CANTER Core Steering Group Meeting

18 September 2025 – via MS Teams – Public minutes

1. Welcome and apologies

Chair: Julie Shrubb.

Attendees: Claire Shand, Laura Peachey, Jodie Perrett, Bryan Lovegrove, Jacqui Matthews, Nicola Housby-Skeggs, Martin Nielsen, Wendy Talbot, Diane Gilby, Tim Mair, Hillary Cowley, Esther Rawlinson, Jeremy Johnson, Victoria Murrell, Andrew Cairns, Jane Hodgkinson, Rachel Andrews, Steve Howard, Mary Bawn, Bridget Lloyd.

Apologies: Alison Pyatt, Chris Shaw, Lois Unitt, Lucy Coyne, Claire Williams, Hilary Glasgow, Gwyn Jones & Dawn Howard.

2. Actions from January 2025 Core Steering Group meeting

Previous actions carried over from VMD governance have been incorporated into our current actions and we have picked actions up offline with the various people involved between meetings to ensure we are up to date. Where relevant, updates were included within this meeting. Any outstanding actions will be picked up offline directly with those specific people involved.

Action points update in brief – not otherwise covered in this meeting:

Competition law statement is now included on each agenda with thanks to guidance provided from NOAH.

Governance & administration - involving google drives and contact via website is all in hand.

Minutes & future meetings - at the May meeting all agreed that Core steering group will receive the full meeting minutes and, after approval, a condensed "public" summary will be placed on the website and circulated to others included on the distribution lists. Meeting dates to December '26 have been circulated.

Market research FEC & diagnostic methods suitable for a FECRT – to be covered in the December meeting.

3. Funding against strategic plan and website

a. Funding commitment update – Julia Shrub

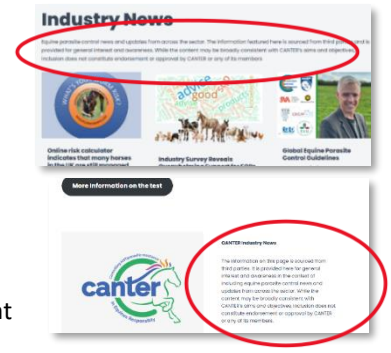
Finance - Letters were circulated to the core steering group in June and extended to the distribution list in July. We thank all involved for the support generated, both in terms of the financial support from organisations able to contribute and for the continued support in-kind from others which is equally valued. We also thank RUMA CAE office holders for their support through this process. The amount raised gives us confidence and the resources needed to move forward positively, enabling the development of new material and facilitating the promotion of the collective work we achieve as per the strategic plan agreed in May.

Financial reports - As CANTER is not a separate legal entity, but operates now as part of RUMA CA&E, the accounting year end will be 31 January 2026, with accounts prepared after that. RUMA CA&E accounts are finalised in April, so financial reports would be available for the CANTER meeting in June 2026.

Terms of reference (ToR)– these have been reviewed and updated to include the transition to working under the RUMA CA&E umbrella and following agreement of the funding model. The updated version will be available on the website in due course.

b. Industry News – Claire Shand

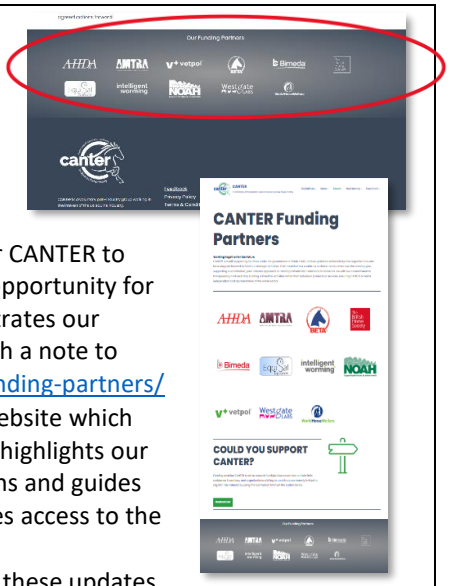
Industry news website updates: Since the last meeting we have developed the wording for the website to reflect the CANTER position, to ensure that sharing resources, through website links to either information or tools, is not directly linked nor endorsed by CANTER. There is a statement at the top of the Industry news page, which is also repeated at the foot of each individual article.



