

## PUBLIC MINUTES

### CONTROLLING ANTIPARASITIC RESISTANCE IN EQUINES RESPONSIBLY (CANTER) CORE STEERING GROUP MEETING

MONDAY 09 OCTOBER 2023 – 13:00-16:30 – VIA ZOOM

#### MINUTES

- CHAIR:** Alison Pyatt
- CONFIRMED:** Jodie Perrett – Secretariat, Alison Glennon, Blaise Scott-Morris, Bryan Lovegrove, Chris Shaw, Claire Shand, David Rendle – part, Esther Rawlinson, Jacqui Matthews, Jeremy Johnson, Julia Shrubbs, Martin Nielsen, Rachel Andrews, Victoria Murrell, Stephen Dawson, Nikki Walshe – part (University College Dublin, Guest Speaker), Caroline Johnson – part (Guest)
- APOLOGIES:** Alice Barnard, Andrew Cairns, Claire Williams, Diane Gilby, Gabrielle Madders, Hillary Cowley, Hilary Glasgow, Jane Hodgkinson, Laura Peachey, Tim Mair, Wendy Talbot

#### 1. Welcome and apologies

Alison Pyatt (AP) opened the meeting and noted apologies from Claire Williams, Jane Hodgkinson, Tim Mair, Wendy Talbot, and Hillary Crowley (Stephen Dawson attended on Hillary's behalf). AP introduced Esther Rawlinson as a new member replacing Alice Barnard as the Boehringer Ingelheim representative and highlighted that Nikki Walshe (University College Dublin) would join the meeting later as a Guest Speaker for [agenda item 5](#).

#### 2. Actions from June 2023 CANTER Core Steering Group meeting

The CANTER Core Steering Group (the "Group") agreed the minutes and discussed the actions from the June 2023 CANTER Core Steering Group meeting.

#### 3. Development of the best practice guidelines (AP)

AP updated the Group on the progress on the development of the CANTER best practice guidelines (BPG). The BPG Group are making good progress to achieve consensus on areas that were identified for further discussion during peer-review. It was noted that there were areas where it has been more challenging to achieve consensus, for example due to limited/absent evidence and current understanding of different diagnostic tools. When the BPG Group was initially set up the process for moving forwards with areas where consensus cannot be achieved within the main BPG Group meetings was outlined (e.g. workshops or Delphi-based process). At the last BPG Group meeting (22 September 2023) this process was discussed in more detail and it was agreed that smaller panel of independent BPG Group members could be convened as a subgroup to discuss areas where consensus could not be reached in the main BPG Group meetings.

AP presented a proposal for the representatives that could be selected for the subgroup. There was general agreement on the representatives that could be selected for the subgroup panel. It was noted that representation may be subject to change depending on the area on discussion.

AP presented a proposal for the process for how the subgroup may be coordinated. There was general agreement for the VMD to coordinate the subgroup panel in cases where consensus cannot be reached in the main BPG meetings.

#### 4. Report on progress of CANTER subgroup activities

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CANTER subgroup leads provided an update on progress to date on activities of established subgroups.

### **a. Research subgroup (AP)**

AP provided an update received from the group in Jane Hodgkinson (JH) and Laura Peachey's (LP) absence. The Research subgroup have yet to have another meeting, but JH/LP will organise one before the end of 2023. There have been active calls for submissions from HBLB, Horse Trust and Defra VMD but not all outcomes are known yet as awards have yet to be made. The Research subgroup will collate the new grant awards at the next meeting and identify if these calls address any of CANTER's research priorities.

AP informed the Group that the VMD recently issued a research call for interest for a qualitative investigation into attitudes, beliefs and practices on the use of equine anthelmintics in the UK. This is an area of research that was identified as a priority for CANTER to inform targeting of responsible use messaging. The VMD will ensure that the VMD and CANTER are integrated into this project and there are potential synergies and opportunities for knowledge exchange with Nikki Walshe's work that she will be providing update on (see [agenda item 5](#)).

Nikki Walshe joined the meeting (see [agenda item 5](#)).

### **b. Diagnostics/monitoring subgroup (JM)**

The Diagnostics/monitoring subgroup have not met since the last Core Steering Group meeting due to focusing resources on progressing the BPG. Jacqui Matthews (JM) and Martin Nielsen (MN) have drafted FEC guidance and are considering how to incorporate the key messages in the FEC guidance into the BPG. JM highlighted that she will be stepping down as the subgroup lead now that she has completed a 2-year term. AP indicated that the VMD will have an internal discussion around the process for replacing subgroup leads and present a proposal to the Core Steering Group at the next meeting.

### **c. Communication subgroup (CSh)**

Claire Shand (CSh) provided an update on the Communication subgroup. Articles raising awareness of CANTER have been published in:

- Equine Quarterly
- Vet Record
- Horse & Rider

CANTER members recorded a podcast for This Business of Horses in July – re-record required due to corrupted file.

