



NOAH Annual Review 2023

and Outlook for 2024



Contents

Introduction 3

Regulatory 4

Access to Medicines 5

Sustainability 6

Animal health, One Health and sustainability

Companion Animal Parasites

Working with others

Investors in the Environment (iE)

Public Affairs 9

Paws to Protect Campaign

Understanding the challenges to pet care in 2022 and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on pet ownership

New website launched

Member communications

Parliamentary & stakeholder lobbying

Governance 13

Code of Practice for the Promotion of Animal Medicines

NOAH Certificate of Animal Health (NCAH)

NOAH Compendium – a new app

NOAH's services promoted at London Vet Show

Members

NOAH's Committees

International work

Forward Look for 2024 17

Introduction

2023 has been another challenging but productive year for NOAH and our members. The NOAH staff are now all working remotely with plenty of on-line meetings and regular meet ups in our new Stevenage office.

Following our sustainability goals, we are proud to announce that we have achieved Bronze 'Investors in the Environment' award.



The NOAH Articles of Association have been updated to be more inclusive and better reflect the NOAH strategy. The NOAH Officer Team has been newly elected with Ned Flaxman (Norbrook) as Chair for 2023/24, Gerard Ensink (Boehringer Ingelheim) as Vice Chair, Caitrina Oakes (Vetoquinol) as Past Chair and Matthew Frost (Elanco) as Treasurer. We have also welcomed Jo Vale to the NOAH team as our new Membership Assistant.

Regulatory

The review of the legislation governing the authorisation of veterinary medicines has been the major focus for the year, with the public consultation on the new GB Veterinary Medicines Regulation (VMR) launched by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) in February, with responses due at the end of March. This was welcomed as an opportunity for the UK animal health sector to thrive, as the current 2013 VMR regulatory framework is no longer fit for purpose, and regulations have fallen behind those in the EU, where a new VMR came into force in 2022.

Led by its Regulatory Affairs Committee, NOAH put together a detailed response, which was finalised via an all-day face to face meeting in March, to give all members the opportunity to fully contribute to our submission. There was a further consultation in June 2023 regarding future batch release requirements that NOAH also responded to.



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The NOAH response welcomed much in the draft VMR proposals, but highlighted several areas of that, if left unchanged, could have an adverse impact on the availability of veterinary medicines in GB and a knock-on risk to animal and public health, animal welfare and sustainability. Our views were reiterated through a parliamentary drop in event at Portcullis House, hosted by Shadow Environment Minister, Daniel Zeichner MP, where our **briefing paper** stressed the importance of parliamentary time to bring the new legislation to fruition.

However, as the year has progressed there has been no update on the expected publication of the Government response to the GB VMR consultation. This is of concern to NOAH, and we have regularly lobbied politicians to raise awareness of the importance of the new legislation to our sector, asking for it to be prioritised.

Throughout the year, NOAH has held regular formal liaison meetings with the VMD: at policy level, with the regulatory team and to discuss pharmacovigilance. NOAH staff and member companies also attended the VMD's series of workshops on the VMR review.

This working relationship is valuable both to industry and regulators alike, as it identifies potential problem areas and provides an opportunity to discuss possible solutions for consideration.

Access to medicines

NOAH member companies remained concerned about the implications of the Northern Ireland Protocol (NIP) for their ability to fulfil regulatory requirements to maintain product authorisations, the impact on supply chains and disruption to product supply.

NOAH welcomed the Windsor Framework, published in February 2023, as a positive step forward towards making changes to the NIP in a way that sets out to benefit all communities in Northern Ireland. The constructive dialogue and detailed discussions have paved the way for new trading arrangements between GB and NI. Importantly, it also recognised the island of Ireland as a single epidemiological area for animal disease and includes measures to protect this.



Nevertheless, for the animal health sector, the specific issue of continued access to veterinary medicines in NI remains, as no change has yet been made in relation to arrangements for veterinary medicines.

The extension of current arrangements until 2025, announced by the European Commission in December 2022, continues to alleviate problems in the short term, supporting the health and welfare of NI farm livestock and pets as well as food security and public health. However, in the longer term, with no change to the NIP for veterinary medicines, there will be impact on the availability of veterinary medicines on the NI market.