A framework template has been developed for Core Steering Group members to use with consideration, when news items are circulated for potential inclusion to the website.

Turn-around time for review of any news item – all agreed that a fortnight would allow sufficient time to review articles.

c. Website update – Claire Shand



- A logo footer has been added to the website, visible on each page, to highlight organisations providing financial support to CANTER. This is visible on desktop screen view only, not mobile phones due to formatting .
- In addition to this, a dedicated "funding partners" page has been developed, with text to explain how we work together. This helps to highlight transparency and explains the need for CANTER to have industry support. It shows strength, whilst allowing an opportunity for us to acknowledge the funding organisations. It also demonstrates our resource which provides a means for future development with a note to invite further support. See https://canterforhorses.org.uk/funding-partners/
- This page has been placed in the "about us" section on the website which also shows who is involved in the Core steering group, which highlights our individual expertise, with an indication of who makes decisions and guides CANTER. This section also explains our main aims and provides access to the meeting minutes.
- We are indebted to Claire, for her valuable time in producing these updates which have been organised both promptly and professionally.

4. Guideline development update from Julia and leads

a. **Quarantine chapter –** Laura and Tim have done some initial collation of the various global quarantine guidelines, and comparison with guidelines in livestock, but are yet to finalise a consensus. They had two options in mind:

- An evidence-based test and treat approach to quarantine guidelines – with fears this could become very complex and impractical. Results of diagnostic testing are complicated for the end-user to understand and may negatively impact on implementation.
- The alternative is a pragmatic 'treat all the same' approach, which has some downsides but is easily implemented, more of a blanket treatment with some follow-up.

Laura shared their flowchart which was generally well received and overall people liked it, although conscious of the need to keep it simple and pragmatic. There was some conversation about developing a digital tool/chatbot to guide decisions and simplify the end result for users. The general consensus from the meeting was that simplicity is important and agreed the flowchart is a good basis for a digital tool to simplify delivery. Further consideration will be given to a ChatBot idea. To be discussed further at a future meeting.

b. **Youngstock –** Nicky has taken the lead on this chapter and is working alongside other Core Steering Group members. The chapter is largely written and currently at the "major revisions" stage. They will provide an update at the next meeting.

c. **Single PDF version of each chapter of the Guidelines -** At the May meeting we agreed that a focus group will develop a single PDF, one for each of the 10 chapters – this will take place toward the end of the year in conjunction with the annual Guideline review.

d. **Guideline review -** We agreed in the last meeting that this would be conducted annually in Autumn. We are in the process of liaising with chapter authors and the Guideline Working Group to establish the process and conduct these reviews during October and November, with any amendments approved and shared with core steering group ahead of the December steering group. It was agreed that these two things (c & d) will be done together, aiming to complete by the end of 2025.

Timeframe agreed for the chapter reviews and single PDF versions:

- Re-submit any previously revised versions (from 12 months ago) to Bridget by 5th October.
- Documents sent to authors by 10th October.
- Authors suggest any edits by the end of October/early November.
- Guideline Working Group to review any edits by end November.
- Circulate to Core Steering Group early December, ahead of next core steering group meeting.
- PDF versions created from reviewed Guidelines and uploaded to website (with version control noted, such as - Last review Dec 2025).

e. Any other guidelines to consider?

Large strongyle test – There is now a large strongyle test available through Westgates. There may be a need to link it to information about the possible re-emergence of large strongyles, as seen in Scandinavia, now it is more commercially available in the UK. A separate meeting is planned in November for those with interest.

5. Chapter podcasts & promotion of guidelines to prescribers – Julia

Julia has been discussing this with Mary (RUMA). They have established that developing these in-house will be most cost-effective method. More detail to follow.

