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IVNA Statement re Increase in Licence to Practise Fee for 2018

The IVNA were shocked when we received news yesterday that the Licence to Practise fee was being increased by over 16%. This news was received by the committee members personally when they each received their renewal notice.

We understand that the decision was made on November 3rd 2017. We feel extremely disappointed that the Veterinary Council of Ireland did not see fit to inform the IVNA, who are the representative body for Veterinary Nurses in Ireland, of this decision, albeit that they have no obligation to do so. Advance notification would at least have allowed our members to prepare for this extra expense which is due by December 31st 2017, unless payment is by Direct Debit in which case it will be processed around January 26th 2018.

Having seen the financial report for 2016, which can be viewed in the Annual Report <http://www.vci.ie/getmedia/4718d3f3-c01b-48c8-abb6-1598aaa347e0/2016-VCI-Annual-Report.pdf>, we feel that with equity reserves of €5,462,315 and the fact that Veterinary Council employees were given a pay increase, which averages €249 per month per employee, while most of our members have had no pay increase in many years that it is blatantly unfair to increase our fee.

Our other concern about the recent renewal documents is the mandatory requirement for professional indemnity insurance. While we do agree that this requirement is extremely important in order that registrants can protect themselves against malpractice claims, we feel that the timing of the announcement and the requirement to have it in place by January 1st 2018 is very unreasonable given the very short notice.

In light of the fact that the Veterinary Council surveyed veterinary nurses about their pay and conditions in 2015, we have to wonder how the Veterinary Council think that RVNs will be able to afford to pay their fees. Given that many RVNs are being paid minimum wage and have to pay their registration fees themselves we feel that this will put undue pressure on RVNs and will result in many more of our members and colleagues being forced to leave the profession or move abroad in order to make a living.

We really feel that this increase in fees will be extremely detrimental to the profession and on behalf of our members and for the good of the profession we have emailed and written to the president of the VCI and the minister for Agriculture asking them to review it as a matter of urgency. We will keep members updated with any developments.

IVNA committee