

**Submission
No 7**

**INQUIRY INTO VETERINARY WORKFORCE SHORTAGE
IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Dr Kurt Enzinger

Date Received: 19 June 2023

Dear Mr Banasiak,

I am writing to you to express my concern about the deregulation of sedative use in horses and how this will impact the veterinary workforce in Australia. I am a 20y+ graduate having spent the past 17y+ as an equine veterinary surgeon. I currently employ 4 veterinarians within my practice and we conduct approximately 1000 dental examinations and treatments on horses per annum.

There are a few issues that I would like to draw your attention to if I may.

1. Sedation is a large part of our examination in order to make a diagnosis as medical practitioners for our patients.
2. We have completed a tertiary degree to obtain the knowledge and training of our patients and the medications available to sedate and monitor sedation depth throughout a procedure.
3. As medical practitioners we are required to be registered under a governing body (Veterinary practitioners registration board) to ensure codes of conduct and the welfare of our patients are upheld.
4. As medical practitioners, we are required to be covered by professional indemnity and public liability insurance which protects our patients and their owners.
5. Every patient requires assessment before formulating an individual appropriate sedation protocol taking into account physical conditions, their disease status, environmental factors and the pharmacological actions of the medications.
7. As medical practitioners, we have the knowledge and training to respond and treat any abnormal or adverse reactions to medications. Every sedation procedure carries some risk.

If sedative use in horses is deregulated I feel it will have potentially devastating affects on our profession as a whole and the attrition rate of equine veterinarians in Australia. Deregulation of sedatives to allow use by untrained individuals could impact the welfare of Australian horses through

1. inappropriate use of medications (over-dose)
2. potential for serious injury of both horse and handler
3. misuse of medications (use for other procedures)
4. inappropriate dental procedures being performed while under sedation
5. no regulations governing users to protect horses and their owners

In relation to the veterinary profession, I feel this act will firstly, devalue our knowledge and expertise. Additionally, deregulation will place more pressure on our profession having the risk of sedatives being distributed more widely, increased numbers of inappropriate procedures performed by unqualified individuals, undercutting and market competition, the increased stress and focus on horse welfare due to all of these facts which could contribute to our already high attrition rate in Australia.

Please accept this submission for my objection to deregulate sedatives in horses.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kurt Enzinger BSc (Hons) BVSc