

19<sup>th</sup> April 2016

**Submission – QLD Parliament Hendra Vaccine Inquiry**

I have been working for an Equine Veterinary practice since 2003 and currently have 5 of my own horses.

The Hendra vaccination has been administered to my horses since July 2013 and they are all currently up to date.

Only one of my horses had a slight stiffness after the second vaccination, which resolved within 12 hours. I have had no other adverse reactions with any further vaccinations with any of my horses. An injection site reaction can occur with other vaccinations and penicillin injections. This is not limited to the Hendra vaccination.

In 2009, prior to the vaccine being available, I had a very sick miniature horse which presented with specific symptoms of the Hendra virus. My family and I had spent the week prior handling and hand feeding this horse. The vet came to the property, donned full PPE and drew bloods which were sent for Hendra testing. We had to wait until the following day for results, unable to treat this little horse who suffered immensely and subsequently I had to watch die. My family and I also had the tremendous stress waiting to hear if we had come into contact with the Hendra virus and how it was going to affect us. Fortunately for us, the results did come back negative. If the Hendra vaccine had been available at the time and my horses were vaccinated, we would not have gone through the enormous stress, and our horse would have been treated and/or euthanased without suffering.

In working at an Equine Veterinary practice, we come into daily contact with many horses. Knowing that a horse is Hendra vaccinated gives all the staff peace of mind that we are not put at risk. Admitting any sick horse that has not been Hendra vaccinated can potentially put all our lives at risk. Surely we have the right to choose if we come into contact with these unvaccinated horses.

We have clients that call for visits to unvaccinated sick horses. We have to explain that our Veterinarians have to use full PPE to take bloods which are then sent to BSL for Hendra exclusion. The clients are also told they cannot handle or treat their horses while waiting for results. These results can take up to 24 hours for results (or more if the weekend), depending on the time of day samples are taken, as the laboratory only carries out Hendra testing at 2pm once daily (Mon-Fri).

I know that our practice has vaccinated over 6,000 horses since the release of the Hendra vaccination, including over 30 owned by the practice partners each year. There have been no reactions to any of the practice owned horses and no severe reactions in client owned horses.

I will continue to vaccinate my horses as a responsible horse owner to protect my horses and primarily myself, my family, any other people that may come into contact with my horses.

  
Anna Kettlewell