

# EXTERNSHIP AT DE MORETTE EQUIN HOSPITAL



Erasmus + trainsheep program





# The hospital

**De Morette Hospital is located about 1 hour from Brussels in Belgium, more precisely in Asse.**

**De Morette offering a wide range of services: surgery, emergency care, internal medicine, orthopedics, neonatology, and medical imaging.**

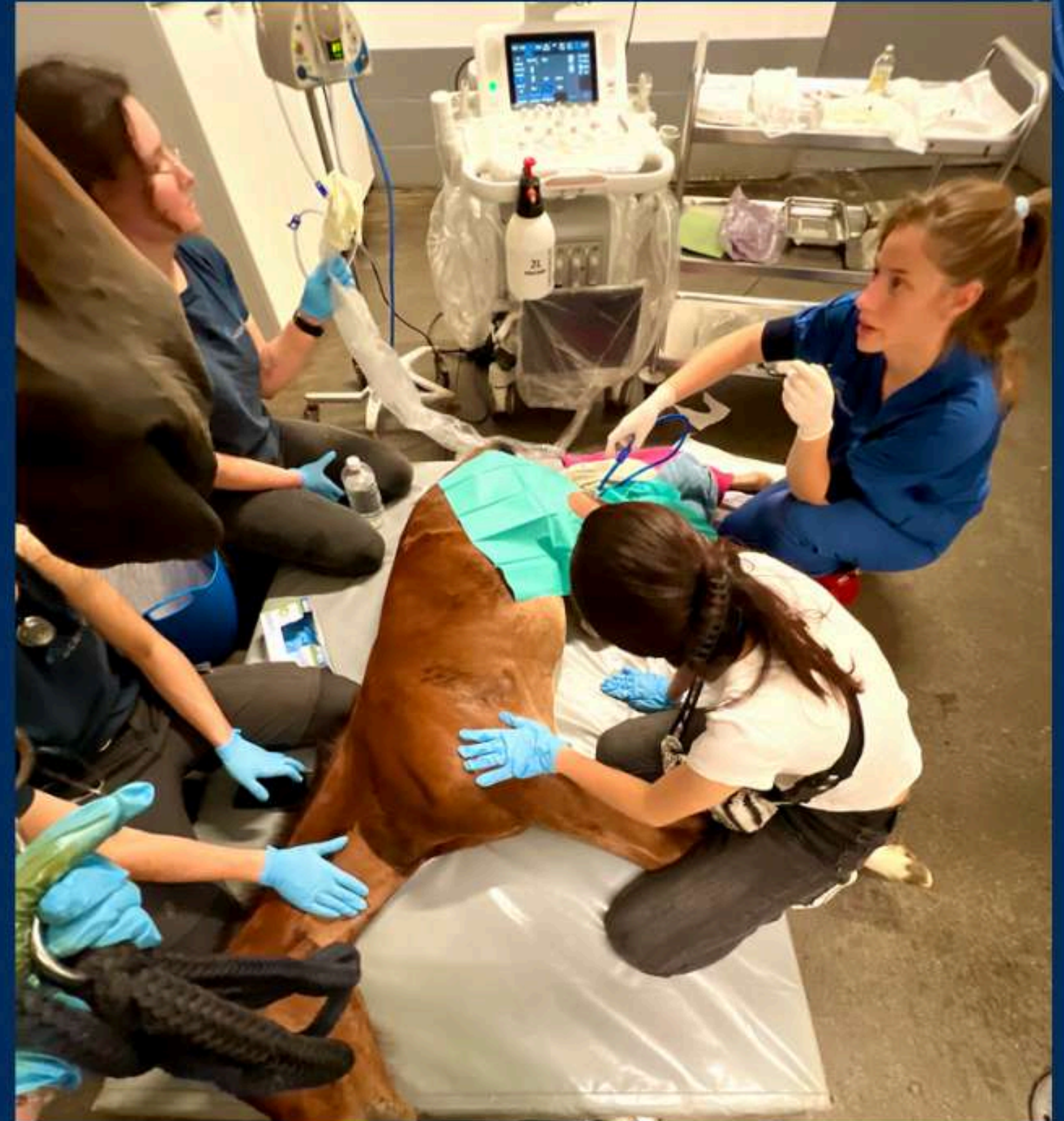
**The team is highly skilled and includes experienced specialists, interns, veterinary assistants.**





