**Objectives**

To determine:

1. Communication characteristics between veterinarians and dairy farmers
2. The effect of communication training on
   a) Communication skills in veterinarians
   b) Farmers satisfaction with/adherence to veterinary advice
   c) Herd health parameters

**Background**

- Diseases reduce cattle health and welfare → production losses
- Veterinarians: key information source in disease prevention and treatment, but room for improvement in communication skills
- Well-developed communication skills ↑ farmer satisfaction ↑ adherence to veterinary advice → ↑ herd health
- No longitudinal studies have assessed the effectiveness of communication training on communication competencies and farm consultancy

**Materials and methods**

Motivational interviewing (MI) is a communication methodology promoting internal motivation of clients to change, analyzed with the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity (MITI) code. Veterinarians can use MI to facilitate farmers in implementation of best practices.

**Predicted outcomes**

- Enhanced communication skills of veterinarians
- Raised standards of veterinary herd health advice
- Improved farmer satisfaction and herd health
- VDT: a cost-effective and safe learning environment
- Guidance in improvement of existing and development of future communication skills training