



# Improving animal welfare: improving animal health management

## The role of SQPs

Our **Blueprint for Animal Health and Welfare** is built around a three-step approach to keeping animals healthy and one in which we all play a part. In the latest of our fact-sheet series, we're looking at the role of SQPs (Suitably Qualified Persons) as animal health advisers when it comes to upholding the three pillars of this approach.

### Stop disease getting to the animal

As a section of registered qualified persons allowed to prescribe animal medicines, SQPs are a vital part of the UK animal health and welfare landscape. In addition to advising pet owners, farmers and other animal keepers on choices and the safe, effective use of medicines, SQPs work closely with them to advise on other strategies which contribute to the health and welfare of their animals. SQPs must have sufficient knowledge about the animals they may need to prescribe for and also collaborate with the animal owner to ensure that they take account of any Animal Health Plan or advice from a veterinary surgeon that may already be in place to help keep pets, farm animals and other animals healthy all year round.

### Equip animals to fight disease

SQPs can prescribe and supply certain medicines to protect the health of animals, for the species for which they hold a qualification. They need to continue to work closely with animal owners – from farmers to horse and pet owners – to advise on the right choice of preventative medicine and their safe and effective use. This includes POM-VPS medicines – used in farm animals and horses to reduce or prevent effects of endemic disease in herds, flocks or individual animals, as well as NFA-VPS medicines, used in companion animals where they may be used to prevent or limit the effects of endemic disease (for example, internal and external parasites). They advise on medicine use strategies to help keep medicines such as wormers effective.

### Treat animals appropriately when disease is unavoidable

SQPs play a key role in helping those who care for animals choose the right medicines and use them correctly. They work with the veterinary profession and other animal health specialists to advise animal keepers to seek a veterinary diagnosis where necessary, to ensure they receive the correct treatment. They can only prescribe on-label and if any other treatment is required, they will refer to a vet. They help ensure that anyone using a medicine they prescribe is competent to use it safely; providing advice on any warning and contraindications, and advice on safe administration.

SQPs must ensure that they have sufficient information about the animals being treated, that the person who will be treating the animal uses the product for its intended, authorised use, and that the person who will be treating the animal is competent and able to administer the prescribed product. When prescribing for horses they must satisfy themselves of the food-producing status of an animal, either by examining the passport or prior known status of the animal.



For more information on NOAH's Blueprint for Animal Health, visit: [www.noah.co.uk/campaigns/blueprint-animal-health](http://www.noah.co.uk/campaigns/blueprint-animal-health)

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