
    - o blood and urine tests including total T4  $\pm$  TSH, creatinine, SDMA, urinalysis  $\pm$  UPCR
- \* recommendations may vary depending on test results

We will work closely with you to keep you informed of your patient's treatment, liaise with you regarding follow-up and are available to answer any ongoing queries that you may have regarding radioactive iodine treatment of your feline patients.

**Please do not hesitate to contact SASH with any questions regarding feline radioactive iodine treatment.**



## Continuing Education Calendar

**Tailored content for  
Vets and Nurses**

Live Webinars plus  
Face-to-Face events

Our Continuing Education program, provides both face to face events as well as webinars enabling you to participate in engaging presentations from the comfort of your home or clinic. Each course is full of practical insights that you can use immediately to benefit your patients in your practice.

1  
Jun

**Vet CE - Webinar**

Gallbladder disease with  
Dr Lucy Barker, Medicine  
Specialist

14  
Jun

**Vet CE - Face to Face**

Liver shunts with Dr Penny  
Tisdall, Specialist Surgeon  
& Dr Stewart Ryan,  
Specialist Surgeon

7  
July

**Vet CE - Webinar &  
Face to Face**

Physiotherapy with  
Johanna Higgs,  
Physiotherapist

2  
Aug

**Vet CE - Webinar**

Coagulation with Dr Lisa  
Smart, ECC Specialist

24  
Aug

**Vet CE - Webinar &  
Face to Face**

Neurology with Dr Dillon  
Devathanan, Neurologist

Sep  
TBD

**Nurse CE - Face to Face**

Ophthalmology for nurses  
with Courtney Dawson,  
Surgery Nurse Lead

18  
Oct

**Vet CE - Webinar &  
Face to Face**

Surgery with Dr Ryan  
Taggart, Specialist  
Surgeon

14  
Nov

**Vet CE - Webinar &  
Face to Face**

Emergency & Critical Care  
with Dr Nici Kalnins,  
Criticalist

## SASH Academy

Gain CPD points  
anywhere, anytime



Missed a webinar? Visit [SASH Academy](#), our on-demand digital platform to provide our referring veterinarian partners with a unique library of educational content from SASH specialists.

Features include:

- Access free content any time anywhere, on your computer or mobile device
- Learn at your own pace and resume where you left off
- Instantly receive CPD certificates on course completion
- A library of courses including past SASH webinars
- Regularly updated content, with new courses due in the new year
- Join a community of like-minded veterinarians



## SASH Critical Care

The SASH Adelaide Critical Care department provides immediate, essential, intensive care and management of those patients who are severely ill, injured with complicated diseases and/or experiencing an acute decline. The Critical Care team commonly manages life threatening multiple comorbidities, and to provide a continuum of care in partnership with other specialists departments such as surgery, medicine, and neurology. Critical Care accepts cases internally referred by other departments and from external referring veterinarians. If you would like advice, please feel free to call.

Core areas of expertise:

- mechanical/positive pressure ventilation
- transfusion medicine
- coagulation disorders
- fluid and colloidal therapy
- cardiorespiratory disorders
- acute endocrinopathies
- sepsis and antimicrobial use
- trauma management
- acute toxicities



The SASH Adelaide ICU is unique, as it is the Adelaide's only dedicated ICU with South Australia's only Board Certified Criticalist. It provides 24/7 intensive veterinary and nursing care, with the following equipment and facilities:

- Adelaide's largest canine & feline blood banks, managed by a specialist
- Mechanical ventilators
- Oxygen supplementation for patients ranging from <100 g to > 90 kg
- Humidicribs for neonatal care
- Advanced in-house laboratory equipment
- Cardio-pulmonary resuscitation equipment, including a defibrillator
- Continuous bedside monitoring equipment, including ECG, invasive blood pressure and blood gasses (pulse oximetry, capnography)





## In the Spotlight: Dr Nicole Kalnins

Dr Nicole Kalnins grew up in the Adelaide Hills and moved to Queensland to study Veterinary Science. In 2010 she graduated from the University of Queensland with honours and spent the next 7 years working in mixed practice, general small animal practice and emergency where she developed her passion for critical care. In 2021 she completed a residency position in Emergency and Critical Care at the University of Queensland.

Having now returned to Adelaide, she is excited to be providing a new level of emergency & critical care to local pets, as South Australia's only Boarded Criticalist.

While Nici enjoys all aspects of veterinary critical care, she has a keen interest in transfusion medicine, toxicities, and antimicrobial stewardship.



## Resource Hub



Our new resource hub enables you to easily order SASH flyers, posters and client information sheets for your clinic.

[www.sashvets.com/collateral-order-form/](http://www.sashvets.com/collateral-order-form/)







## Clinical Case Challenge



Below is a medical case challenge. Scan the QR code to login, or register, for the SASH Academy to reveal the answer. Once you've selected the answer, you'll unlock some additional questions and invaluable case notes.

