

### Pru Gardiner (Veterinary Medicine) – Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital, Kentucky, 2015

Over the summer I spent three weeks as an extern at Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital in Kentucky, USA. Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital is a large equine referral centre with over 50 veterinarians. It was opened in 1986 to provide both ambulatory and referral services including advanced imaging, treatments and surgery to the ever increasing horse population in the area. Kentucky is famous for its racing with many internationally renowned races held here, including the Kentucky Breeders' Cup. The equine veterinarians are a central part of this industry and are kept very busy!

During my externship at Rood & Riddle I split my time between the hospital and the ambulatory vets. In the hospital I saw a very large and varied caseload, spending time with all the different departments (medicine, surgery, lameness, reproduction and podiatry), while going out on the road with the ambulatory vets gave me a chance to see some of the farms in the local area. Compared to equine practice in the UK the biggest difference for me was the scale. The hospital itself covers a large site and their specialist equipment and experienced staff allows many routine surgeries to take place each day. Out on the road, at most visits the farm manager would have a substantial list of horses for routine work, check-ups and new cases, and the larger farms would have visits every week.

Overall my time at Rood & Riddle was really interesting as I saw a wide cross-section of equine hospital medicine with many unusual cases which I would not see elsewhere and emergencies which could not be dealt with anywhere but at a referral centre. Watching the veterinary surgeons work through these cases gave me the opportunity to see in practice a large amount of the theory from our lectures and was a fantastic learning opportunity.