

May 2, 2016

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WARWICK, QLD 4370

Hendra Virus Vaccine Submission

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a horse owner on the Darling Downs (where Hendra Virus has never been identified) and am writing to you to highlight the terrible situation I was put in last November.

I attended my horses for their morning feed, as usual, and noticed that one was showing signs of mild colic. Aware of the potential severity of colic, and knowing speed was essential, I contacted a vet in Warwick who agreed to attend my horse immediately.

He initially looked at the horse without wearing any PPE at all, agreed with the colic symptoms before taking the horse's temperature (again without PPE). However, on realising the horse did indeed have a temperature, he decided to quarantine my horse for possible Hendra and perform a Hendra Exclusion Test – even though Colic is not a symptom of Hendra. He also informed me that he would not be helping my horse until the Exclusion Test had returned. This was at 9.30am on a Monday. To do this we both had to dress in appropriate PPE. He then happily left my horse with no concern for his welfare and refused to give me any advice on what I could do to help him.

The Hendra Exclusion results (which, of course, were negative) did not come back until 4.30pm the following day and it is only the fact that my horse obviously only had a mild dose of colic that he was not left to die in agony without any veterinary attention or pain relief. Interestingly, I was charged \$100 for the test – I have since found out that the test is free when the vet **actually** believes it could be Hendra – which proves my Vet did not actually believe the case to be Hendra at all, but was willing to refuse my horse assistance anyway.

I have luckily since found a Vet who will attend my un-vaccinated horses as, at this time, my very real concerns over the safety of the vaccination due to a number of adverse reactions I have heard about – especially when I do not even live in a known Hendra area – outweigh any worry I have of my horses actually contracting Hendra Virus.

As a pleasure horse owner I am disgusted that anyone in the Veterinary industry would refuse a horse in pain adequate treatment and am appalled that I, and many others, are effectively being bullied by Vets to subject our horses to a yet untried vaccine or be refused treatment. I trust that this submission is of use to you within your enquiry.

Regards

Dawn Heath