### Collapsed dog with lethargy & inappetence

A 5-year-old male neutered Kelpie X presented for collapse, lethargy and inappetence for the past few days. He has pale mucous membranes, tachycardia HR 160 on physical exam. You performed the following diagnostics:

- PCV/TP: 13%/60g/L
- Blood smear: platelet 8 per HPF
- Chest radiographs: no significant findings
- PT/APTT: within normal limits
- Abdominal/thoracic POCUS: no free fluid found
- In-house CBC: Macrocytic, hyperchromic anaemia with significant reticulocytosis.
- Mild to moderate neutrophilia, lymphocytosis and monocytosis
- In-house biochemistry: within normal limits
- Positive in-slide agglutination



1. What is the most likely diagnosis?
  - a) Acute haemorrhage/bleeding
  - b) Immune mediated haemolytic anaemia
  - c) Immune mediated thrombocytopaenia
  - d) Bone marrow disease



2. What are some common features that you may find on the patient's blood smear?



a) Heinz bodies



b) Spherocytosis



c) Agglutination



d) Target Cells



## Meet our Physiotherapy Team

Johanna Higgs BPhty, PGDip(Vet Physio), PGCert(Acup), APAM, is our resident physiotherapist at SASH Adelaide. Johanna has been working as a physiotherapist since 2005 when she obtained a Bachelor of Physiotherapy from Otago University in New Zealand and then a Postgraduate Certificate in Acupuncture for Physiotherapy. Having worked in private practice and with sports teams in New Zealand, Brisbane and Adelaide she decided to combine her love of animals with her work by completing a Post Graduate Diploma in Veterinary Physiotherapy through the University of Liverpool.



*Johanna (Physiotherapist) and  
Eugenie (Specialist Support)*

Eugenie Thompson, Specialist Support Nurse worked at the University of Sydney Veterinary Teaching Hospital in the Surgery and Rehab services for 5 years. She holds a Diploma of Vet Nursing (Surgery) and supports our Physio & Rehab and Hospital Care teams

Our physiotherapy team work closely with the veterinary and surgical teams to get the best outcomes possible for your patients. Physiotherapy can help your patients to achieve improved quality of life, help to maintain or improve function and help with injury prevention using current best evidence from animal and human physiotherapy research.

We treat and manage a range of conditions including:

- Pre and post-surgical rehabilitation
- Intervertebral disc disease
- Soft tissue injuries such as muscle or tendon strains
- Elbow and Hip dysplasia
- Osteoarthritis
- Geriatrics
- Respiratory conditions

Physiotherapy is part of our routine in-patient care for surgical, non-surgical and intensive care patients. We also provide an outpatient physiotherapy service. A session with the physiotherapist includes taking a thorough history, gait analysis, physical assessment of joints, muscles and neurological systems, any hands-on treatment that may be required and development of a tailored rehabilitation and exercise program.

Treatment can include:

- Myofascial release or trigger point therapy
- Joint and soft tissue mobilization
- Laser or transcutaneous electrical stimulation
- Exercise prescription

You are able to refer directly to our physiotherapy service for any of your patients you believe would benefit.

## CT vs MRI - An Informed Decision

As there is some crossover between the use of CT and MRI, it can be challenging to find the right modality for the patient. Several factors come into consideration, including multiple diseases, a broad differential list, anaesthesia/sedation etc. Finding the right modality is often achieved through multidisciplinary teamwork involving discussion between multiple specialists, including a Radiologist. After a mutual patient has been examined by a SASH clinician, the most appropriate form of advanced imaging will be recommended after considering all the above factors.

The below table shows some general guidelines when MRI and CT should be used.

MRI	CT
<p><b>Excellent soft tissue contrast</b></p> <p><b>Gold standard for neurological diseases</b></p> <p><b>Diseases related to the brain:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brain tumours</li> <li>• inflammatory disorders</li> <li>• vascular lesions</li> <li>• congenital malformations</li> <li>• degenerative disorders</li> </ul> <p><b>Spinal conditions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• disc extrusions</li> <li>• soft tissue tumours</li> <li>• inflammatory disorders</li> <li>• other intraparenchymal disease (syringomyelia)</li> </ul> <p><b>Musculoskeletal disease:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ligament injury (CCL rupture)</li> <li>• tendon injury (biceps tendon)</li> <li>• myopathy (myositis)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Superior resolution</b></p> <p><b>Larger areas can be scanned in a short time</b></p> <p><b>Abdominal diseases (esp. larger dogs)</b></p> <p><b>Cancer staging</b></p> <p><b>Orthopaedic Surgical planning</b></p> <p><b>Osseous conditions</b></p> <p><b>Diagnosis of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• head &amp; spinal trauma</li> <li>• bony tumours</li> <li>• diseases of the ears</li> <li>• elbow disease (fractured coronoid process)</li> <li>• dental disease</li> <li>• nasal disease (neoplasia, foreign body)</li> <li>• pulmonary disease (aspiration pneumonia, metastasis, etc.)</li> </ul>



- 24/7 Emergency
- Critical Care
- Surgery
- Internal Medicine
- Medical Oncology
- Dermatology
- Diagnostic Imaging
- Neurology & Neurosurgery
- Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation

**SASH Perth opening 2024**

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