Throughout the year, NOAH continued to work alongside colleagues in Brussels, as well as the veterinary profession and farming groups in Northern Ireland, to seek a long-term solution.

Sustainability



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REPORT

Animal health, One Health and sustainability

To mark One Health Day on 3rd November, NOAH published a new summary report to highlight the contribution the animal health industry makes to One Health and sustainability.

It explains how protecting and improving animal health and welfare not only benefits animals, but also helps to protect human and environmental health while positively contributing to societal sustainability goals, giving specific examples in relation to public health, food security, sustainable farming, healthy pets and emerging diseases.

The report also includes recommendations on what is needed so animal health industry can continue to help meet the needs of societal sustainability challenges. Some of the measures needed are:

- A robust UK regulatory framework for veterinary medicines, to ensure the availability and accessibility of safe and effective medicines for all animals. Updated UK Veterinary Medicines Regulations are vital to ensure that unnecessary burdens are removed, and that the regulatory system is future-proofed to include innovative and novel products.
- For all routes of veterinary medicines to market to remain available, to ensure animal owners can readily access veterinary medicines, with appropriate prescription controls where they are needed, to maintain high standards of animal health and welfare in the UK.

- To improve collaboration and partnership between human, animal, and environmental sectors to promote finding One Health solutions to One Health challenges
- To provide ongoing training to farmers on disease prevention and responsible use.
- To increase awareness and provide resources to pet owners to ensure veterinary medicines are used responsibly.
- To ensure funding for research and development of new medicines and solutions remain a priority in the UK.
- To improve diagnostics, surveillance, and monitoring of diseases in animals, in order to protect the UK from future disease outbreaks.



Companion animal parasiticides

Fleas, ticks, and worms pose a year-round risk to our pets in the UK. For instance, it has been estimated that 1 in 4 cats and 1 in 7 dogs in the UK have fleas and 86.6% of soil samples taken from UK & Ireland parks contained roundworm (*Toxocara*) eggs. Today, the risk of parasites to the UK pet population is growing. Increased travel and movement of cats and dogs combined with climate change are enabling parasites to thrive and spread into new areas.

However, recently, there has been discussion in the veterinary press about the use of licensed veterinary medicines and their potential impact on the wider environment. NOAH has continued to robustly defend the regulatory system for all veterinary medicines against inaccurate, unscientific criticism where it occurs. NOAH also continues to stress the importance of companion animal parasiticides for animal health and welfare.

To support prescribers and pet owners, NOAH has set out to increase recognition of the benefits of preventing parasites in companion animals and to educate and inform prescribers, retailers and pet owners on the responsible use of companion animal parasiticides. To ensure that all pet owners are able to access these important medicines, we also wish the current classification and distribution routes of companion animal parasiticides to be retained.



As part of this work, we have developed a new section on the NOAH website so all the information on this topic is easily accessible.

This includes resources that address some of the issues raised in the various reports and papers released on this topic during the year.



Working with others

We are proud to be part of the new pan-industry group CANTER, launched in March as the first of its kind worldwide, formed to tackle the increasing threat that wormer resistance poses to horse health and the equine industry.



Investors in the Environment (iIE)

NOAH has achieved Bronze level accreditation for the Investors in the Environment accreditation with a score of 81%.



The award required NOAH to provide evidence that it has met a range of pre-defined criteria, set targets to reduce its environmental impact and taken action to improve its performance whilst enhancing the community in which it operates.

NOAH has been working towards our Silver level accreditation by deleting unnecessary documents from cloud storage and engaging in social projects such as the NOAH beach litter pick and individual staff volunteering. NOAH staff have also taken part in environmental awareness courses.

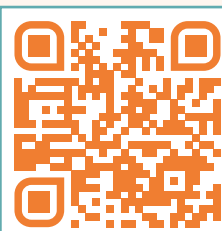


Public affairs

Paws to Protect Campaign

Our '**Paws to Protect**' campaign was launched to help pet owners understand the importance of reading and following packaging information provided with veterinary medicines. In a survey commissioned by NOAH in December 2022, we identified that whilst 78% of pet owners said they were aware of and usually followed the instructions that came with their pet's medicine, there was still a gap in understanding about the need to use medicines appropriately.

Compliance is important: failure can result in implications to an animal's health and welfare and can even harm the pet, people or the environment if the product is not used appropriately.



