MASTITIS TUBES BECOME POM

Intramammaries have been re-categorised by the Irish Medicines Board (IMB) as “Prescription Only” animal remedies (POM) and become subject to the prescribing and related sale control requirements of the Animal Remedies Regulations with effect from 1 January 2008.

The process flow-chart below, prepared by Peadar O Scanaill, Chairman of the Veterinary Ireland Animal Remedies Committee, is designed to assist veterinary practitioners in understanding the new requirements. A more complete outline, and recommendations on how to proceed, has also been prepared and is included with this VetView.

JANUARY 2008
MASTITIS TUBES BECOME P.O.M

VET DECIDES WHETHER TUBES ARE NEEDED FOR HERD OF COWS “UNDER HIS/HER CARE”

↓

IF FARMER NEEDS MASTITIS TUBES

↓

FARM VET SUPPLIES A PRESCRIPTION (CO-OP VIA SCHEDULE 8 CAN HELP FARM VET CHOOSE APPROPRIATE TUBES)

↓

PRESCRIPTION IS FILLED AT OUTLET OF FARMERS’ CHOICE

↓

1. VET SHOP
2. CO-OP / LICENSED MERCHANT
3. PHARMACY
The VICAS Winter Conference 2008 will be held at the Heritage Hotel and Golf Resort, Killinard, Co. Laois from Friday 25th to Sunday 27th January 2008. A full online booking facility is available on the Veterinary Ireland website: www.veterinaryireland.ie. Alternatively, members can contact the Conference Managers at Ovation on 01-280-2641.

Reflecting the title “Pet Practice—The Science and The Business: Top Tips to Maximise your Practice’s Potential” the Conference Programme has a great mix of topics covered. Friday begins the conference with a session on “Ten Top Tips for Practitioners” from colleagues in UCD. On Saturday and Sunday there will be business modules showing how to maximize practice profitability, a practical behavioural module and a “State-of-the-Art” lecture on new approaches to feline gingivitis-stomatitis complex. In addition there will be three Practitioners Case Presentations. Also, there is a full social programme, with golfing, drinks reception, mulled wine and a casual social evening on Saturday.

Nursing Programme
VICAS recognises the important role Veterinary Nurses play in helping practices achieve excellent standards. Again in 2008, the Conference has a comprehensive veterinary nurses’ programme on Saturday for which there is a nominal registration fee (€65), with the option for veterinary nurses to attend the Friday and Sunday conference programmes for a further fee of only €10 a day (places limited). Members are again strongly urged to do their best to encourage and facilitate their nurses to attend.

Spreading the Word
Mention the conference to as many of your colleagues as possible, and in particular encourage younger colleagues to attend this important CVE and Social Event. Members should also encourage non-members to attend, and to join Veterinary Ireland in 2008 - especially as there are significant discounts on Registration fees for members of the Organisation for this and all future Veterinary Ireland CVE events (See WSAVA article below).

CVE Credits
This event has been accredited for 15 CVE Credits for attendance for the whole programme, three quarters of your annual requirement under the Veterinary Council’s CEA Scheme.

For Full Details, see enclosed Brochure & Booking Form.

VICAS AGM 2008
The AGM of the Veterinary Ireland Companion Animal Society (VICAS) will be held in conjunction with the VICAS Winter Conference 2008, at the Heritage Hotel & Golf Resort, Killinard, Co. Laois at 5.15 p.m. on Saturday 26th January 2008.

All VICAS members should ensure that they have this date firmly lodged in their diaries.

VETERINARY NURSE REGISTER - PRESENTATION
Also at the VICAS Winter Conference, there will be a presentation on Saturday afternoon (2.15pm - 3.00pm) by the Veterinary Council of Ireland on the new Veterinary Nurse Register.

In recognition of the importance of this new legislation to Veterinary Nurses, not only in companion animal practice, but also equine practice, this session only will be offered free of charge to all Veterinary Nurses employed by members of Veterinary Ireland.

