

# Practices alerted as fake vet faces prison

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A man with no qualifications worked as a vet in a Somerset practice for almost two years, it has been revealed.

Patrick Keniry, currently living at Crosslanes, Purton Stoke, Swindon, used the identity of a properly qualified and legitimately registered veterinary surgeon when he applied for a job at Priory Close Veterinary Surgery in February 2015.

This week, the 59-year-old appeared before Taunton Crown Court to admit one charge of fraud and one of practising as a registered veterinary surgeon when he was not qualified.

The court also heard he has convictions dating back to 1986 in his native South Africa for fraud and impersonating a veterinary surgeon.

In the past, he has managed to gain employment in large and small animal practices across the UK, and worked as a vet at a greyhound track.

Prosecuting, Neil Treharne, told the court an investigation had been carried out by the Royal College of Veterinary

Surgeons on May 2 this year. Keniry had assumed the identity of a fully qualified vet when he started working for the surgery after a short trial period.

"He was originally employed as a locum, and he seemed to do well at the practice," Mr Treharne said.

"Staff said that at times he seemed a little rusty, but he said it was because he had been practising in Australia."

The court heard a cat under

**'He is well known to the college and to the police'**

Michael Hepper

Keniry's care had died on the operating table.

"When it came to light that Keniry was not who he said he was, staff were surprised and shocked," he said.

The court also heard Keniry had been paid over £40,000 in wages and had been living free of charge in a flat, making the value of his fraud a little under £50,000.

"When Keniry was arrested,

he was taken into custody and offered no comment," he said.

Mr Keniry – who appeared unrepresented – had wanted to be sentenced this week, but the hearing was adjourned until October 17.

He handed a letter to the judge which he said explained the reason for his offending.

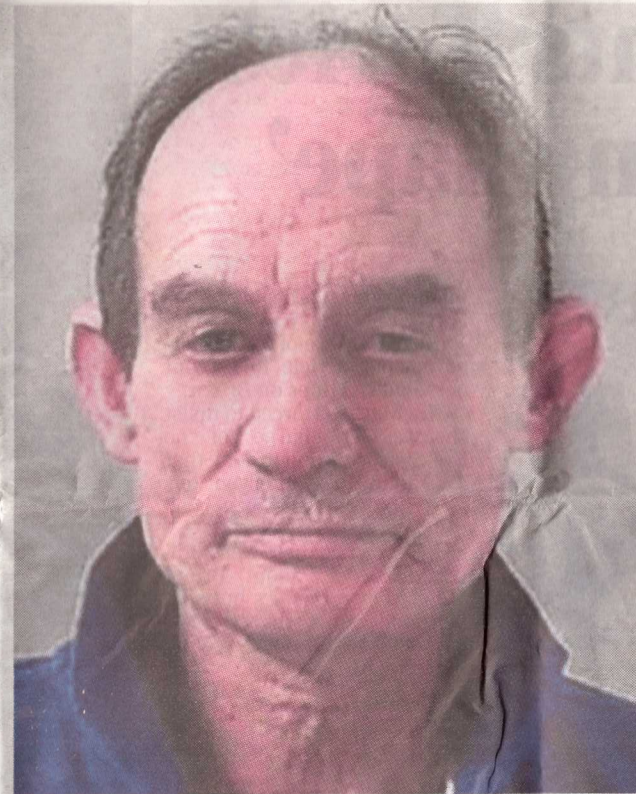
Judge David Evans told him to get his affairs in order, adding: "It is inevitable you will be sent to prison."

Keniry was released on unconditional bail until the sentencing.

Keniry has convictions dating back to 1986 in South Africa for fraud and impersonating a veterinary surgeon. In the past, he has managed to gain employment in large and small animal practices and greyhound racing. He is known to have ties in Norfolk, Swindon, Somerset and possibly Cornwall.

Although Keniry is likely to be jailed, vets in the West Country are still being warned not to employ him in case he later seeks employment in the field.

Michael Hepper, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons' (RCVS) chief investi-



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ator, has worked with several police forces in order to bring Mr Keniry to justice.

He said: "Keniry's modus operandi is to steal the identity of properly registered members to obtain work as a veterinary surgeon.

"As he impersonates members of the RCVS whose names are legitimately on the register, this can make it ex-

tremely difficult, even for practices that do check prospective employees credentials, to identify him.

"He is well known to the college and to the police having been convicted in 1998, 2001, 2005 and 2011 and has served custodial sentences for practising as a veterinary surgeon and fraud. We suspect that he will continue to reoffend."

## Cooling babies 'helps reduce epilepsy risk'

Cooling newborns starved of oxygen at birth reduces the risk of epilepsy later on in childhood, a new British study found.

It also reduces the number and severity of cerebral palsy and slashed by half the numbers who suffer poor health outcomes such as death and disability.

Babies who suffer perinatal asphyxia reduces may develop permanent brain injury resulting in cerebral palsy or other conditions, like epilepsy.

Up to three in ten would develop epilepsy and many need regular antiepileptic treatment affecting their cognitive performance, life quality and life expectancy.

But therapeutic hypothermia may provide the answer, scientists at the University of Bristol said.

The study followed 165 infants born in the South West and who received cooling therapy at St Michael's Hospital, Bristol, part of University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust over eight years.

It found babies born after 2007 who received the treatment had much less epilepsy than before the cooling treatment was introduced.

The study was published in the journal *Epilepsia*.