

Utrecht, January 27, 2017

Re: SDa report *Usage of antimicrobial drugs in horses from 2012 - 2014: Results of a survey of veterinary practices in the Netherlands*

Dear Sir, Madam,

It is with great pleasure that the Netherlands Veterinary Medicines Authority (SDa) presents to you its report *Usage of antimicrobial drugs in horses from 2012 - 2014: Results of a survey of veterinary practices in the Netherlands*. We drew up this report following a request by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs. The main objectives of the report were to quantify the amounts of antimicrobial drugs used in horses, to identify differences in prescription patterns between individual veterinary practices, and to specify the relative contribution of first-, second- and third-choice antimicrobial drugs to overall antimicrobial drugs use in horses. To this end, usage data for the years 2012, 2013 and 2014 were collected through a survey of equine veterinary practitioners. At the same time, a similar survey was conducted to shed light on the usage of antimicrobial drugs in companion animals. The two reports are published simultaneously.

The survey of equine veterinary practitioners has shown that usage of antimicrobial drugs in horses is low. Over the 3-year study period it decreased by 24%, from 0.735 DDDA_{DAP} in 2012 to 0.562 DDDA_{DAP} in 2014. Relatively big differences were seen between individual practices, although all practices reported low usage levels (their mean DDDA_{DAP} figures for the 2012-2014 period ranged from 0.168 to 1.190). The inter-practice differences identified during the study were getting smaller or showed increasingly narrow distributions. The differences between the veterinary practices were probably due to the inclusion of different types of practices.

In 2014, first-choice antimicrobial drugs were the main group of antimicrobial drugs used in horses, representing 85.1% of all antimicrobial drugs used. Second-choice antimicrobial drugs and third-choice antimicrobial drugs represented 12.5% and 2.5%, respectively. Between 2012 and 2014, usage of third-choice antimicrobial drugs dropped by 68%, from 0.040 DDDA_{DAP} to 0.013 DDDA_{DAP}. This reflects the general downward trend in overall

antimicrobial drug use and usage of third-choice antimicrobial drugs in particular. The horse sector has managed to successfully implement prudent usage of antimicrobial drugs all by itself.

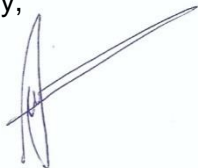
Assuming a national horse population of 450,000 (as estimated by Sectorraad Paarden), the horses included in the SDA study represented 15.7% of the national population.

The SDA expert panel feels continuous monitoring and benchmarking of the horse sector is not necessary, since current usage levels are low, inter-practice differences are decreasing, and third-choice antimicrobial drugs only represent a small proportion of all antimicrobial drugs used. It therefore recommends monitoring the usage of antimicrobial drugs in horses once every 3 years, by means of a survey of veterinary practices similar to the survey described in this report.

The SDA board is going to act on this advice. In addition, the SDA board would like to ask the KNMvD to keep promoting prudent usage of antimicrobial drugs among its members just like it has done successfully over the past few years.

On behalf of the SDA board,

Yours sincerely,



F.J.M. Werner
Chair



H.M.G. van Beers- Schreurs
Director

Appendices: [SDa report Usage of antimicrobial drugs in horses from 2012 - 2014: Results of a survey of veterinary practices in the Netherlands](#)