

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Agriculture and Environment Committee](#)
Subject: FW: Hendra Virus Vaccine Concerns
Date: Saturday, 27 February 2016 2:04:10 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you in regards to the concerns I have with the Hendra Virus vaccine. I have been involved with horses for thirty years. I have owned around 20 horses over those years. In areas bats were known to frequent such as Burpengary and Townsville.

The Hendra Virus Vaccine issues I personally have to deal with are:

1. I have an aged Horse and Pony (both over the age of 25 years old). I am not confident that my aged pony and aged horse would be okay with receiving the Hendra Virus vaccine. My old gelding though now in good health, was gravely ill last year from an infection. Both the horse and pony before I received them, lived poorly for a number of years before they came to live with me. I am not confident they would have a strong enough immunity to within stand the vaccine.
2. If any of my horses have an adverse reaction to the vaccine, it would be very hard to prove it as from what I've witnessed from other horses owners who have gone through this, a lot of vets will dismiss the vaccine as being the cause and the APVMA leave it up to the drug company Zoetis to prove if the vaccine could be the cause. Zoetis is a private company and as it's their own product they naturally have a vested interest. Why would they want to prove their vaccine could cause adverse reactions?
3. If any of my horses have an adverse reaction, I have to pay for treatment and follow up care. My horses' quality of lives are at risk. Whether they die, need to be put to sleep or to have to live with serious health conditions caused by the vaccine. All for a vaccine that was created ultimately to save human lives when only 4 out of 7 infected people have died from the virus in 21 years. Those that caught the virus were not wearing appropriate PPE and if they had, with what is known about the virus today, they very likely wouldn't have caught the virus let alone died from it.
4. Before the vaccine, I had a choice of several equine vets in the area should I need their services. Since the roll out of the Hendra Virus vaccine and the questionable marketing, I now have one vet 35 minutes away (as opposed to the others that were 10-15 minutes away) and one mobile vet that visits the area monthly, so requires booking in.
5. Though not my only concern, it is a valid one. I find the cost of the vaccine expensive. I would have to vaccinate my seven horses. If I was to follow the 6 month booster schedule as advised to by Zoetis and the APVMA it would add up to a large sum of money. I don't scrimp on my horses' care but I have to be realistic, why would I want to spend that large sum of money when I know by using appropriate PPE when my horses present any possible Hendra Virus symptoms and by feeding and watering them under cover or at least way from trees, reduces the chances of my horses or humans catching Hendra Virus greatly to the point of extremely unlikely?

6. I am feel there hasn't been enough study done on the transmission of the virus nor on the actual vaccine. Though the vaccine is no longer under special permit since it was registered last August, I feel like our horses are still being used as guinea pigs.
7. How am I to trust the professionalism of a vet when I see some vets are now using false claims to get clients to vaccinate their horses (such as saying they can't treat unvaccinated horses due to Workplace Health and Safety Laws)? I feel like many vets are now blackmailing many clients into vaccinating their horses by informing them they will not treat their horses unless they do so. One of my former vets that I used, posted a letter on his facebook page stating this, as have other vets throughout Qld.
8. Vets are being encouraged to push the vaccine or discourage treatment by people in influential positions such as [REDACTED]. Yet [REDACTED] still treats unvaccinated horses at his [REDACTED]. I find it appalling as he is still making a regular income from unvaccinated horses yet some of the vets his has advised, no longer are.
9. I have been running a Hendra Virus facebook group since before the vaccine came out (Hendra Virus Not Restricted to Qld) with Cindy Medway. I actually created the group to assist Cindy as she had been bringing awareness to the disease for years, through forums and her own website. She's very knowledgeable on the subject. Since the vaccine has come out, I have had private messages from people that have had negative experiences with their vets, Zoetis Hendra Information nights providing false information and horses suffering adverse reactions. I can only encourage these people to speak out as what they've told me has been in confidence. I find it all so disheartening and can understand why some horse owners are now getting out of horses due to the whole Hendra Virus vaccine debacle. I worry for the future, of what may become of the horse market, Equestrian businesses and lifestyle all due to what's unfolded since the Hendra Virus vaccine was released.

Regards,

Simone McArdle
Oakhurst Qld