INTERNATIONAL
GROOMING SOCIETY

GLOBAL GROOMER HEALTH INITIATIVE

Protecting the people who care for animals



Institutional Overview 2026–2030

Overview • Achievements 2025–2026 • Current projects • Outlook 2027–2030

International Grooming Society (IGS) | www.internationalgroomingsociety.org

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FROM EVIDENCE TO PREVENTION.
FROM PREVENTION TO SUSTAINABLE CAREERS.

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Reference document | 12 November 2026

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International non-profit association
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01 — GGHI at a glance

The Global Groomer Health Initiative (GGHI) is the International Grooming Society (IGS)'s international research, prevention and awareness programme dedicated to the health of professional groomers. It grew out of an international study conducted in 2025–2026 with approximately 4,000 professionals and is designed as a long-term initiative extending at least through 2030.

Its approach is straightforward: document real working conditions, identify risks and turn findings into resources that can be used in grooming salons, training centres, businesses and professional networks. GGHI is neither a one-off survey nor a single annual event. Its aim is to establish a lasting culture of prevention across the industry.

STARTING POINT	LONG-TERM DIRECTION
An international baseline study	A recurring system for monitoring risks and professional needs
An international conference delivered in October 2026	Practical tools, education and discussions throughout the year
A professional network with international contacts	Multilingual, independent dissemination open to the profession

02 — Why this initiative matters

Professional grooming involves repeated physical exertion, sustained postures, animal handling, exposure to noise, particles and products, and substantial interpersonal and emotional demands. These factors may affect groomers' health, their ability to remain in business, their quality of working life and, indirectly, the conditions in which animals are cared for.

GGHI promotes a constructive, non-judgemental approach: understanding risks, offering realistic choices, supporting change and encouraging shared responsibility among groomers, employers, training providers, experts, equipment suppliers and manufacturers.

03 — The evidence behind the action

The 2025–2026 GGHI international survey is based on self-reported responses. It describes professional experiences and perceptions; it is not a clinical assessment, a statistically representative sample of all groomers or proof of cause and effect.

SELF-REPORTED INDICATOR	RESULT
Back pain	79% of respondents
Joint or muscle pain	84%
No hearing protection when using noisy equipment	65%
Hearing difficulties developing during their career	39%
Respiratory problems arising since entering the profession	22%
Skin conditions affecting the hands	31%
Hair splinters	87%
Work-related mental or emotional difficulties	78%

These findings help set educational priorities and open dialogue with the wider industry. They will need to be developed further through subsequent monitoring cycles, methodological analysis and specialist input.

04 — Six complementary pillars

PILLAR	CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE RESPONSES
1. Physical and musculoskeletal health	Back, joints, wrists and fatigue; biomechanics, ergonomics, safe movement and workstation organisation.

2. Respiratory, eye and skin exposure	Dust, hair, aerosols, products and irritation; ventilation, protection and adapted working practices.
3. Noise and hearing	Dryers, high-velocity dryers and barking; reducing exposure and protecting hearing.
4. Injuries, accidents and biological risks	Bites, scratches, tools, slips and zoonoses; prevention, safe handling and post-incident procedures.
5. Mental health and emotional demands	Stress, overload, isolation and burnout; professional boundaries, support and recovery.
6. Specific circumstances and vulnerable periods	Pregnancy, early career, nutrition, hydration, heat and cumulative exposure.

05 — What has been achieved (2025–2026)

- **International baseline study —** approximately 4,000 responses collected and analysed across pain, exposure, injuries, sensory health, mental health and career longevity, with a public summary made available.
- **Initial awareness campaigns —** international communication on occupational risks and the need to move from awareness of problems towards practical solutions; the 2026 health campaign has concluded.
- **Global Groomer Health Online Conference —** a two-day international online event held on 25–26 October 2026, addressing ergonomics, back health, hearing, respiratory concerns, pregnancy, nutrition, emotional well-being and client relationships, among other topics. Replays and participation certificates extend the event's reach.
- **First educational resources —** hearing health and groomer biomechanics courses incorporated into the IGS learning offer, with progressive links to continuing professional development and PDC points.
- **GGHI podcast —** launch of a series exploring and explaining the study's findings, including episodes on the realities of grooming work and occupational injuries.
- **International outreach and representation —** a presentation on groomer occupational health in Zagreb on 12 September 2026, together with discussions with industry stakeholders at Interzoo, SUPERZOO and Groomania.
- **Early collaboration structures —** relationships established with associations, speakers, specialist media, brands and experts. Partner contributions are governed by principles of independence and transparency.

06 — Projects underway as of November 2026

- **International survey, "What do groomers expect from cosmetic brands?" —** open until 31 December 2026. It explores performance, safety, transparency, education, ergonomics, health and innovation to inform relevant recommendations for the professional grooming cosmetics industry.
- **Conference follow-through —** progressive release of session replays, wider circulation of speakers' contributions through partners, and translation of discussions into practical resource and training ideas.
- **IGS expert network —** development of thematic collaborations, including Noreen MacMahon (musculoskeletal health and ergonomics), alongside expertise in feline handling and holistic approaches. GGHI contributions will be guided by each specialist's area of expertise.
- **Resource hub and dissemination materials —** the GGHI website is already accessible and is being progressively expanded with factsheets, guides, checklists, prevention resources, materials for schools and businesses, and partner communication tools.
- **Preparation for 2027 —** consolidating data, formalising priorities, seeking partners and funding, planning recurring follow-up monitoring and preparing the next international activities.

