

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Agriculture and Environment Committee](#)
Subject: Hendra Virus Inquiry
Date: Saturday, 19 March 2016 8:10:10 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am Kim McPherson, a veterinarian and practice owner of Valley Veterinary Surgery at Walkerston Queensland. In our practice, my partner - Brad Pullen (also a veterinarian), and myself are responsible for 5 other young associate veterinarians and 14 support staff.

Hendra virus is a definite possibility in our area and must be considered with any sick horse. It is a serious frustration that so many horse owners are not vaccinating their horses - mainly due to the fear of reactions, which is simply not a reasonable reason to not vaccinate. The internet is responsible for exaggerating and spreading ridiculous information about bad reactions, and people choose to listen to this instead of protecting their horses and their families and workers.

We are witnessing the plight of poor vets - who are trying to do their job - being placed before the courts to defend their actions when they have been faced with handling the stressful situation of a Hendra case. Due to this situation, many vet surgeries are having to make their own policy to not see unvaccinated horses who are sick. No vet is happy about this decision. It has been forced on us. If the government could support vets and endorse the vaccination of horses against Hendra and support vets who are in the front line dealing with the disease, putting themselves at risk and their families instead of allowing laws leading to them being sued, our work would be a lot easier.

We have to subsidise the cost of the vaccine to try and encourage our clients to vaccinate, in order to protect them and us. The public are unaware that the virus can be infectious in a horse for 3 days before it shows any illness, so no vet is safe unless the horse is vaccinated when they go out to perform routine procedures like rasping teeth.

How many more people must die before vaccination becomes mandatory ??

Politicians like Jim Pearce speak out about vets using "stand over tactics" forcing people to vaccinate - he simply does not have a clue and is not fully informed and should not speak out on a subject he is ignorant on. Jim Pearce is totally irresponsible and understands nothing of the stress that all equine vets in Queensland and New South Wales are going through - vets want to look after horses and treat horses - but now that Hendra virus has appeared - they have to make a risk assessment every time they attend a sick horse. Vaccination against Hendra is the only safe way to move forward against this devastating disease.

Yours sincerely

Kim McPherson B.V.Sc.

Valley Vet Surgery Pty Ltd

[REDACTED]
Walkerston QLD 4751

[REDACTED]