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VIEW THE
RESOURCES

This campaign provides resources for prescribers and retailers of veterinary medicines to use: there is a dedicated campaign page and a downloadable 'Paws To Protect' poster, with simple advice and a QR code to access more detail. We have reached out to vets, SQPs and other pet medicine retailers and encouraged them, to download and display the poster and to engage with the campaign on social media using #Paws2Protect, and we have printed 12,500 copies for distribution with Veterinary Times, to make it easier for vet practices to use the resource. The campaign will continue next year.



Understanding the challenges to pet care in 2022 and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on pet ownership

The cost-of-living crisis in the UK has had financial implications for pet owners, who also are facing challenges from other lifestyle changes post-pandemic such as people spending more time out of the home.

NOAH commissioned a survey with Kantar to understand the challenges to pet care and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on pet ownership. The survey, carried out in December 2022 with results released in February 2023, showed that overall people are still positive about pet ownership, but there are some groups still more likely to struggle.

Encouragingly, the survey showed ensuring pets get the right veterinary treatment still seems to be a priority, however people have needed to reduce expenditure in other areas of pet care such as disease prevention, health plans and insurance. Generally, people rank vet visits as their third most prioritised spending, after food and energy and above rent or mortgages.

New website launched

NOAH's new website, launched this year, showcases the association's work on behalf of its members and promotes NOAH membership to potential new members. The website highlights member benefits, events, regulatory updates and acts as a hub for NOAH news and resources.

The website also hosts and promotes NOAH services such as the NOAH Code of Practice for the Promotion of Animal Medicines and our training: the NOAH Certificate of Animal Health (NCAH) and Animal Medicines Best Practice (AMBP).

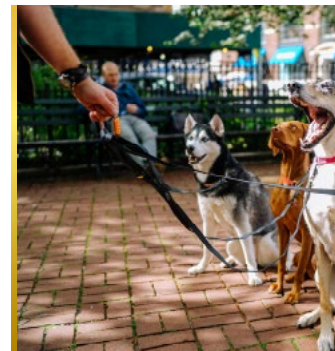
KANTAR

Understanding the challenges to pet care in 2022 and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on pet ownership

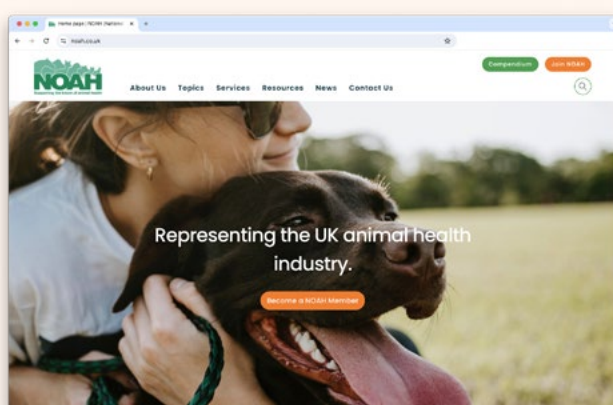
A report prepared for NOAH



Amy Lewington
Raluca Elena Barbu
February 2023



People have needed to reduce expenditure in disease prevention, health plans & insurance.



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VISIT THE
WEBSITE

Member communications

Members Day

In July, we held a NOAH Members Day event in central London. This was a networking opportunity for members to meet their colleagues, to learn about how NOAH can support them as well as to discuss topical issues. NOAH Chair Ned Flaxman set out NOAH's priorities for the year and announced the top NOAH Certificate of Animal Health (NCAH) course students from 2022. He also launched the new campaign to raise the profile of the NCAH qualification.



Our keynote speaker was Paul Redmond from University of Liverpool, giving a fascinating presentation on generational change and the future of work. Robert Dawson from Vet AI also discussed how AI technology is impacting the animal health industry.

The event gave an opportunity for Jade Statt from NOAH's charity of the year, StreetVet, to highlight the important work that they do to support the health of companion animals for people living on the streets.

Meet the Member webinars

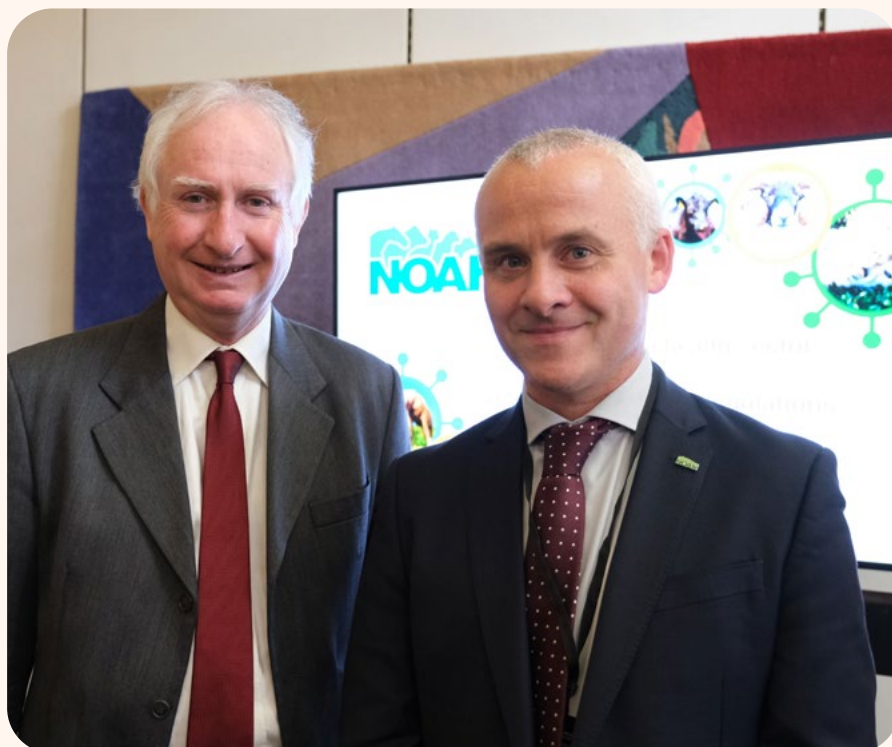
We have been running 'Meet the Member' webinars throughout the year, which gives the opportunity to Associate Members to be able to showcase themselves to other member companies and explain their role in the animal health industry.

This year we have had presentations from Proagrica, VetComms, Kynetec, Paul Dick and Associates and PetMedix.



Parliamentary & stakeholder lobbying

NOAH held a Parliamentary Drop In event at Portcullis House, Westminster in April, to discuss the GB Veterinary Medicines Regulations Review, to explain where we believed changes should be made and to stress the importance of their adoption. Kindly sponsored by Daniel Zeichner MP, Shadow Minister (Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), the event was attended by a number of parliamentarians and researchers.



NOAH, along with others in the veterinary sector, has continued to support Lord Trees' Veterinary Policy Research Foundation.

A NOAH Conference for members and stakeholders was due to take place on 4 October, but was, unfortunately, postponed due to transport problems on the day. It has been rescheduled for 1 February 2024.

Governance

Code of Practice for the Promotion of Animal Medicines

NOAH's self-regulatory Code of Practice for the Promotion of Animal Medicines goes beyond advertising legal requirements and sets higher standards for accurate, ethical promotion of veterinary medicines. There have been no Code of Practice cases this year, demonstrating that companies are abiding by its rules.

NOAH holds regular training seminars on the Code. Both open sessions in July and December were sold out and two additional bespoke seminars were also arranged.



The NOAH Code of Practice is obligatory on all NOAH members and is endorsed by several non-member companies



NOAH Certificate of Animal Health (NCAH)