07 — The 2027 roadmap: scaling up

The following programme reflects the development goals set out in the WPA proposal and IGS preparatory work. All dates are indicative; implementation will depend on available resources and the involvement of experts and partners.

PERIOD	PRIORITY ACTIONS

January–March	Consolidate the work programme; formalise the expert network; launch the proposed first annual awareness campaign on noise and hearing health; begin recurring data monitoring.
February–June	Analyse and publish a Global Groomer Health Report; define priority prevention messages and the process for their technical review.
March–September	Produce an initial range of guides, checklists, short videos and practical learning modules; develop the digital resource hub.
May–October	Create dissemination toolkits for schools, associations, salons, events and businesses; adapt priority materials into multiple languages.
June–November	Organise a new international GGHI conference, a dedicated Industry Roundtable and at least two follow-up “Afters” sessions, subject to resources.
Throughout 2027	Deliver awareness initiatives, consultations and partnerships; represent GGHI at industry events; monitor outcomes and publish progress updates.

08 — Beyond 2027: momentum through 2028–2030+

By 2030, GGHI aims to become an international reference point for prevention in the grooming profession. Rather than accumulating isolated initiatives, it intends to sustain a coherent cycle: “observe → understand → prevent → educate → evaluate”.

- **Long-term monitoring —** repeat surveys, compare trends cautiously, document emerging risks and adjust priorities each year.
- **Annual thematic campaigns —** following the proposed inaugural 2027 focus on hearing health, select a distinct evidence-informed priority each year through expert review.
- **Health embedded in education —** make groomer health a routine part of initial training, certifications, refresher learning and continuing professional development.
- **Technical dialogue with industry —** bring real-world use conditions to manufacturers of products, tools and equipment, including formulation, noise, aerosols, ergonomics, ventilation and user information.
- **International accessibility —** strengthen dissemination through IGS Chapters, associations and schools, broaden language access and support local adaptation of materials.
- **Connections with research —** develop dialogue with occupational health professionals and research teams to strengthen the quality of future studies.

09 — Proposed success indicators for 2027

The indicators below are development targets, not outcomes already achieved. They reflect the intended commitments described in the 2027 funding proposal.

AREA	WORKING TARGET
Monitoring	At least one structured follow-up data cycle and a trend analysis.
Publication	One professional Global Groomer Health Report.
Prevention	At least ten digital or downloadable resources.
Events	One conference, one Industry Roundtable and at least two follow-up sessions.
Engagement	At least fifteen organisations or experts engaged in dissemination or dialogue.
Languages	Four additional languages for selected priority resources.
Infrastructure	An expanded resource hub and a member/partner collaboration area.
In-person outreach	An enhanced presence at a major international event, if funded.

10 — Independence, ethics and collaboration

GGHI is led by IGS, an independent non-profit association. Its approach is educational and preventive, grounded in actual working conditions. Support from a brand or partner does not amount to accreditation, certification or endorsement of its products or services.

Survey responses are handled anonymously, and their interpretation must remain independent of commercial interests. Public outputs should clearly distinguish observed data, personal accounts, technical recommendations and hypotheses requiring further validation. Confidentiality, appropriate specialist review and transparency about contributions are essential to the initiative's credibility.

GGHI welcomes groomers, training centres, associations, healthcare professionals, researchers, manufacturers, distributors, businesses, event organisers and media organisations seeking to advance useful and responsible prevention. Core resources are intended to benefit the wider profession, not only IGS members.

11 — How to get involved and contact us

There are many ways to contribute to GGHI: share a survey, highlight a frontline need, host a presentation, provide independent expertise, distribute prevention resources, take part in industry discussions or help fund a specific part of the programme.

WHO CAN CONTRIBUTE?	PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTIONS
Groomers and salons	Respond to studies, identify needs, test the clarity and usefulness of materials, and share prevention tools.
Schools, associations and Chapters	Distribute surveys and guides, incorporate resources into training, and organise local discussions.
Experts and health professionals	Review and improve resources, contribute to webinars, propose research directions and relevant tools.
Companies and industry stakeholders	Help improve products and equipment, support dissemination and join technical dialogue without influencing study conclusions.

Clear principles for collaboration

Every contribution is defined by its purpose, responsibilities and compatibility with IGS principles. Participation in GGHI does not confer automatic commercial approval. The programme prioritises contributions that improve knowledge, prevention and working conditions.

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Explore GGHI | 2026 conference | Cosmetics survey

Sources and interpretation notes

This overview draws on published IGS/GGHI institutional materials and projects underway as of November 2026. Future activities describe planned work, not actions already funded or delivered.

Survey figures: Global Groomer Health Study, international self-report survey conducted in 2025–2026 (approximately 4,000 responses). Percentages refer to respondents to the relevant questions; subgroups and question wording may vary by measure.

PROTECTING GROOMERS ALSO MEANS BUILDING A MORE SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRY.