



30 May 2017

Congratulations NZVA!

Saturday 29 April was World Veterinary Day, organised by the World Veterinary Association (WVA) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) to celebrate the work of vets around the world. The theme this year was 'Antimicrobial Resistance – from Awareness to Action'.

The 2017 World Veterinary Day Award recognises the veterinary profession's contributions to the AMR – Awareness to Action theme. NZVA made it to the top three entrants for their work on the 2030 AMR goal. Congratulations NZVA! This is a huge achievement.

[Read more](#) about the international projects, including NZVA's work and the winner, France's Conseil National de l'Ordre des vétérinaires.



SPCA

NZVA and VCNZ are fielding a number of calls from veterinarians about the SPCA's role and responsibilities. We had a preliminary meeting with the SPCA last week. We'll be meeting again in June and will report back after that meeting.

Endorsing products

The Code says that an endorsement or testimonial is a 'public declaration or personal approval by a veterinarian for a product or service'. This is considered a form of advertising, and therefore must comply with the guidelines in the [Professional Integrity](#) section.

If you're giving an endorsement or testimonial, you need to make sure:

- you're a genuine user of the product or service you're endorsing
- you disclose any financial, business or other relationship you have with the seller/supplier
- you can back up any claims you make about a product or service.

If in doubt, refer to [the Code](#) or contact us.

Chlamydia psittaci, equine placentitis and the potential for zoonotic transmission

We recently viewed a report of a case in Australia of an isolation of *C.psittaci* 6BC from the placenta of a recently foaled mare, whose foal was born ill and died after one week. The report highlighted the zoonotic risks of *C.psittaci* and we thought we should bring it to veterinarians' attention.

The isolate of *C.psittaci* 6BC strongly suggested that its original reservoir may have been a native Australian parrot. *C.psittaci* 6BC strains have previously been shown to readily infect and cause serious human disease. This appears to be the first report suggesting that contact with infected horses and/or equine products may be a source of transmission of this pathogen.

C.psittaci is not a new disease and it has been isolated in birds in New Zealand. We have been advised that the diagnosis requires PCR testing of the foetal and placental tissues, which has not been performed routinely in New Zealand and so historically cases will have been undiagnosed.

There are implications for mares that are imported as healthy and then suddenly abort after entry into New Zealand.

This is an important reminder for veterinarians of the importance of implementation of strict hygiene control measures when examining and disposing of an aborted foetus and associated tissues.

This information has been sent to the NZEVP branch of NZVA.

Release of records under the Privacy Act

[Principle 11 of the Privacy Act](#) allows you to release a client's records without their permission if you get a request from an organisation that it is carrying out its business to uphold the law (eg Animal Welfare Inspector, Police, Dog Control Officer). The request must relate a specific investigation or possible contravention of the law. It can't just be a fishing expedition by the officer.

We recommend:

- ask for the request in writing
- the written request should give the reason for the request, the specific information requested, the name and address of the client, and the animal name
- the written request should be kept as part of the client's records.



Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua



VETERINARY COUNCIL
OF NEW ZEALAND
Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri o te Whakahaere o te Whakahaere



Using animal behaviour to determine suffering in companion animals

The SPCA, NZVA, VPIS, VCNZ, MPI, and Animal Welfare Science and Bioethics Centre Massey (AWSBC) are delighted to host Dr Rebecca Ledger, a companion animal behaviour scientist from Canada.

Dr Ledger will be presenting a number of talks throughout the North Island in June 2017.

Dr Ledger has successfully developed a method using animal behaviour to determine suffering in companion animals. She pioneered the forensic use of behavioural evidence to assess animal suffering in cases involving cruelty and neglect. Her technique uses behavioural and physical evidence to determine emotional suffering for animal cruelty prosecutions and she has been an expert witness in legal cases involving dog aggression and animal cruelty.

Using behavioural forensics in cases of animal cruelty and neglect

Unlike the presence of injury, for which there is tangible, physical evidence, suffering is a feeling that an animal experiences mentally. Animals cannot verbally tell us how they are feeling, and hence, the negative emotional states that animals experience when abused and neglected, historically, have gone unpunished in the legal system.

Decades of scientific research into animal welfare now allow the emotional experience of animals to be inferred using behavioural and physiological measures. In order to be credible, this inference needs to be evidence-based and requires a species-specific understanding of how affective states in animals can be assessed.

Dr Ledger has used an evidence-based approach to successfully demonstrate suffering in animal cruelty prosecutions. Cases include the abuse of animal patients by veterinarians, dog trainers, owners and in research facilities.

Rebecca's work recognises the significance of using behavioural signs to demonstrate animal suffering even when no physical evidence is available.

Rebecca will be speaking in Wellington, Auckland, and Palmerston North.

Wellington, 15 June

Rebecca will be presenting two short veterinary specific talks, with opportunity for questions and discussion.

- Using animal behaviour to determine suffering in companion animals
- Update on relevancy of Breed Specific Legislation (aggressive dogs)

Wellington SPCA, 140 Alexandra Road, Mount Victoria

Thursday 15 June, 6.30pm for nibbles and Drinks, talk starts 7pm

[Click here to register](#)

Rebecca will also be speaking at the following events.

Auckland, 12 June, SPCA

Law and Behavioural Forensics Seminar co-presented by Dr Rebecca Ledger and Crown Law. There will be an opportunity for questions and discussion.

Auckland SPCA, 50 Westney Rd, Mangere

Monday 12 June 2017, 9am–5pm, morning and afternoon tea and lunch will be provided

RSVP to sue.baudet@spca.nz

Palmerston North, 14 June, AWSBC Massey University

Dr Ledger will present three sessions.

- How behavioural and physical characteristics of animals can provide credible insights into emotional suffering
- How evidence based on these characteristics can be used to demonstrate such suffering using various successful case studies as examples
- Discussion of how this process has been used successfully in Canadian courts and how it might be applied in New Zealand.

Wednesday 14 June, 1pm–4pm, Ira Cunningham Lecture Theatre, Institute of Veterinary, Animal and Biomedical Sciences, Massey University

RSVP to David Mellor D.J.Mellor@massey.ac.nz

Wellington, 16 June, MPI

Dr Ledger will be presenting a seminar/workshop on using behavioural forensics in cases of animal cruelty and neglect.

Friday 16 June 2017, 10.30am–12.30pm, Ministry for Primary Industries, 25 The Terrace, Wellington

RSVP to animalwelfare@mpi.govt.nz to secure your place. Seating is limited and security clearance needed.

For further information on any of these sessions, please contact the organiser directly at the email address given.