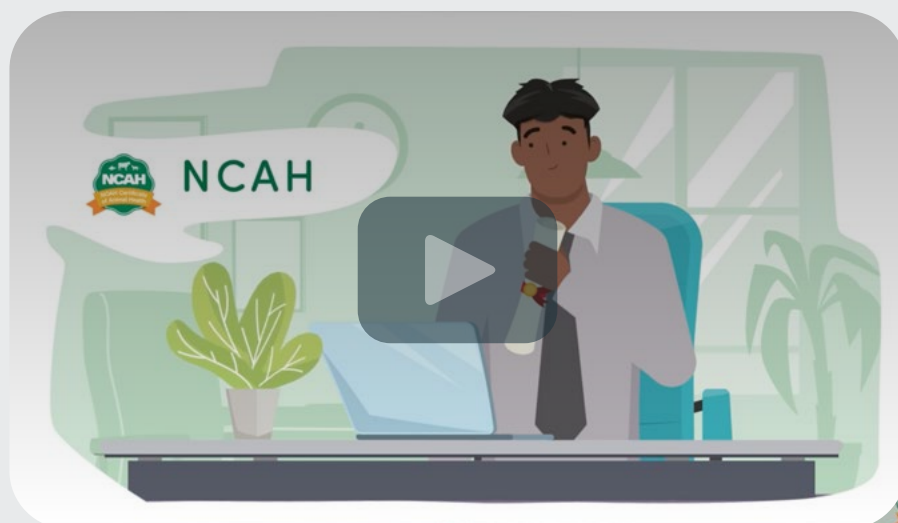
In July, NOAH launched a new campaign to help raise awareness of the **NCAH (the NOAH Certificate of Animal Health)** which is the qualification for the animal health industry, accredited and awarded by Harper Adams University. The NCAH ensures promotion is carried out in an ethical manner, with accurate information given to prescribers.

It gives the sales representative a high level of technical and regulatory knowledge about the licensed medicines and solutions they are promoting, and gives the prescriber a trusted source of advice, giving both confidence in the process.

A new logo was developed to help raise awareness of the qualification, and how it meant prescribers and retailers can have confidence in the information they receive from animal health representatives and how they can act as a resource for them. The campaign assets included a new logo, a short explanatory video, and for anyone that holds the qualification, an enamel pin badge to wear and an e-signature.



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[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



Some of the 2022 Top Students with NOAH Chair Ned Flaxman. Students left-right, Daisy Whymark, Amber Weinrich and Jessica Tilbrook. The overall winner was Alan Dykes (inset).



