

6<sup>th</sup> September, 2007

## **HEVC INFLUENZA UPDATE**

Dear Client,

No doubt you will all be aware of the current Equine Influenza outbreak in the Hawkesbury area. The virus is spreading rapidly throughout the area, and we no longer feel alone in having horses on the clinic premises testing positive.

Whilst horse to horse transfer is the most rapid form of spread, and initially horse to person to horse transfer had been implicated, most new cases now appear to be airborne, spread by the wind. New cases are appearing as the virus rolls from property to property, and it seems hard to see how any property in an infected area will avoid being hit. Nevertheless, personal hygiene measures when going off an infected property are still vital to minimise spread.

As many of you will have realized, the DPI is quarantining all horse properties within the infected area. This is not to imply that you are infected or not, but is just part of the control procedure.

We are still working in close liaison with the DPI with regard to updates on the spread of the virus and control measures. The practice website ([www.hevc.com.au](http://www.hevc.com.au)) has regular flu updates and the DPI website ([www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au)) is also a good reference point for information about the situation for all who have access to the internet.

There is still a restriction in performing routine veterinary work, and most of our vets are occupied doing flu testing. If you have a horse or horses with a cough, fever or nasal discharge, please ring the office to organize to have them tested. We still have "clean" vets who have not been in contact with infected horses that can attend to emergency calls and work on clean properties and other vets to cover all other forms of emergencies and work.

Our office is still open but we would remind clients from infected properties to change clothes and wash before leaving home.

It is crucial that we all take all available measures to prevent the spread of the virus from the Hawkesbury area.

On a very much more pleasant note we would like to say a fond farewell to Donna Keegan who has decided on a change of direction back to small animals. We will miss her delightful disposition and wish her all the best for the future.

However, it gives us great pleasure to introduce Kristi Goldman, a very experienced equine and alpaca vet who has just returned from England. We look forward to her professional input to our veterinary team.

John & Tony