The Dick Vet Peer Support Programme
School and Discipline Context

• Professional programme leading to BVM&S degree
• From session 2011-12, school on one site 7 miles from City centre
• ~750 undergraduate students
  – 5 year undergraduate
  – 4 year graduate entry (GEP)
• Cohorts merge after year 2 of the 5 year or year 1 of the GEP
• Research has shown high rates of depression, anxiety and mental health issues in veterinary students generally
Background research

• Ran several student focus groups and surveyed all students

• Strong demand for more formalised Peer Support

• What ‘type’ of Peer Support?
Peer Support in the UK

• Mostly Peer-Assisted Learning
• Oxford University created a pastoral peer support programme
• Based on Gold Standard Peer Support models from US Universities
• Over 350 Peer Supporters now trained and available at Oxford
• Liverpool Vet School finishing off 3-year pilot

- Developed in recognition of the “essential role students play in supporting one another”
- 30-hour intensive training course in communication, listening, empathy and referral skills
Our Pilot Peer Support Programme:

- Open recruitment October 2012, to all years except 1st
- 31 volunteers signed up for Training
- 18-hour weekend of training (16, 17, 18 November 2012)
- 2 further Training Sessions in January
  - including optional 3-hour SafeTalk (suicide education course)
The Dick Vet PSP Launch: 12 February, 2013

• Launched Programme last week with information stand for National Eating Disorder Awareness Week

• Peer Support Drop-in Sessions begin Thursday this week:

2 Peer Supporters will now be available every Tues and Thurs, 12-2