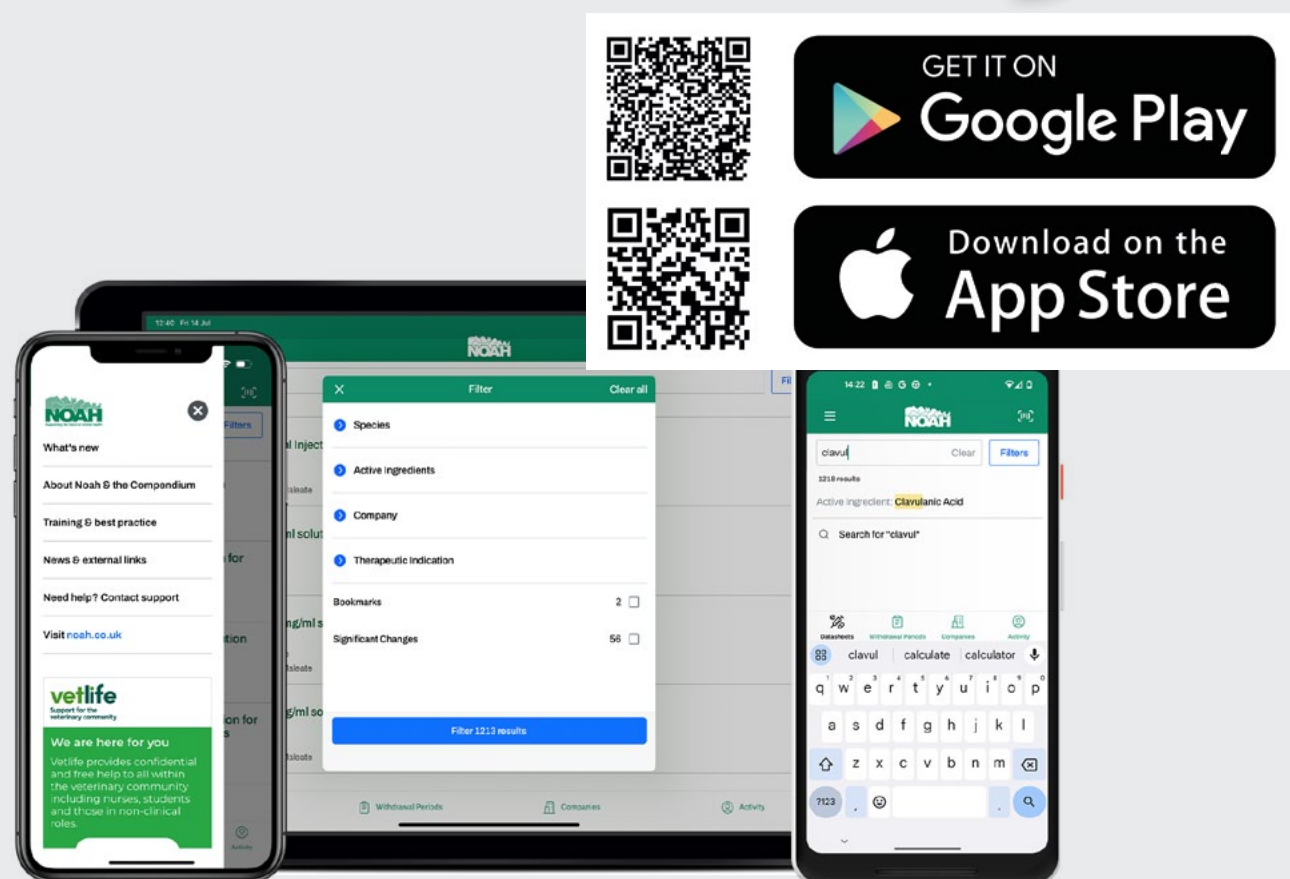
NOAH Compendium – a new app

Following extensive feedback from NOAH compendium users, and aligning with NOAH's environmental and sustainability commitment, 2023 was the first year NOAH did not produce a hard copy of the NOAH compendium book, moving completely to the digital formats of the free-to-access NOAH compendium app and website.

An advantage of having the compendium in a digital format is that datasheets are regularly updated by companies, ensuring users have access to the most up-to-date information.

In September NOAH released a new version of the Compendium app, with new features and improvements to make it even more useful and easier to use. These included a list of new and updated datasheets to draw attention to what changes have been made, more extensive search options and the ability to bookmark data sheets and make notes. To access the new edition and its benefits, users need to update the app on their devices.

The NOAH Compendium is free to access online and via the app



NOAH's services promoted at London Vet Show

The NOAH stand at the London Vet Show was focused on how NOAH services such as the Code of Practice for the Promotion of Animal Medicines, the NCAH and the Compendium support the veterinary profession.



Members

In June we ran a membership campaign across NOAH's social media channels. Called Membership Mondays, it showcased how being a member of NOAH can benefit animal health businesses.

NOAH's Committees

NOAH's Strategy is regularly reviewed by the NOAH Board of Management, to ensure it reflects current issues, and delivered via a number of specialist committees, comprising colleagues from member companies. The committees reports into the elected Board and is flexible to meet the needs of the members. Our committee members make a vital contribution to NOAH activities and help shape the direction for the industry.

International work

NOAH continues to take an active role in its global and European associations HealthforAnimals and AnimalhealthEurope; members of the NOAH Executive sit on a number of international committees.

HealthforAnimals
global animal medicines association

animalhealth
europe

Forward look for 2024

With a general election on the horizon, NOAH is ensuring it is ready to support prospective and newly elected MPs on matters relating to the veterinary medicines and animal health solutions made by its members. These protect the health and welfare of UK farm livestock and companion animals.

We are developing a manifesto which builds on the contribution good animal health makes to One Health and sustainability, and explaining what is needed for the animal health sector to thrive in the UK.

But even before the election, there is much to be done.



