



MANLY ROAD VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Hospital Open and staffed 24 hours

Manly West, QLD, 4179.

20th April 2016

For the attention of:

The Agriculture and Environment Committee Hendra Vaccine Enquiry.

Parliament House

George Street

Brisbane

4000, QLD.

Dear Mr Hansen,

I have worked as an equine vet in the state of Queensland for 18 months. During this time I have been vaccinating horses against Hendra virus on a daily basis. I also own a horse and prior to moving him from Melbourne to Brisbane I vaccinated him with the Hendra virus vaccine. He has had the 6 monthly boosters since the initial course and I will never not vaccinate him against this deadly disease. Vaccination allows me to give him the best possible treatment should he become sick. I do not understand why anyone would risk their horse not being able to receive the best available treatment for the sake of a few hundred dollars. My horse is a part of my family and just like my dogs I am responsible for ensuring he is vaccinated against the diseases he can be exposed to. If he shows signs of Hendra I could not forgive myself for any delay in treatment being made available to him. He does experience a mild temperature increase for up to 12 hours after the vaccination, this is mild and I simply put one less rug on him. In fact I have a much worse reaction to my annual Influenza vaccine – it does not mean that I would not have it!

In terms of adverse side effects of this vaccine in patients of mine I have seen the following:

- mild and short in duration (less than 12 hours) increase in body temperature
- mild swelling in the area that the vaccination was given and mild pain in this area.

In the last 6 months under advice from Zoetis I have given any horses that have shown a small reaction in the past a low dose of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory as a one-off and all of these horses have subsequently had no reaction.

I am very grateful that there is a vaccine to protect against Hendra virus and to the practice policy of my place of work. I did not become a vet to risk my life unnecessarily when there is an easy and affordable way to avoid the risk. My fiancée and my parents and friends were very worried when I moved to Queensland with the risk of this disease being so prevalent. I know from speaking with equine vets and equine vet students that this is a concern amongst a lot of us and I fear that soon there will be a shortage of vets willing to work in this state if the Hendra vaccine does not become mandatory. I am fortunate enough to work for a practice that does not pressure me to treat unvaccinated horses, the opposite in fact. On the few occasions I have performed Hendra exclusion tests on unvaccinated horses I have had 1-3 very sleepless nights worrying about whether I have been exposed to the virus.

Being an equine vet is a privilege but I do not want to lose my life to a disease that is preventable.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr Sarah Allen

Associate Equine Veterinarian

Manly Road Veterinary Hospital, Manly West, QLD 4179.