

**Supplementary
Submission
No 298a**

**INQUIRY INTO USE OF PRIMATES AND OTHER ANIMALS
IN MEDICAL RESEARCH IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Ms Irene Callahan

Date Received: 13 March 2022

It is generally recognised in western society that sentient animals have rights, although, disappointingly, not so much in the NSW Parliament last year, where they were not given such recognition. In animal experimentation they are subjected to tests that are often painful, or cause permanent damage, or death. This is why animal testing in medical experimentation has been a controversial topic for many generations, throughout the world, and for good reason. The animals used are sentient beings. This means they have the capacity to experience different feelings such as suffering or pleasure. Negative feelings or emotions include pain, fear, boredom, confusion and frustration, whilst positive emotions include contentment, joy, excitement and the ability to form attachments with other animals and humans.

In addition, there is serious debate within the scientific community about the value of information obtained from many animal tests, and about the relevance of various animal 'models' - and this raises doubts about the scientific validity of applying the results from research on animals to humans. Further, there are concerns about the poor quality of much animal research that is conducted.

The issues relating to scientific validity and quality are very worrying. Research that is of little value, poorly designed, or conducted, and badly reported, is a waste of animals' lives, causing suffering that should have been entirely avoidable. Animal experiments like these are neither necessary nor justified. Animals do not get many of the human diseases that people do, such as major types of heart disease, many types of cancer, HIV, Parkinson's disease, or schizophrenia. And no one will forget the tragic debacle that was thalidomide, which caused irreversible damage to the human foetus, and thousands of children were born with severe congenital malformations. Many of them did not survive more than a few days after they were born.

Some people would argue that if we didn't use animals, we'd have to test new drugs on people. The fact is that we already do test new drugs on people. No matter how many tests on animals are undertaken, someone will always be the first human to be tested. Because animal tests are so unreliable, they make those human trials all the more risky. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has noted that 95 percent of all drugs that are shown to be safe and effective in animal tests, fail in human trials, because they don't work or are dangerous. And of the small percentage of drugs approved for human use, half end up being relabelled because of side effects that were not identified in tests on animals.

In conclusion, I believe that animal testing should be eliminated because it violates animals' right and causes them pain and suffering. Today, the world's most forward-thinking scientists are developing and using animal-free methods, that are actually relevant to human health, for studying diseases and testing products. These alternatives to animal testing include sophisticated tests using human cells and tissues (also known as in vitro methods), advanced computer-modelling techniques (often referred to as in silico models), and studies with human volunteers. These and other non-animal methods are not hindered by species differences that make applying animal test results to humans difficult or impossible, and they usually take less time to complete.

Humans cannot justify making life better for themselves by randomly torturing and executing thousands of animals, every year, to perform laboratory experiments or to test products. All animals should be treated with the respect and dignity they deserve, not just companion animals, which appear to be the only ones, currently, that are really protected in NSW law.