

**Goddard Veterinary Group
 Gender Pay Gap Report @ April 2020**

What is the gender pay gap?

The gender pay gap shows the difference in the average hourly rate of pay between females and males in an organisation, expressed as a percentage of the average male earnings. We have followed the calculation methodology set out by the Government Equalities Office to report our mean and median gender pay gap, bonus gap, and distribution across pay quartiles.

A gender pay gap can be driven by a number of factors including a lack of females in senior positions or just as importantly by a lack of males in more junior positions.

It is important to note that this is different to the issue of equal pay – namely the legal requirement to pay males and females the same for equal work – which is governed by the Equality Act 2010.

Headline gender pay figures for Goddard Veterinary Group

The tables below show our overall median and mean gender pay and bonus gap based on hourly rates of pay as at the snapshot date of 5 April 2020, and bonuses paid in the year to 5 April 2020. Over the last three years, the mean gap has reduced by 2% to 45% and the median gap has reduced by 3% to 48%.

	<u>2017</u>		<u>2018</u>		<u>2019</u>		<u>2020</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
Mean Gap	47%		46%		46%		45%	
Median Gap	51%		50%		52%		48%	
Pay Quartile	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
Lowest	2%	98%	4%	96%	5%	95%	5%	95%
Second Lowest	4%	96%	4%	96%	3%	97%	5%	95%
Second Highest	17%	83%	14%	86%	12%	88%	19%	81%
Highest	38%	62%	34%	66%	35%	65%	50%	50%
Bonus Pay		34		-72		148	0	0
Sex of Bonus Pay	12%	3%	10%	10%	7%	8%	n/a	n/a

The number of males in the lowest pay quartile has remained at 5%. There are an equal number of females in the highest quartile and in the second highest quartile there is a substantially higher ratio of 81%.

Understanding the Gap

In the Veterinary Sector females still account for almost 60% of practising vets and 80% of undergraduates yet the national statistic for the GPG in the UK veterinary sector is 36% (source: thevetservice.com).

At GVG, in the lower pay quartile, which mainly comprises Support, Contact Centre and Reception roles, although dominated by female employees, the salary data is impacted by the inclusion of technical maintenance roles which are currently all male. Within the lower middle quartile, which mainly comprises qualified nurses, there is no pay gap between males and females who are remunerated according to their length of seniority and years of experience in the role.

At GVG our gender pay gap as at April 2020 is primarily due to males holding fewer junior nursing positions within the organisation. The major reason for our median GPG reducing to 48% is due an increase in the hiring of female vets and the progress made on our action plan.

Actions to close the Gap

It will be impossible to achieve GPG parity across the organisation while we continue to recruit many more female than male nurses as they are paid less than veterinary surgeons. Our ultimate aim is to reduce the GPG below the industry average and to continue to ensure equal pay, at all levels, supported by initiatives we have either already put in place or plan to roll out over during the next 12 months. We embrace diversity, inclusivity and equality and recognise the benefit and strength of a diverse work force. We are confident that our reward structure is based on qualifications, achievements and performance, but are taking positive action to help reduce the GPG to below the industry average and to ensure females are paid fairly in the context of our organisation, our industry and the wider market.

1. Recruitment and Interviews

We know that the GPG may be linked to disadvantages on intake. We have therefore designed structured processes for recruitment and promotions to eliminate unconscious bias.

- We continue to implement a skills matrix with skills-based assessment tasks to recruit vets, RVNs, SVNs, VCAs and receptionists.
- We continue to evaluate how to anonymise applicant CVs effectively as applicants are applying direct on our website and job boards. This is to eliminate unconscious biases. We are using template interview questions to ensure suitability for a role is assessed using the same criteria for all candidates.
- Shortlists for recruitment and promotions, are now carefully reviewed with the aim of rebalancing the gender ratios and remuneration at all levels within the organisation. (to ensure the gender balance for all pay quartiles reflects the gender balance in our organisation.) Ultimately, we are recruiting the right skills for the right jobs.

2. Pay transparency

It is recognised that the GPG may be linked to reticence on the part of females to negotiate salaries. Promotions, pay and rewards are based on qualifications and performance. All processes are now reviewed to ensure they are fair and transparent.

- We conducted a full job evaluation process to establish a clear salary banding and reward framework.
- We publish salary ranges in job advertisements, which are accessible both internally and externally, to encourage females to confidently undertake salary negotiations based on their skill sets and match to job roles

3. Workplace flexibility

Work life harmony is an essential consideration for every individual. However, when females take lower paying jobs because they are more flexible than higher-paying jobs, or work fewer hours this can lead to lower levels of experience, leaving females behind in the workforce.

- Throughout 2020 we have been reviewing how adjustments to individual workloads can be made without an adverse impact on pay and career progression. We are now able to recruit on flexible working patterns to improve work life balance and accessibility for females.

4. Diversity Management

We recognise that none of our gender balance actions will succeed without the right culture and working environment.

Our 'Commitments' are to our people, our clients, their pets and the business as a whole. For the GVG Board this means that our organisation's business model is geared towards developing a culture which enables value creation and value capture for all of its stakeholders

- Uptake of shared parental leave is encouraged by ensuring prospective parents are proactively provided with information about their pay entitlements and eligibility.
- We are extending a mentorship programme for new colleagues, specifically graduates and those returning from extended career breaks by assigning a mentor from within the organisation.
- We will establish a Diversity and Inclusion task force to maintain a focus on an inclusive culture

Summary

Our plan includes building on the actions we have implemented to date as well as focusing on new initiatives. By ensuring that all of our processes are without bias, specifically focusing on recruitment, pay transparency, workplace flexibility and diversity management, we aim to continue to achieve a year-on-year improvement in the GPG to achieve our objective of being below the industry average.