6. Report on progress of CANTER subgroup activities

a. Communication subgroup – Claire Shand

Update on Horse owner communication strategy – starting to consider owner-friendly, focused guidelines with "Call to action" tools developed. We need to consider the target audience and who to influence; individual owners or a livery yard focus. Understanding our audience will help to build the campaign accordingly, using social media and our membership organisations, perhaps targeting certain events or sponsorship for an awareness week etc. We appreciate the funding is a limited resource. There was some discussion about how to approach this with some actions to follow up on in the December meeting.

b. **Research subgroup – Laura Peachey**

Laura and Claire have worked together to create a website page to highlight the CANTER Research Roadmap which includes the methodology and impact strategy. It explains how it has been developed and has the research guidelines added. It highlights interest in research areas and defines a list of CANTER research priorities. At the bottom of the page is a "Get in touch" tab to encourage contact from people working in any of these areas. The page was shown to the core steering group at the meeting and is now live. Research - CANTER

Research database - plans for development are underway to map existing research priorities to activities within the roadmap, to track progress for key areas of future research. This will help to avoid working in silos and incorporate data collection. Future developments may involve links to potential equine research funders or an overview for funding calls.

Listing recent research publications in peer review journals – the research subgroup will establish a strategy to monitor this area to ensure the research priorities and our Guidelines are kept up to date and relevant, ensuring that key updates are not missed. We plan to develop a section on the website, with recent publications and relevant links to peer reviewed published papers, to become a "Go To" reference list of papers with a "research focus" added to the news section to include impact/outcomes of different projects

c. **Education subgroup**

As discussed at the May meeting this subgroup has been absorbed into the Research subgroup for now. The horse parasitology topic, using the CANTER Guidelines, is regularly addressed through the relevant courses at Liverpool University and Bristol University. The CANTER Guidelines are also covered through BEVA meetings. Between the Core Steering Group, members are happy to speak at various conferences and are taking up the opportunities as and when they arise. There was some discussion about the inclusion of Guidelines in CPD training.

7. Identification of Equids when prescribing

CANTER Guidelines - everything we are trying to achieve is only possible if we can trace horse ID and products.

- **Chapter 3 Selecting and using anthelmintics appropriately** –recording treatment decisions relies on records, which can only be done if an individual ID is linked.
- **Chapter 8 – Behaviour change** – necessary in order to protect our environment and slow the anthelmintic resistance acceleration.
- CANTER needs to consider its position to decide if we can agree some basic principles to implement changes to the SQP code of practice and the Veterinary Medicine Regulation (VMR) in the future which would enable implementation of the CANTER Guidelines.

Jeremy provided an introduction to this topic area: The SQP code of practice and the VMR now contain a requirement to record the rationale when prescribing. Much of the dewormers are provided through SQP outlets and online pharmacies. He suggested that the following areas should be reconsidered and potentially changed, now that online supply has been facilitated:

- Rationale should be provided, when purchasing products to justify the reason to purchase.
- Individual horse identification against a treatment prescribed, i.e. a horse passport/microchip number – this would help to build case history or provide evidence of product resistance emerging.
    - To track progress with horses in order to ultimately slow anthelmintic resistance, we need to be able to track treatment record and determine previous tests for a particular animal.

    - Quarantine - Moving livestock from one place to another, with no treatment record, poses a higher risk to the new environment, than an animal with treatment history.
    - Youngstock - It is hard to assess risk on youngstock with no treatment history for dam.
- Equal opportunity to supply - the same obligation ought to be imposed upon vets, SQPs and pharmacists to maintain records, with agreement that they may need to share details (if a potential risk is identified), to keep a track of which product and why it is prescribed and for what animal/group of animals by some form of identification, with a need to check a passport at some point.

VMD perspective – the VMR does set out the requirements for retailers and SQPs for supply of prescription medicines and the Code of Practice should align with and support the aims of the VMR offering additional context. Introducing requirements that aren't currently in the VMR would impose an unjustified regulatory burden on the sector. Jodie detailed the terms under which a proposal can be added to a recommended list for consideration for future revisions to the VMR, stating until anything was in place, it could not be enforced or included in a code of practice. She highlighted a number of terms we, CANTER, would need to abide by, in terms of suggesting any such proposal.