# The hospital and the team

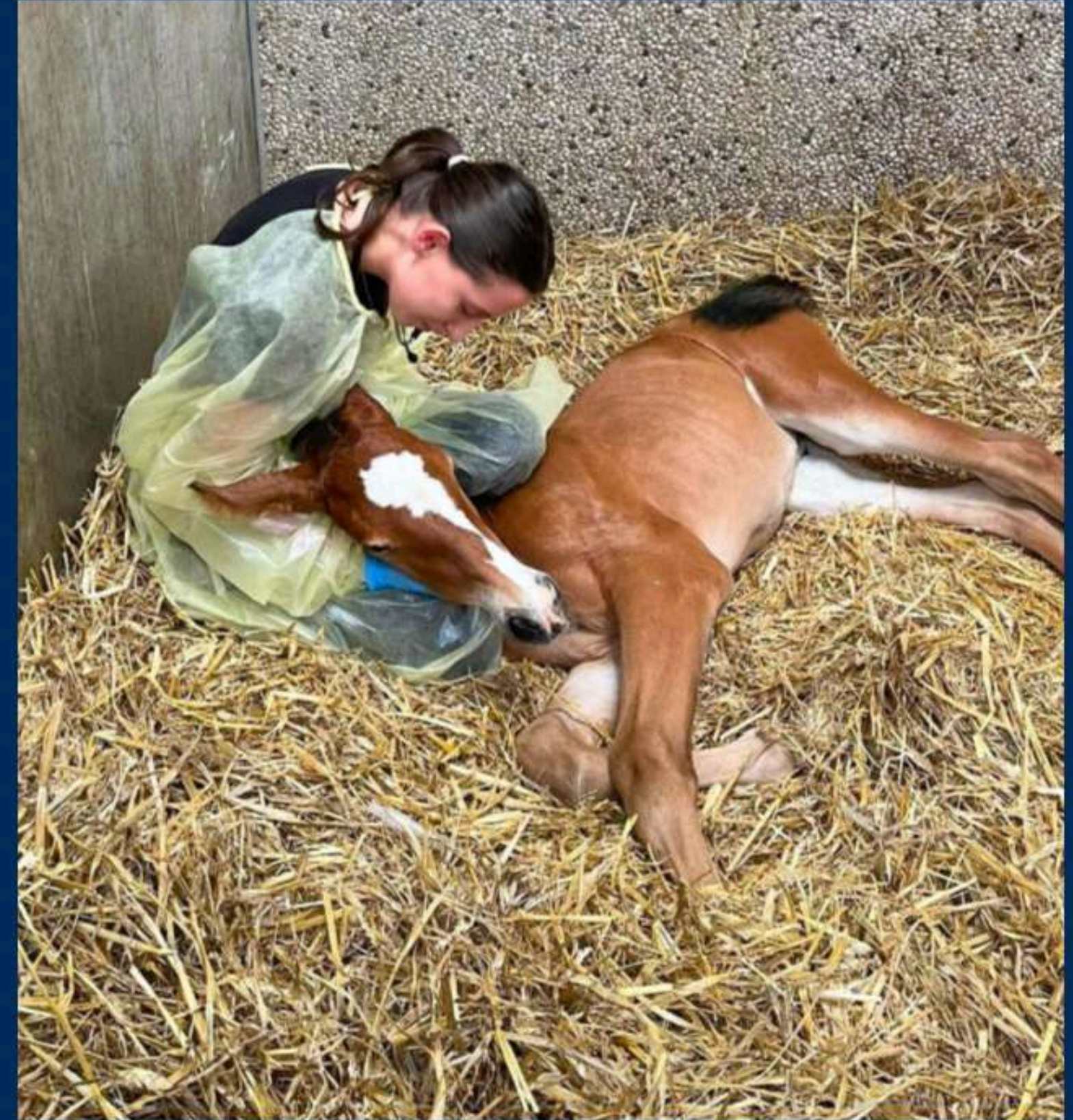
- De Morette Hospital is part of a group called the Equine Care Group, which brings together several equine clinics and hospitals. Locally, the hospital is led by three European Specialists:  
Dr Katrien Palmers, European Specialist in Equine Internal Medicine (ECEIM); Dr Michaël Meulyzer, European Specialist in Equine Surgery and Orthopaedics (ECVS/ACVS); Dr Elke Pollaris, European Specialist in Equine Dentistry (EVDC Eq)
- In addition, there is one resident in each specialty area and several interns.
- The hospital has just over 30 horses hospitalized at a time, including adult horses, foals, and also donkeys
- There are stalls for emergency cases, orthopedic cases, internal medicine, an isolation unit, and a foal unit.





## Extern in De Morette

- As externs, we are required to be present from 7:30 AM until at least 8:00 PM, sometimes even later if there are many patients.
- These are long and intense days, but very rewarding for gaining initial experience in equine medicine.
- In addition to the daily schedule, we must be ready to wake up in the middle of the night in case of emergencies.
- As externs, we are responsible for performing clinical examinations on all patients several times a day.
- We also administer their medications and assist the interns with tasks such as bandaging, X-rays, ultrasounds, and more.
- If the interns do not need assistance, we are allowed to observe consultations and surgeries with the specialist veterinarians.





