

ABN 15 211 513 464

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A survey of the perception of colic surgery amongst Australian and New Zealand Horse Owners

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is this study about?

Colic is one of the most common reasons for emergency veterinary consultations. Whilst many horses respond to medical treatment of colic, a proportion of horses will require emergency colic surgery. The decision by owners to send their horse for surgical management of colic is one often made at short notice and in highly emotional circumstances, with the help of their veterinarian.

The aim of the study is to investigate the factors that influence Australian and New Zealand horse owners' decision to proceed with colic surgery, and to assess the perception and knowledge of Australian primary equine veterinarians towards colic surgery. This study hopes to determine if there are trends between owner demographics and previous experience with colic, and whether owners elect to send horses for emergency surgery.

By completing this survey, you will be providing valuable information that may help future veterinarians better understand how they can support horse owners whilst they make this difficult decision and allow for better insights in horse owners' understanding of outcomes of colic surgery and lead to the development of better information resources for owners.

Please read this Participant Information Statement carefully before commencing the survey. For further information and questions, please find contact details below.

You will be given a copy of this Participant Information Statement to keep.

(2) Who is running the study?

Dr Clara Wilkins (Intern in Equine Surgery and Medicine, University of Sydney) and Dr Kate Averay (Resident in Equine Surgery, University of Sydney) are conducting this study under the supervision of Dr. Denis Verwilghen, Associate Professor in Equine Surgery at University of Sydney and Head of the Camden Equine Centre.

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This study doesn't have any funding. There is no identified conflict of interest for researchers, sponsors and/or institutions involved in this project.

(3) What will the study involve for me?

The questionnaire includes 20 questions, the majority of which are multiple choice. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes of your time. Submitting your completed questionnaire is an indication of your consent to participate in the study.

By giving your consent to take part in this study you are acknowledging that you:

- ✓ Understand what you have read.
- ✓ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- ✓ Agree to the use of your personal information as described.
- ✓ Are over 18 years of age
- ✓ Are a registered veterinarian in Australia or New Zealand

Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and there are no associated risks or financial costs. Your decision whether to participate will not be known to the researchers. You can withdraw from this study at any time by simply discontinuing your responses and not submitting the survey; there will be no negative consequences of withdrawing from the study. Incomplete submissions will not be taken into account. Once submitted, responses cannot be withdrawn.

If you consent to participate in the study, you will be required to complete a questionnaire that seeks information about:

- The percentage of primary equine vets who have worked in a referral equine practice (with an equine surgical caseload) at some stage during their career.
- Current workplace demographics including percentage and type of equine work, geographical location (Rural/remote/metropolitan) and distance from and relationship to referral clinic
- Perceived outcomes of survival and competitive use following colic surgery
- Perceived financial cost of colic surgery
- Awareness of potential complications during or following colic surgery
- How comfortable they are that they are informing clients correctly about colic surgery and likelihood to refer for colic surgery

The survey will take place online on a platform of the University of Sydney. The survey is completely anonymous, and no identifiable source will be recorded on the questionnaires.

You are able to forward the link to the study to other veterinarians if you wish.

(4) What will happen to information about me that is collected during the study?

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting personal information about you for the purposes of this research study. Your information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement, unless you consent otherwise. The information collected for this study will not be used in other projects.

Your information will be stored securely, and your identity/information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. The information gathered is stored for the minimum period of five (5) years. The unidentified datafiles used for statistical analysis will be stored on the secure university network and permanently erased after the minimum period of 5 years.

Study findings may be published in a veterinary journal, but you will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

(5) What if I would like further information about the study?

If you have questions or concerns at any stage during the study, please feel free to contact:

Dr Clara Wilkins

clara.wilkins@sydney.edu.au

Dr Kate Averay

kate.averay@sydney.edu.au

Dr Denis Verwilghen (A/Prof in
Equine Surgery)

denis.verwilghen@sydney.edu.au

or on 02 4651 1752

Once data is obtained and trends evaluated, an article will be written for publishing in a veterinary and horsemen's journal which will be available to you.

(6) What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?

Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney 2020/445. As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies.

If you have any concerns or wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university using the details outlined below. Please quote the study title and protocol number.

The Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telephone:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** human.ethics@sydney.edu.au
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile)

Thank you for your time and participation.

This information sheet is for you to keep.