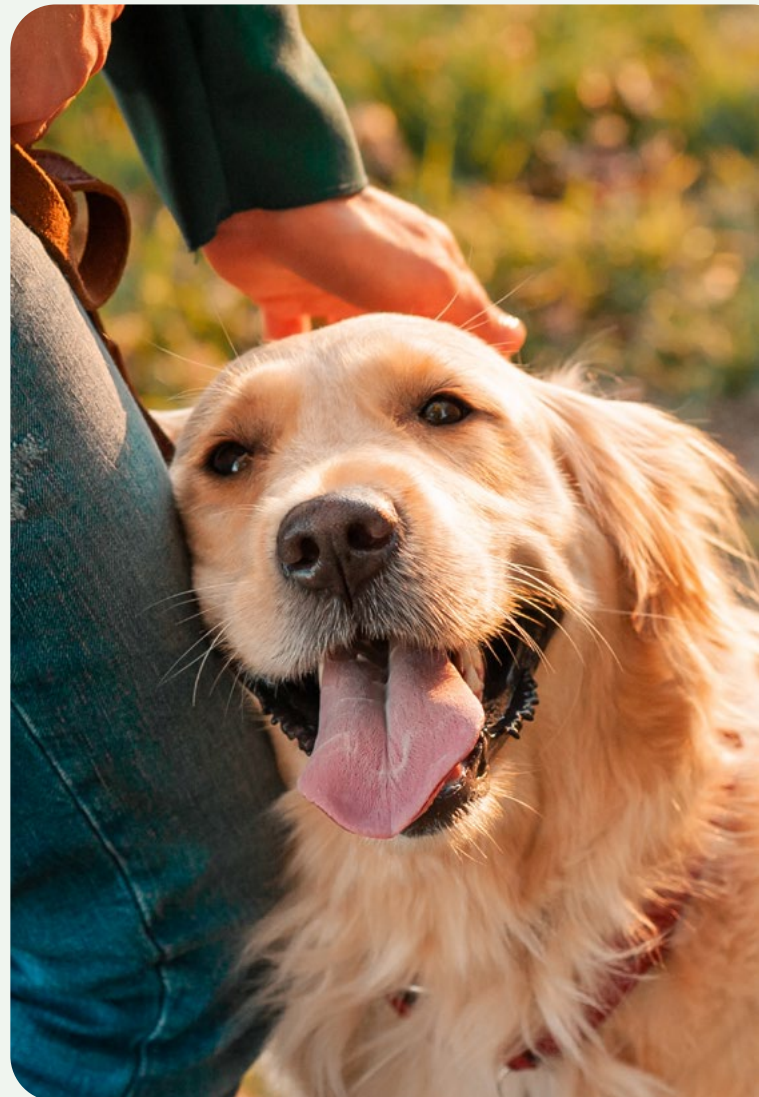
NOAH is becoming increasingly concerned about the apparent delay to the Government response to the draft GB Veterinary Medicines Regulations Review. This was expected in the autumn, and now is likely to be in January.

While we recognise that, with such an important piece of legislation, it is vital to get things right, with every delay comes a greater chance it will not be implemented in this parliament. The UK regulations already lags behind those of the EU, who had a new Regulation implemented in 2022, which aimed amongst other things to encourage innovation, reduce unnecessary administrative burden and support the fight against AMR. The current UK legislation dates from 2013 and is not fit for purpose.

We will continue to lobby for the passage of the new proposals through parliament, so the sector has the updated legislation it needs.

Once the new legislation is in place, NOAH will be working to support members with the new rules and will help to explain to others in the sector what the changes mean to them.

As part of this we will be developing materials to illustrate the value of medicines – to highlight the controls that govern placing a product on the market, the safety process (pharmacovigilance) that monitors its safety, quality and efficacy whilst in use, and the complex supply chain with its many checks and balances, that can impact on actually making medicines and vaccines available for prescription and use.





We have some exciting events upcoming in 2024.

The rescheduled NOAH conference on 1 February has a One Health theme 'Animal health and securing our future – a vital connection' – bringing together political speakers, the VMD and an expert panel to explore the animal health sector's role further.

NOAH is planning a networking event in the summer, to showcase the value of medicines to our society. We are also working closely with the Royal Veterinary College to deliver a brand new event in the autumn; the Animal Innovation Forum will be focussing on prevention and will showcase the latest developments, the best of industry and academia working together.

Prevention of disease through measures such as vaccination, as well as the responsible use of medicines, will remain core to NOAH's work in 2024. During 2023, NOAH has been working with consultants to update its Animal Medicines Best Practice (AMBP) training programme. The new course will be ready to launch on the LANTRA platform in early 2024.

With Dr Lucy Coyne, NOAH's Senior Technical Manager, on maternity leave through much of 2024, her work will be covered by Donal Murphy and Jodie Bartels, NOAH's Technical and Sustainability Policy Assistant. They will be supported by a new policy intern during this time.



NOAH is continuing to invest in, and develop, its digital assets to serve NOAH members and to develop further outreach to stakeholders, government, veterinary practices and we aim to continue our sustainability goals to achieve our iE accreditation silver award.