Lunch will not be included in this free session. Veterinary Nurses wishing to attend this session, should contact the Conference Desk on arrival at the hotel.

WSAVA CONGRESS 2008 - DUBLIN
VICAS will host the World’s companion animal veterinarians to the 33rd WSAVA Congress and 14th European FECAVA Congress in the RDS, Dublin, 20-24th August 2008.

Registration bookings are now being taken at the Members rate of €475 (€575 after 9th May).

Visit www.wsava2008.com for full details or phone Ovation, the Congress Organisers on 01-280-2641
EQUINE IDENTIFICATION

The identification of horses and enforcement of related regulations by the Department of Agriculture continues to exercise the minds of equine practitioners.

While it is not the role of practitioners to enforce legislation, Veterinary Ireland is keen to contribute to improving the numbers of horses being documented by passport issuing organisations.

We are pleased to report that the Board of the Irish Horse Board have advised that they will be reducing their registration fees for horses without pedigree (White Passports) for the months of January and February 2008.

The Veterinary Ireland Equine Group welcomes this, and is encouraging its members in turn to offer a 20% discount off their normal fees to mark and identify horses during these two months also.

We hope that these combined actions will contribute to the overall desired improvement in this area.

SYRINGES AND NEEDLES

A member has been recently contacted by an addiction counsellor to inform him that a patient of theirs had been able to acquire, free of charge, a number of syringes and needles from a receptionist in a veterinary practice on the pretext that they were going to vaccinate their own dogs.

The member has been asked to circulate this information to as many members of the Profession as possible, to ensure that this practice is stopped. In the event that such material is given out to bona fide cases (e.g. Diabetics Patients’ owners etc.) it would be advisable to keep detailed records of dates and amounts.

“FERTILITY FOR EXPANSION”

“Fertility for Expansion” was the theme of three large meetings (Cork, Limerick and Dundalk) attended by dairy farmers, veterinary surgeons, AI Technicians and breeding industry personnel. These meetings in the second week of December were a joint initiative involving Intervet, ICBF, Teagasc, UCD, Progressive Genetics, Munster Cattle Breeding Society, Eurogene and Veterinary Ireland’s Animal Health Committee.

Speakers included Stephen Butler and John Mee (Teagasc, Moorepark), George Ramsbottom (Teagasc Advisor), Michael Diskin (Teagasc, Athenry), Mark Crowe and Finbar Mulligan (UCD), Scott MacDougall, (New Zealand Veterinary Researcher) and Doreen Corridan (Dairygold AI Station).

The Key Steps to achieving fertility for expansion were given to farmers as:

- Measure the reproductive performance of the herd;
- Plan corrective actions with the advisors including Teagasc and the Veterinary Surgeon;
- Act and implement the Plan
- Monitor, using records to determine if actions have achieved the required result.

It was stated that high levels of productive performance - calves per cow per year - can be achieved in herds at all levels of production. However, there are a number of links in this chain - if any one is broken then a low level of reproductive performance results. The links include:

- Genetics
- Heat Detection
- Disease
- Nutrition

This collaborative effort is being reviewed and decisions will be taken on how to build on experiences from these meetings in order to address the dairy cow fertility problem that is currently prevalent in Ireland.
Common European Animal Health Plan

The European Commission has published a new “Community Animal Health Policy, Prevention is better than cure”.

This new Strategy provides the framework for animal health and welfare measures over the next six years. Given the devastating impact that serious disease outbreaks can have on farmers, society and the economy, the aim of the strategy is to put greater focus on precautionary measures, disease surveillance, controls and research, in order to reduce the incidence of animal disease and minimise the impact of outbreaks when they do occur.

However, the new strategy encompasses much more than just the control of animal diseases. It also focuses on issues which are inextricably linked to animal health, such as public health, food safety, animal welfare, sustainable development and research.

Priorities will be re-evaluated to ensure that funding and resources are employed in areas of most benefit to European citizens. Moreover, all those involved with animal health will have clear responsibilities in ensuring that the goals of the new strategy are met.