CSh presented CPD for AMTRA/Vetpol SQPs at BETA International (September 2023) and provided an overview of CANTER.

The Communication subgroup will start planning the communications to disseminate the BPG towards the end of this year (see [agenda item 6a](#) for more detail on the strategy for communication).

## **5. Equine anthelmintics and best practice in Ireland (Nikki Walshe, University College Dublin)**

Nikki Walshe (University College Dublin) joined the meeting and provided an update on the current information regarding FECs and anthelmintic use in Ireland, the qualitative research

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regarding owner behaviour and the equine parasitology technical working group (TWG) projects. The update and presentation was well received by all.

The overarching aim of the TWG is to provide implementable and practical advice for owners to promote sustainable parasite control methods and veterinary involvement. The TWG are developing a set of guidelines focused on 5 targeted behaviours that were identified during focus groups as the most impactful for behaviour change. The TWG are developing a risk-based framework for vets to facilitate herd assessment and owner-centric goal setting.

There was general discussion around the barriers to sustainable parasite control strategies for horse owners. Julia Shrubbs noted that there were similarities between the Project WORMS survey results and Nikki's experiences with horse owners in Ireland in terms of horse owners engaging in diagnostic testing and treating regardless of the results. AP highlighted that the aim of VMD-funded qualitative PhD research project will be to provide greater insight into attitudinal and complex behavioural themes associated with horse owners' usage of anthelmintics. It was noted that promoting the use of FECs after treatment to check efficacy can often help to engage owners in testing in the first instance.

Nikki Walshe left the meeting and the Group continued with the update from subgroups ([agenda item 4b](#)).

### **6. Future CANTER strategy and activities**

#### **a. Strategy for communication and activities**

The Group discussed the next steps for the communication strategy regarding dissemination of the CANTER Best Practice Guidelines.

AP noted that it would be useful for the Group to provide the VMD with suggestions for where/how the BPG should be disseminated in the first 6 months and associated availability for these activities (events, podcasts, webinars, etc). Using this information, the Communication subgroup can develop a calendar of activities for disseminating the BPG in the first 6 months.

There was discussion around the target audience (prescriber groups and/or horse owners) for disseminating materials and associated funding to achieve this. It was agreed that developing a communication strategy using CANTER's current resources and scaling activities up according to the funds available in the future was the best way forward as discussions around funding will take some time to work through. It was agreed to adopt a pragmatic approach to disseminating the guidelines in terms of event opportunities, however the overarching strategy will be to focus messaging to prescriber groups in the first instance, followed by horse owners.

#### **b. Governance**

AP raised the need for CANTER to decide on an approach to funding that will ensure the Group are able to fund a future model whilst being comfortable with the concerns around conflicts of interest. Martin Nielsen (MN) noted that CANTER's strength is the Group's inclusivity, and this may help to diminish concerns around commerciality, particularly if CANTER is transparent about the funding/sponsorship.

AP proposed for the VMD to have internal discussions to decide the best way forwards for establishing a funding model for CANTER to present a proposed approach to the Group. The Group agreed to have a specific meeting to discuss the VMD's proposed approach and agree a funding model.

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AP informed the Group that the VMD can continue to provide the Chair and Secretariat until September/October 2024 for continuity, due to discussions around governance, structure and funding having been put on hold whilst resources have been focused on delivering the BPG. The Group agreed for the VMD to continue as Chair and Secretariat for the next 12 months. It was noted that at the start of 2024 the Group would need to give focus within these meetings to establish process for governance, structure and funding.

The Group discussed the mechanism for joining/leaving the CANTER group. The Group agreed that if a representative from the Core Steering Group wishes to leave the Group, the representative can nominate an alternative from their organisation. The Group agreed to adopt a pragmatic approach for new organisations joining CANTER with the use of a proforma for individuals to complete for the Group to collectively decide where they would be best placed to contribute to CANTER. It was noted that it would be useful to review CANTER membership at a future meeting to ensure there is sufficient representation across the equine industry (e.g. racing and sport horse sectors).

### **7. Horizon scanning**

New RCVS 'under care' guidance

VMR Consultation

### **8. Other planned activities**

International Equine Infectious Disease Conference (IEIDC) 2024

MN highlighted the International Equine Infectious Disease Conference (IEIDC) 2024 will be held in-person in Normandy, France (30 September – 4 October 2024) and will include sessions on parasitology. MN highlighted that a CANTER presentation would be welcomed at the IEIDC to provide an update on CANTER.

### **9. AOB**

JP informed that Group that the VMD have led on the formation of the cross-government Pharmaceuticals in the Environment Group – see [link](#) for more details.

**Next meeting: February 2024 – 13:00-16:30 – via Zoom**