

Taylor Snowdon

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Submission- Qld Parliament Hendra Vaccine Inquiry

I am currently employed as a veterinary nurse at Scenic Rim Veterinary Services and prior to this I was employed as a stud hand at Queensland's leading thoroughbred stud, so have spent many years within the horse industry. I have seen many horses administered this vaccine including broodmares with foals at foot, broodmares in foal, foals from four months of age, stallions and horses in work and I have myself never seen an adverse reaction. All of the horses currently residing at the clinic have been vaccinated. They have never had any problems when receiving booster shots or the initial shots.

I enjoy having a peace of mind when coming to work every day that I will not be handling unvaccinated sick horses that potentially could have Hendra which would then expose me to this virus. I believe that if a horse owner has chosen not to vaccinate their horses against Hendra, they are also making the choice that if their horse was to become ill with Hendra symptoms, they would not be able to receive immediate treatment or admission to the clinic. The choice that some horse owners have made to not vaccinate their horses should not impact the health and safety of veterinarians and other staff employed in this industry.

When I was employed in a thoroughbred stud a couple of years ago they had just started to vaccinate all of the horses on the farm, however with around 500 horses on the property at one time and constant moving of horses it took some time to vaccinate all horses. During this process one of the horses that had not been vaccinated yet became very sick with Hendra symptoms. This was a scary experience as all the workers (around 20 people) and all the horses on the property could have been potentially exposed to Hendra as well. It was horrible watching the sick horse suffer, knowing that we couldn't treat the horse or even go close to it. Luckily the results came back Hendra negative, however if it had been positive then it had the potential to shut down the farm and any one of the workers could have also fallen ill with Hendra. This whole situation would have been different if the horse had been vaccinated.

I believe that vaccinating is a choice that should be made for the well being of the horse and any person who then has to come into contact with that horse.



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