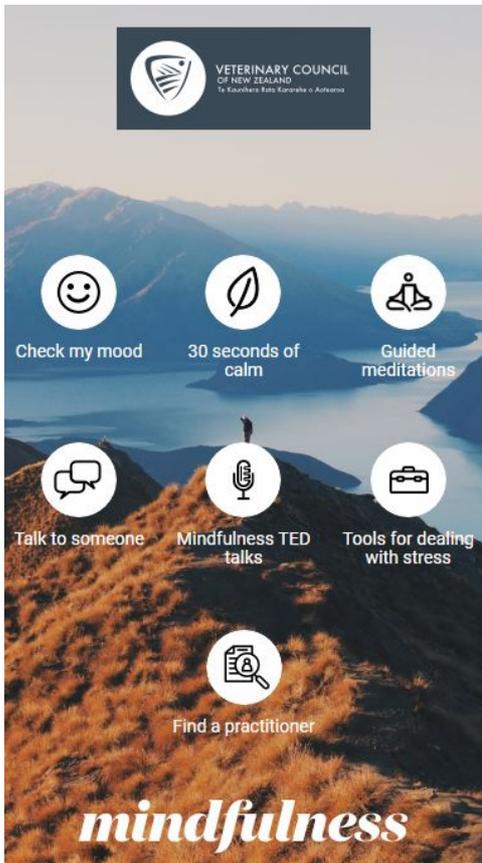




June 2018



Try our new mindfulness app

Veterinary work can be incredibly stressful and it's vital that all veterinarians look after themselves. We've developed a web-app with some useful resources to help focus on your wellbeing. We encourage you to give the app a go - it works best on a smart phone.

You can access it at mindfulapp.vetcouncil.org.nz or use the QR code below.



Vaccination certificates

Two recent complaints to us have highlighted some issues around vaccination booklets.

In both cases breeders presented animals for vaccination shortly before the animals were sold to their new owners. The veterinarians had ticked the boxes for each body system (ears, eyes, nose, heart, lungs, etc) in the vaccination booklets. The booklets were passed on to the new owners.

The animals were both subsequently confirmed to have congenital issues and the new owners complained to us that these issues had not been picked up on or documented despite the animals having a "vet check" shortly before they were sold to them by the breeders.

Both veterinarians told us that they had carried out an examination for the purpose of vaccination, not a full health check. They felt that the booklets they completed only certified that the animals were suitable for vaccination.

The veterinarians' views were at odds with those of the owners. We believe that many members of the public may see the vaccination check as a full health check rather than a check to ascertain whether the animal is immunocompetent. This perception is reinforced by many of the booklets currently in use which use terms like "health check" and encourage owners and veterinarians to enter more information about the animal than just vaccination records.

The complaints assessment committees took no further action in both of these cases but identified some opportunities for learning for both veterinarians.

These cases highlight that there is the potential for differing perceptions of what a vaccination consultation and certification entails. Many members of the public are likely to expect a general health check and may be reinforced in this view if booklets using phrases like "health check" are used. There is the potential for more confusion when breeders are involved, meaning that the veterinarian may not see the owner face to face and the owner will rely on what is written down.

Veterinarians may choose whether to provide a general health check to clients or limit their service to a vaccination consultation only. In light of these recent cases, we recommend that:

- Veterinarians are clear with clients, both verbally and in their documentation, what type of health check they are providing.
 - If an examination is limited to ensuring an animal is suitable for vaccination, it may cause confusion to provide documents that use terms like "health check".
 - Some practice software allows veterinarians to print their own vaccination records and this might allow veterinarians to be more specific about what service they have provided, if necessary.
 - Where veterinarians identify concerns about an animal during a vaccination check, these should be documented both in their history and in any vaccination record given to the client. (we note that some breeders may not want this, in which case veterinarians may choose not to vaccinate). This can be particularly important where the animal is likely to change ownership in the near future.
 - Use caution around what is written in the vaccination booklet - for example, the tick boxes could, sometimes, be taken to suggest a full health check has been done.
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Photo by [Celia Sun](#)

BVD Free New Zealand

BVD Free New Zealand are launching a national campaign to get veterinarians and farmers involved in building the business case for BVD eradication in New Zealand.

From 15 July 2018 to 15 May 2019, BVD Free wants to get as many dairy and beef farmers in New Zealand to register on their website (www.bvdfree.org.nz) and tell them:

1. How BVD currently impacts on their farm; and
2. What control measures would be practical to implement in their herds.

BVD Free will be creating an interactive online tool to make designing and budgeting a BVD management plan with farmers easier than ever. The data will be used to work out costs and benefits of the current voluntary approach to BVD control versus implementing a coordinated national eradication programme. The results will be presented back to the industry in July 2019 so they can decide on the best strategy for New Zealand.

BVD Free requests your help to achieve a better BVD Free future for New Zealand cattle farms:

1. Register on the project website by 15 July 2018 and complete a short survey telling them your thoughts about BVD control as well as your current BVD management recommendations. They are also looking for 10 to 15 veterinarians to pilot the new online BVD tools (contact c.gates@massey.ac.nz if you are interested in participating).

2. Talk to your farmers about getting tested for BVD and registering on the BVD Free website to develop a BVD management plan. BVD Free strongly believes that national eradication will be far more cost effective if the programme can be tailored to individual farms rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach.

At the end of the national campaign, the individual veterinarian and individual veterinary clinic with the most registered farmers will win the title of BVD Free Champions as well as other great prizes. Further details are available on the [project website](#).

Fitness for transport:

Recently, we have dealt with a number of concerns from the Ministry for Primary Industries about veterinarians certifying animals as fit for transport. In dealing with these concerns, it has become clear that it is time to review the standards and guidance that are available for veterinarians when performing this task. This need is reinforced by the [Care and Procedures Regulations](#) that will come into force in October this year.

The NZVA is working on revising their guidelines and we will be contributing to that. We are also preparing a VCNZ statement on how we deal with concerns about transport certification when they are raised with us. We will share this with the profession in the coming months

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