

Ruth Gough

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Submission - Qld Parliament Hendra Vaccine Inquiry

I own 18 horses and have been vaccinating my horses with the Hendra vaccine since its release. None of my horses have ever experience an adverse reaction at any time. Some of my horses are brood mares and I have vaccinated them whilst they are pregnant and they too have never had any adverse reactions and have gone on to produce beautiful, normal, healthy foals.

I also have a stallion that has never experience an adverse reaction to the Hendra vaccine and it has not affected his fertility.

I currently work in an Equine Veterinary Practice and have been working for the same practice for just over 13 years. The practice has approx 35 horses that are vaccinated and they too have never had any adverse reactions.

Our practice has vaccinated over 6000 horses since the release of the vaccine and I can only recollect 2 of our client's horses that had a moderate case of hives that was resolved by administering antihistamines.

In my current position as an Equine Veterinary Nurse, I am reminded daily of the pending risk of the Hendra virus in the unvaccinated horse. However as a horse owner and being devoted to my horses I am the first person to carelessly run down to my horse if it is ill or off colour without a second thought of the pending risk of the Hendra virus until I have touched it, caught it and put a halter on it, given it a cuddle and then taken its temperature. It is not until I have taken the horses temperature and it gives an alarmingly high reading that I even consider the possibility of Hendra virus, by which case I have already exposed myself to the sick horse and the associated risk. This is the main reason I vaccinate my horses, because I am completely thoughtless in the above described situation because of my devotion and love I have for all of my horses. They are considered a part of my family.

I feel that to vaccinate is not only for the safety of my horse but also for the safety of my life, my family's life and for the life of any one that comes into contact with my horses as human life cannot be replaced.

Many Thanks

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Ruth Gough