## A day as an extern

- The day starts at 7:30 AM with clinical examinations of the patients (heart rate, respiratory rate, temperature, borborygmi, etc.). Then we administer the medications.
- Once that is done, we begin the rounds with the specialist veterinarians, we update the cases and present any new patients to pass on information from the night shift to the daytime team.
- There is a surgical round and an internal medicine round.
- The rest of the day can vary a lot depending on the cases. Sometimes we go to surgery, take care of hospitalized patients, or assist with many consultations.
- Some days are filled with emergencies, which can make things very hectic.
- The day usually ends around 8:00 PM with the evening round (clinical exams and medications).
- However, we always have to be ready for emergencies — whether at 10:00 PM or even at 4:00 AM... ;)





# Surgery

- The hospital performs numerous surgeries carried out by the European specialist in equine surgery and orthopedics, Michael Meulyzer, and the resident, Ines Claeys.
- During my time there, I had the chance to observe all types of surgeries from simple castrations to complex colic surgeries such as colon torsion, displacements, and impactions.
- Orthopedic surgeries were also common, including fracture repair and wound management.



- I was also able to observe other procedures, including the removal of sarcoids, masses in the hoof, and even arterial embolization.
- There are many surgical cases, ranging from basic procedures to more complex and rare interventions !





# Internal medicine and Orthopedics

In internal medicine:

- The main cases are colics. Most of the time, we perform an ultrasound and a rectal palpation. In severe cases, surgery is required and it can easily last up to 4 hours.

## Orthopedics:

There are many lameness cases, including laminitis, ligament tears, fractures, joint infections, and severed tendons. There is a wide variety of cases.

As externs most of the time, we can observe the consultations, which always begin with an examination of the patient at the walk, trot, and canter in order to evaluate the lameness.

- Other conditions that I was able to see during my externship were hypolipidemia, neonatal isoerythrolysis, and jaundice :)



# Neonatology

The hospital welcomes many foals with their mares, especially from April to early July.



It was a great opportunity to gain a experiences with foals and to learn more about their behavior, common diseases, and the proper care adapted to newborns.

I had the opportunity to observe plasma and blood transfusions in foals, as well as cases of septic arthritis and umbilical infections, which are quite common in foals.

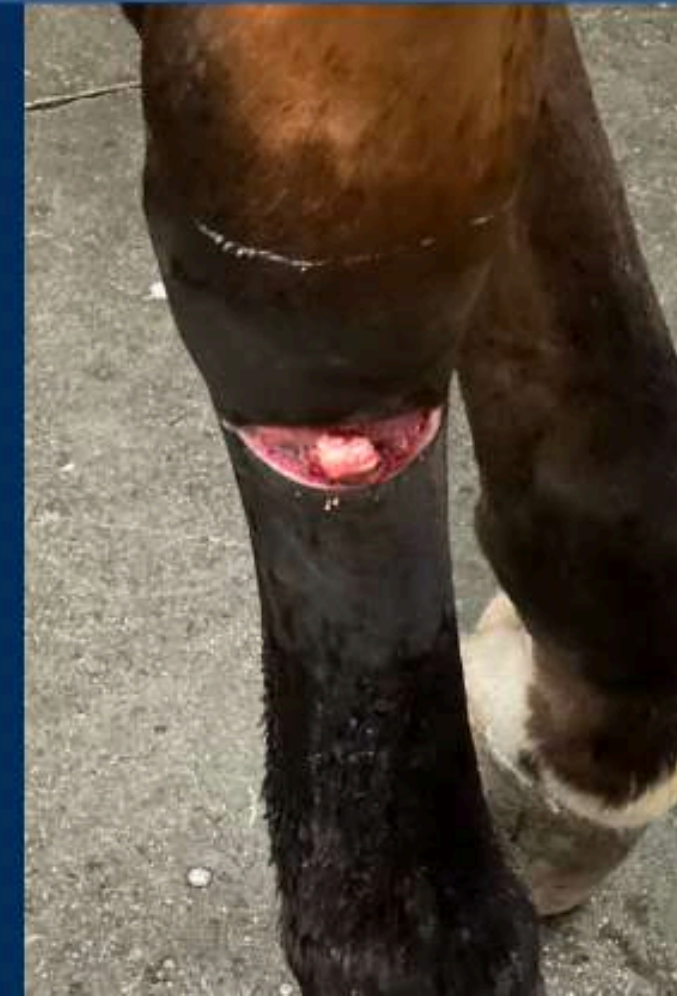




# My personal experience

Externs are accepted for a maximum of two weeks, which may seem short, but given the intensity of the days, it is more than enough for a first experience. I had the opportunity to observe numerous cases in all fields and to learn from some of the best equine veterinarians in Belgium. In addition, I was lucky enough to perform an ultrasound, give intramuscular injections, learn how to apply bandages, place catheters, put horses on fluids, assist with pre-surgical induction, and be involved in the post-surgery care process.

It was a truly enriching and rewarding experience. I was able to discover a completely different side of the equine world ; one we don't usually see in regular practice ( clinic vs hospital ). I would highly recommend this externship to anyone who is passionate about equine medicine and willing to work hard. 😊







**To conclude, it's a very good place to gain practical experience and discover equine medicine. However, long days, night shifts, and working under pressure with high expectations from the hospital are also part of the experience and of the job :)**





Thank you to De Morette  
Hospital and the team for this  
great externship, and thank  
you to my university for the  
opportunity !



Charlotte de Barrau