The Commission believes that a new Strategy was necessary for many reasons, such as:

- The number of EU member states increasing from 12 to 27;
- The emergence of new threats and the increased volumes of trade;
- The estimate that by 2020, World demand for animal protein will increase by 50%;
- That 87 new species of human pathogens have been recognised since 1980;
- That 60% of human pathogens are zoonotic, as are 85% of emerging pathogens;
- That any global pandemic could cost $1 trillion.

Much has already been done such as the control of BSE, but more efforts are needed to reach a high level of public health and food safety. At the same time, the farming community and the rural economy should be supported and the economic growth/cohesion and competitiveness should be improved. Last but not least sustainable farming practices and animal welfare should be promoted.

Of course, imports should not be forgotten. The safety of imported products should be improved, more focused controls should be implemented and stronger measures should be taken against illegal imports.

With the need for a modern legal framework, the Strategy is envisaged to replace the existing series of linked interrelated policy actions within a single policy framework, and also to converge as far as possible with the international recommendations, standards and guidelines of the OIE/Codex. Efficient cost and responsibility sharing schemes are envisaged, to be developed via categorisations of diseases.

The Strategy also deals with research and science, in that collaboration should be strengthened between European Agencies and national bodies and the Community Reference Labs. A research action plan is also to be developed to promote innovation and research, with appropriate funding and international cooperation.

**Next steps:**

This strategy is a recommendation of the Commission towards the other EU institutions and now the Commission is waiting for the outcome of the Council, the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee. A detailed action plan will be presented during 2008. At European level Official vets will be represented through the CVO’s, and we need to make sure that other veterinarians are also represented.

For the veterinary profession, pillar 3 – developing biosecurity on farm level – is seen as the most important part of the strategy. An advisory committee on animal health will include representative stakeholders such as producers, farmers, the industry, pet animals. The broader veterinary profession through FVE – the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe of which Veterinary Ireland is an active member - also will participate.
NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS AUTHORITY (NERA) INSPECTIONS

SFA inform us that the National Employment Rights Authority (NERA) has been established on an interim basis with the appointment of the Director, Ger Deering, and the establishment of NERA inspection offices in Carlow and Dublin. NERA’s temporary website states that it was set up to “promote compliance with employment rights legislation and to provide information on employment rights”. It “promotes compliance” through the visitation to businesses by Labour Inspectors, who have “dawn raid” powers, and can advise on, or impose sanctions against, any infringements of employment rights legislation that they encounter. Generally, though, in the first instance the inspectors will be advising rather than sanctioning.

In the first six months of operations, NERA Inspectors made over 6,000 visits to businesses including a number of Veterinary Practices, and by the end of 2007, almost €1.5 million had been collected as a result of “inspection activity”. At the end of 2007, an additional 20 Labour Inspectors have been appointed with a further 39 Inspectors to be appointed in early 2008.

NERA will be launching a public awareness campaign from 10th January 2008.

HSA GUIDE FOR MANAGERS

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) has published a Guide for senior managers on their responsibilities in the workplace for Health and Safety. The Guide highlights the key areas to consider when ensuring good governance of workplace Health and Safety.

The Guide is available to download from the HSA website www.hsa.ie - direct link:


Health and Safety Inspectors from the HSA have undertaken inspection activities at a number of veterinary practices in 2007, and we would assume that this trend will increase in 2008.

EMPLOYMENT LAW - ARE YOU COMPLIANT?

With the enlarged NERA Inspector Corps, increased activity by Health and Safety Inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), and the imminent appointment of inspectors under the Veterinary Council of Ireland’s Practice Accreditation Scheme (PAS),, we would urge all members to review their Employment Rights and Health and Safety procedures, policies and protocols to ensure maximum compliance.