CANTER is all about evidence based practice – an auditable trail at the point of prescribing would guide future treatment information for next steps, and builds treatment history of individuals or groups of horses. All involved in the meeting are happy to endorse responsible prescribing but understand there are some contentious issues and difficulties to address within the practicalities and approach.

There was some discussion around:

- Practicality of recording individual ID (links to horse passport/microchip).
- Recording the rationale for prescribing - unless written in the horse passport it will not help history
- Best place to hold this information – could involve numerous retail sources/numerous owners
- Current purchasing habits and reasons for purchase – price, timing, worm burden, habit.

Although there is no intention of making any immediate decisions, it was important to provide the opportunity for discussion and thanked Jeremy and Nicola were thanked for providing the background notes prior to the meeting. This is an important area for discussion and we, CANTER with the benefit of involvement from many stakeholders, must consider all aspects.

8. RUMA CA&E updates – office holders

- The RUMA CA&E "Target and Measures Working" subgroup continues with pace having created condition specific focus groups to develop guidelines and resources with the objective to significantly reduce antimicrobial use in cats and dogs where a high proportion of inappropriate use is evident in certain areas.
- Parasiticides – RUMA CA&E have been developing their strategy over the past 18 months. Initially with a focus on antimicrobial stewardship, they have now developed a roadmap for responsible use of parasiticides, complimented by a parasiticide position statement, with resources on their website which will be useful to signpost the profession in this area, of course this includes links to CANTER.
- The Amnesty is evolving this year, to incorporate all animal medicines, rather than just antimicrobials. The campaign will run throughout November and remains simple, encouraging practices to engage with their clients, asking for the return of any unused, or out-of-date product. In the past years, there has been an increase in the return of parasiticides, so alongside discussions with our stakeholders and board, it is appropriate timing to widen the remit of the campaign.
- On 11th November we plan two webinar sessions, working alongside Webinar Vet. The morning webinar will cover antimicrobial use, highlighting the work from our Targets and Measures subgroup. The afternoon focus will cover parasiticides and Julia will talk about this subject from CANTERs perspective.
- Vaccine survey – The VMD issued its statement of intent in August. RUMA Agri & RUMA CA&E have conducted surveys in effort to help our understanding of the impacts of shortage in supply and we thank all those who were able to respond.
- Steve has been working, alongside others, on a proof-of-concept project focused on Equine antimicrobial use data which will be of importance within both the Equine and companion animal sectors. It has relevance when we consider sector targets to encourage reduction in use and promoting responsible behaviour change, as discussed within the CANTER Guidelines.

- The RUMA CA&E Annual Report is available at the end of the year, with thanks to Claire for providing the CANTER feature.

9. Horizon scanning – All

Raising awareness of emerging risks and intelligence to inform future CANTER activities.

- Blenheim - Julia is talking on behalf of CANTER (19th Sept)
- Northern Ireland Veterinary Association Welfare Symposium – October
- We plan to meet with RCVS Knowledge to explore any future opportunities.
- London Vet Show – CANTER will have presence there - November 20-21st
- Virtual clinics to Equine SQPs – being trialled weekly in November, if anyone is interested.
- **EPICENTRE initiative** – A group of academics across Europe, led by Nicola Walsh in Ireland, are coming together to develop cost-action programme with collaboration between seven EU-countries. The aim is to develop a proposal for funding to provide a network to tackle challenges of anthelmintic resistance. It will bring together researchers from multiple countries to combine and develop ideas together.

10. Other planned activities/meetings

Identify additional equine AR-related activities and/or campaigns

Pan Industry CANTER representation – There was some discussion to ensure CANTER has includes representation from each segment, with the need to consider our Terms of Office considering recruitment and retirement from the Core Steering Group, whilst maintaining a dynamic group, retaining expertise and experience, and being aware of succession as necessary.

New members - We agreed this would be discussed further at the next meeting.

11. AOB - Date of next meeting – Thursday 18th December 1-3pm