

# WVA NEWSLETTER – JULY 2021

## A MESSAGE FROM THE WVA PRESIDENT: DR. PATRICIA TURNER



### Preserving Veterinary Access to Lifesaving Antimicrobials

Dear Colleagues,

The ability to responsibly and judiciously prescribe and use antimicrobials to treat specific infections in animals is a critical means by which veterinarians can heal and safeguard the health and welfare of animals in their care, and promote food security. This essential activity is recognized by both the [World Organization for Animal Health \(OIE\)](#) and the [FAO](#), and many veterinary associations around the world have published statements on the necessity of self-monitoring this practice to minimize the development of antimicrobial resistance (see for example the [WVA statement](#) and the joint [AVMA-CVMA-FVE statement](#) on this topic). A potential blow to the continued use of antimicrobials by veterinarians was recently struck by the European Parliament's [Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety](#), which in July, passed a motion to significantly restrict when and how antimicrobials may be used by veterinarians in the 27 Member States as well as which antimicrobials may or may not be used in animals. This motion will be voted upon in September by the European Parliament and could set a dangerous precedent of restricting aspects of veterinary practice if passed. The WVA seeks to support the FVE in their opposition to this resolution and more information will follow regarding whether and how veterinary associations may be able to register their concern.

**Yours respectfully,  
Dr Patricia Turner  
World Veterinary Association, President**

## recognised the contributions of the veterinary profession to protect animal and human health during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

On 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021, the World Veterinary Association (WVA) and HealthforAnimals presented the World Veterinary Day Award to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) to recognise their immediate response to meet the new challenges arising from the emergence of the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Integral to the AVMA's response was the development and implementation of an impressive multi-tiered internal and external communications program anchored by a dedicated online COVID-19 Resource Center that was made available to veterinarians around the world in February 2020—three weeks before the WHO's global pandemic declaration. Read the full press release [HERE](#).



Dr Janet Donlin, AVMA CEO, and Dr Douglas Kratt, AVMA President, accepting the WVD Award on behalf of the AVMA

## OIE and WVA Joint Statement

### Countries must prioritise veterinarian access to COVID-19 vaccines

**The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and WVA unite in encouraging countries to prioritise COVID-19 vaccination access for veterinary professionals.**

On 9<sup>th</sup> July 2021, the OIE and WVA published a joint statement calling on countries to include veterinarians as priority professionals for COVID-19 vaccination within their national strategies and vaccination campaigns. Veterinarians serve the health community by working at the animal-human interface. They need priority access to vaccination services to pursue their work which is central to safeguarding public health. Through the inclusion of veterinarians in priority vaccination access groups, countries support a coordinated One Health response to the COVID-19 crisis. This heightened collaboration between animal and human health professionals is key to overcoming the current pandemic as well as to preventing future outbreaks. Click hereafter to read the full WVA/OIE Joint statement in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#).



**Countries must prioritise veterinarian access to COVID-19 vaccines**

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Veterinary Association (WVA) unite in encouraging countries to prioritise COVID-19 vaccination access for veterinary professionals. Veterinarians serve the health community by working at the animal-human interface. They need priority access to vaccination services in order to pursue their work which is central to safeguarding public health.

**Paris, 9 July 2021** – The COVID-19 pandemic pushed the international community to reconsider how health professionals can address disease emergencies in a more coordinated way. As human health systems throughout the world have strained under ongoing pressure, veterinarians have been offering their skills and expertise to help fight against the pandemic.

This collaboration between animal and human health sectors is a great example of implementation of the One Health approach, as it recognises the need to join forces and capacities on common health objectives shared by both human and animal health sectors. While some veterinarians have supported the testing of human samples, others have provided human health care professionals with life-saving personal protective equipment and respirators. By researching the origins of COVID-19, and conducting passive surveillance of animals, particularly those highly susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 (such as mink and other mustelids), veterinarians have also contributed to the world's understanding of this coronavirus.

In addition to their numerous contributions to the global response to COVID-19, veterinarians have strived to pursue their daily mission to ensure the health and welfare of animals, as well as public health. This multi-faceted profession has played a key role in guaranteeing the continued safety of food production chains, sufficient access to food and the security of traded animals and animal products worldwide since the start of the crisis. Despite this valuable support to the health emergency response and the economy, veterinarians have been excluded from access to priority vaccinations in some countries.

Today, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Veterinary Association (WVA) call on countries to include veterinarians as priority professionals for COVID-19 vaccination within their national strategies and vaccination campaigns. By doing so, countries ensure that their:

- **health emergency workforce is safe**, as veterinarians have the skills and expertise to support national COVID-19 response strategies, including the administration of vaccines to humans and the testing of human samples;
- **food production chains are maintained**, as veterinarians are critical personnel to ensure safe animal production and food safety;
- **national risk management strategies are well-respected**, as veterinarians are in close contact with farmed animal species (such as mink) and other mustelids, or with [equipped species and wildlife](#) which are highly susceptible to SARS-CoV-2. Avoiding the exposure of these animals to SARS-CoV-2 prevents the development of new animal reservoirs and future spillovers of the virus to humans. As a reminder, there is currently no evidence that [companion animals](#), such as cats or dogs, are playing an epidemiological role in the spread of human infections of COVID-19.

Through the inclusion of veterinarians in priority vaccination access groups, countries support a coordinated One Health response to the COVID-19 crisis. This heightened collaboration between animal and human health professionals is key to overcoming the current pandemic as well as to preventing future outbreaks.

**37<sup>th</sup> World Veterinary Association Congress – 29-31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 – Abu Dhabi, UAE**

The WVA is delighted to announce that the 37th World Veterinary Association Congress (WVAC2022) will take place in [Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates on 29 – 31 March 2022](#). Given the continuing uncertainties of the global COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting is being planned to accommodate both in-person and virtual participation. More information regarding the WVAC2022 scientific program and registration will be published soon.



**37<sup>th</sup> WORLD VETERINARY ASSOCIATION CONGRESS** ABU DHABI, UAE  
29 - 31 MARCH 2022  
**الإنسانية . الاستدامة . الابتكار . المستقبل**  
**Humanity . Sustainability . Innovation . Future**

The WVA needs your expertise and opinion in preparing a cohesive global message on our role as veterinarians for the global public good. As Constituent & Observer Members of the WVA, we welcome your input in our discussions! Don't be left out of the process!

**PLEASE FORWARD THIS INFO-NEWS TO YOUR MEMBERS**

If interested in learning more, please contact:

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