

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Agriculture and Environment Committee](#)
Subject: Extreme Hendra Reaction!
Date: Friday, 22 April 2016 9:53:28 AM

Attention Hendra Inquiry:

I am writing in response to a Facebook request to report incidents of reactions to the Hendra Vaccine.

Back in May 2014 our Riding Pony, Mistwood Park Harry Potter, was given his first Hendra vaccine in order to be able to compete at the Brisbane Eka. We noticed a few weeks later he was not quite himself, lacking energy, but just put it down to lack of fitness. We only managed to do one show before Eka as we didn't feel he was up to it. We didn't think it was related to the vaccine because all vets gave the same response; "never seen a horse have a reaction". We competed at Eka successfully, but within weeks felt we needed to get a chiropractic treatment for Harry as he was beginning to show signs of soreness. When the Chiropractor treated him, his comment was "this horse is so tight, I'm amazed that he worked at all". A week later, at "Horse of the Year" in Cabolture, we had to pull Harry from his classes as he was not able to carry weight on his hind legs. We took him home thinking he needed to be rested for a month or so. This made no difference, his condition was no better.

This is when the vet treatments started. The first vet diagnosed Stifle Lock, even though we had never seen his Stifles lock! He was given a course of steroid treatment, and we were told to keep working him. After one month & no improvement we decided to take him to a vet in Brisbane who we felt would be more thorough. After a number of ex-rays that all proved to be normal he suggested that we give him a longer course of steroids & continue to work him. He also noticed that his ligaments in his lower legs were a little inflamed, but only suggested that we ice them after working, which we did.

Harry was then given his yearly Hendra vaccination in August 2015.

We started to notice that Harry was getting watery eyes, and was showing a lot of discomfort in the stable each time he stood up after lying down. He was very stiff and would take a little time before he could actually start walking around. By this time we were getting very concerned because none of the prescribed treatments were doing anything to help our pony. In fact he was getting worse. We tried another local vet, the first to actually give any real help! He diagnosed Harry with a hind gut Ulcer, and also said that he felt it was nothing like Stifle Lock. He also suggested taking him to a highly respected Physio to try to get him some help with the stiffness. We started treating his ulcer and immediately the watery eyes cleared up, this had been a pain response! We also took him to the Physio, which was a 3 hour round trip in the float. The Physio to one look at him and said he has blown all 4 annular ligaments and would most likely need to be operated on! He said these cases were only usually seen in stallions and older dressage horse who put a lot of pressure on their hind legs, and not in all 4 legs of a pony that is ridden by a child maybe 3 times a week! He recommended having his legs ultra-sounded. To have this done we needed to take him out to Gatton UQ Vet Hospital.

This trip was organised for the following week. On arrival Harry was assessed and ultra

sounds taken on all 4 legs. He was diagnosed with Desmitis of the palmar/plantar annular ligaments. He was booked in for surgery on the following Tuesday, requiring him to stay at the hospital for 4 days. When we returned to see him on the day before surgery we were asked to have a look at him to see if we had ever seen him "walk out like this". He was completely lame, an no, we had never seen him unable to walk. He had been stabled for 4 days on cardboard clippings and a hard floor. This was ridiculous considering the state he was already in.

Now we had to have ex-rays done, and blood tests, and glucose tests. All which showed he had now developed laminitis and Equine Metabolic Syndrome, bought on by stress. Even the Vets noted that he was not over weight, a factor that can lead to laminitis, infact they felt he was in excellent condition.

This now led to the surgery being postponed for another 4 weeks to allow the laminitis to settle down. This meant another 4 hour trip in the float, 1 month of being stabled 24/7, and sedation to even get him on the float as travelling was so painful for him.

Four weeks later we returned for surgery, laminitis under control. Due to the risk of a laminitic horse having surgery, it was decided that only the hind legs would be operated on. Given that recovery could take months, we felt that the rest could allow the front legs to heal on their own.

So here we are 7 months latter with a pony that will never see the show ring again and will possibly never be ridden again. He is stabled every night and let into a small yard during the day. He still has pain & swelling in his hind legs post operation. Basically the operation was a failure and he will never get back to normal. We have spent over \$10,000 dollars to try to help this little man and he still has is in pain and suffering. The only option we now have is to have him peacefully laid to rest when he get to the point where he cant cope any more. We are devastated!!!

This is a pony that we bred. He has never lived anywhere else. He has never injured himself. Infact, I don't think we had even had a vet to him prior to his first Hendra vaccination! We still have his mother who is now 24 years old. She was shown for years. Not one sign of laminitis, ligament damage, nothing but good health! When we look at his issues, they all started soon after his first vaccination. It was after the second shot that things got markedly worse. We have spoken to the company who produce the vaccine. They in turn have spoken to all the vets we have dealt with over the past year, but of course they came back to us saying they cant see a link. In fact, some of the vets don't even recall being contacted!!This has been the most traumatic time for our pony and for ourselves. We will never risk vaccinating another of our horses. I hope that there can be something done to regulate this industry. While ever they refuse to look at the adverse reactions there will be no improvement and more horses will suffer.

Thank you for taking an interest in this very important issue.

Regards

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