

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you to inform you of my Hendra Vaccine situation involving my mare Bella, which gained a lot of publicity.

- A letter was sent out to horse owners, by [REDACTED] advising that from the 1st September 2015 any horses that have not been vaccinated against Hendra Virus will not be treated.
- In good faith I made arrangements to vaccinate both of my mares together with three other horses from the agistment paddock where my horses are kept.
- It was observed (by more than one owner) that during the vaccination process no gloves were worn nor any type of PPE. In addition to this, the rectal thermometer which was used, was not cleaned nor did it have a disposable cover, and was inserted into the rectum of all five horses with no regard to hygiene. At one stage the thermometer was dropped into a horses feed bucket after being used, and was subsequently used on another horse.
- During this very basic 'health check' I mentioned to the Vet that my horse had recently lost some condition. She had previously been in very good condition. The Vet was not concerned and advised me to "let her fight for her food"
- Ten days after the initial vaccination, my mare became unstable on her hind legs. I called the [REDACTED] (who had administered the vaccine). They attended my mare on Saturday 1st August. They wore full PPE and drew bloods for a Hendra exclusion test. They advised that they would not be able to treat my mare until the results for this test came back which would probably be Tuesday 4th August. They instructed that I was not permitted to go near my mare and that the yard was in Quarantine. My mare was unable to access feed or water and I feared that she would die if left unattended with no water for the next 3 days.
- I believe that as the [REDACTED] had taken bloods, my mare had fundamentally become a Patient of that Clinic, and that they had taken no care or responsibility for her well-being. I also believe, that this constitutes cruelty and neglect on their part. The fact that the Vet had donned full protective clothing on Saturday and yet still denied my suffering (vaccinated) mare any relief or treatment was a shock.
- In desperation, I asked advice from other horse owners via Social Media. I was overwhelmed with offers of assistance and several people came to my aid.

- I feel that this angered the [REDACTED] and future treatment reflected this. In the ensuing days, even though no diagnosis had been made, The Vets advised on a daily basis that I should euthanize.
- The vets returned on Sunday night, due I believe, to the Public exposure and phone calls being made. They were unfriendly to the point of being rude, and after donning full PPE again, offered my mare basic pain relief. At this time, Bella was still managing to stand up and take staggering steps for short periods. She was drinking and eating normally, had no temperature, no discharge and seemed in good spirits.
- On Monday morning, after a sleepless weekend, I called the Vets to enquire as to what time the blood results might be back. I was told that they hadn't been sent away yet. I drove 50km to the Clinic, collected the samples, and took them to the Laboratory myself.... A distance of approximately 180km. The results were back at approximately 18:00 that evening – Negative for Hendra
- Gympie Vets attended Tuesday 4th August 2015 and drew bloods and gave antibiotics (2 large scoops). During the day, Bella was able to stand up and take a few steps. When these blood results came back the following day 5th August, there was no reference to Gympie Vets on the paperwork. These results named Zoetis as the Clinic.
- The fact that Zoetis was named on the laboratory tests was totally against our wishes. By this stage we believed that the vaccine was responsible for Bella's condition. We emphatically asked that all testing be done independently. There are several witnesses to that request.
- I would also like to make a complaint in regard to the insertion of a catheter. The attending Vet struggled to insert the catheter and attempted to do so for an extended period of time. The result was that the vaginal area was bleeding and then the following day was grossly swollen and protruding. I have attached evidentiary photographs. The time difference is 24 hours.



- The initial attendance by [REDACTED] was conducted in an abrasive and offensive manner. I felt that he attended solely because of the media

attention, and was barely civil. He did not personally attend until 11 days later to attend the slinging of my mare. He was uncaring even in this procedure and arrived almost 2 hours after the pre arranged time. Fire and rescue services and crane hire were left waiting. The slinging was attempted for a period amounting to less than 4 minutes, when it was decided to euthanize Bella.

- This entire experience has been distressful to all concerned. The validity of the testing has left me with doubts, due to the involvement of the pharmaceutical company Zoetis..... against my express wishes.
 - I. None of the paperwork, including the Autopsy makes no reference to the mandatory Microchip which was inserted on the day Bella was vaccinated.
 - II. Bella's age was incorrect on the Laboratory Tests and subsequent reports.
 - III. Bella was 'quarantined' by the [REDACTED]. As the DPI were not informed that this was a 'possible' Hendra case, I feel that quarantine was not appropriate and that the Vet had no cause or right to do so. Other agisted horses were able to make contact with Bella over the single strand of wire separating them, and had it in fact been Hendra, other horse owners and horses, and children would have been able to make easy contact. This fact makes me believe that the vet did not in fact believe that it was ever a Hendra case.
- On Tuesday the 18th August a Vet discussing the importance of vaccinations discussed the fact that Bella had Cancer to a classroom at an Agricultural College in the Tablelands. Several of the attendees informed be via Facebook that the diagnosis has been released by Zoetis. I had NOT at this time received the final report, and this new was distressing, as well as the fact that Zoetis had been informed of this prior to MY being notified. What right does Zoetis have to my information ?
- Later that day, another Vet in the Hervey Bay area posted these results on Facebook. Again, without my consent and without my having been informed of the results. This Vet removed the Post after a complaint was made, but again they confirmed that they had been informed by Zoetis.
- Zoetis had no right to these results, nor did I give my permission for any details to be supplied to Zoetis. In fact, I strongly advised that I wanted Independent out of State testing done.
- When Bella was euthanized, the [REDACTED] advised that if it was proven that the vaccine caused the death of Bella, that Zoetis would pay for the autopsy. I accepted this statement.
- I was extremely surprised, that Zoetis paid for not only the Autopsy of my mare Bella, but also the transportation of the body to the Gatton

University. As the cause of Bella's condition was now reportedly caused by Lymphoma, I find it a strange coincidence that Zoetis have covered these costs.

- I received the results of the mercury testing five weeks after they had the results. I only received them after I'd asked few times for the results. I had paid up front to have them done as I was told it was not included in the autopsy.
- I am now left with a large bill of over \$6000 and after trying to negotiate a more reasonable vet bill and payment plan through my barrister, considering the involvement of Zoetis and the manner my mare and I were treated which has caused considerable stress. They will not negotiate on the bill nor allow a payment plan I can afford so I have since been threatened with court.

I believe that I have been treated disrespectfully and unprofessionally, in an uncaring manner. I believe that my horse Bella was left to suffer in a negligent manner. I also believe the Autopsy was done with an involvement with Zoetis which seems to me to be tainted.

Please feel free to contact me should you require further discussions

Sincerely
Gemma Antrobus

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Cooloola Cove, QLD 4580