

Submission
No 32

INQUIRY INTO VETERINARY WORKFORCE SHORTAGE IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Goulburn Valley Equine Hospital

Date Received: 29 June 2023

Goulburn Valley Equine Hospital is located in Victoria however we feel it is worthwhile contributing to this NSW Parliamentary enquiry as the issue being experienced in NSW by our veterinary colleagues are the same issue being faced by us.

Goulburn Valley Equine Hospital is a specialist equine veterinary practice.

We employ only registerable equine veterinarians.

Sadly, there are not enough Australian veterinarians practicing in the equine field, so it is necessary for us, like all equine practices Australia wide to recruit from overseas.

There are broadly three issues at play:

1. Australian universities with appropriate government support should be financially encouraging Australian students to take to equine practice, particularly in regional practices. Go back to the days of scholarships and bonding the student to several years practice as repayment of the scholarship.
2. The visa conditions imposed by the Australian government are seen as a deterrent for some foreign applicants and Australian practices due to the exorbitant costs and red tape involved. Our practice has had to engage an immigration lawyer due to the complexity of the process. This is an extra cost a struggling practice does not need.
3. Animal welfare is suffering as we do not have enough trained staff to provide a 24 hour a day 7 day a week service.

GVEH is seasonal in nature and during the busy spring and summer breeding season we recruit and employ on average 8 international veterinarians. These veterinarians are vital to our practice remaining open however it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract international staff due to the cost of airfares, the onerous and at times expensive visa process and the onerous vet board registration process.