Veterinary Ireland HQ has available a CD and Advice Pack for members, which includes useful templates, advice and articles, for improving Health and Safety and Human Resource/Employment Law requirements in Veterinary Practices. Advice packs can be requested by e-mail from Veterinary Ireland HQ (HQ@vetireland.ie) with the Subject line of “Employment Law Advice Pack”, and including your name, and address in the text of the e-mail.

Any Veterinary Ireland members who wish to discuss specific problems or concerns they have regarding Employment Law or Human Resources matters, should contact the Operations Executive, Peter Bishtont, at Veterinary Ireland HQ on 01-457-7976. HQ has access to a number of advice services including affiliations to the Small Firms Association and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

All conversations are treated in strict confidence and third parties are not given the identities of members making the enquiries. While this service is available to offer some clarity to this complicated area of legislation, any responses given should not be treated as legal advice, which, if required, should be sought from member’s own solicitors.
NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS FOR 2008
A “Health Check” for me and my Practice

1. Be sure that my membership of Veterinary Ireland is renewed—as this can help with the rest of my resolutions.
2. Become more actively involved in the activities of my professional organisation.
3. Comply with the requirements of the Animal Remedies Regulations.
4. Report any “suspected adverse reactions” to the Irish Medicines Board.
5. Switch some more of my focus to working with clients to “prevent” animal disease.
6. Review the Safety Statement for my Practice.
7. Ensure that my Staffing Manual, employment and partnership arrangements are properly documented and in order.
8. Take an August break to Dublin - and attend the WSAVA Congress 2008.
9. Get my 20 CVE Credits (at least) for the year.
10. Identify and make necessary changes to improve my Work/Life balance.

DANGEROUS GOODS REGULATIONS 2007

The Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road Regulations (SI 288) were signed into law on 13th June 2007.

We have been advised by Veterinary Environmental Management (VEM) that practices who move goods classified as “dangerous” under the Regulation (e.g. sharps, X-ray Fixer etc), even to clinical waste contractors, are deemed to be “consignors” and so are obliged under the regulations to engage a suitably qualified Dangerous Goods Safety Advisor (DGSA). A member of staff can be trained to obtain a valid vocational training certificate, or an external DGSA can be engaged.

Some practices have recently been inspected, with the inspector asking to see the DGSA’s certificate, an appointment letter and the DGSA’s annual report.

We would encourage members to contact their own Clinical Waste contractors, or VEM, in order to ensure their compliance with these Regulations. VEM offer compliance management services (including a DGSA) and can be contacted on 01-281-9744.

Are Your Contact Details Correct?

Veterinary Ireland provides a free information service to its members to ensure they are up to date with recent developments and forthcoming events.

Throughout the year Veterinary Ireland Members’ details can change, through moving job, home, bank, new telephones, new e-mails, etc.

Veterinary Ireland records can only be reliable so long as correct details are maintained, so it is imperative that members keep us informed of any changes.

So if any of your details have changed, or you wish to add to or amend your Interest Groups then please contact Kira, Marie or Susanne on 01-457-7976, or at HQ@vetireland.ie as soon as possible.

E-MAIL Alerts

Veterinary Ireland HQ sends members regular “E-mail Alerts” on topical issues. If you have not received any “E-mail Alerts”, then it is likely we do not have your e-mail address listed.

To rectify this, please send an e-mail to HQ@vetireland.ie putting the words “E-MAIL ALERT” in the subject line. Please also include your name, address, telephone numbers etc in the e-mail text.

Veterinary Ireland Diary 2008

All members of Veterinary Ireland should by now have received their own copy of the 2008 Veterinary Ireland Diary. Published in association with IFP Media, and kindly supported by Bovidec BVD Vaccine, the Diary provides a handy tool for members, either in the surgery, office or vehicle and includes useful contact details as well as a full week to view 2008 Diary. We hope that members will find the Diary useful and a further bonus for continued membership of Veterinary Ireland.

We have sent it to you as a token of our thanks for your support for the Organisation.
WSAVA 2008 - HOME HOSTING

WSAVA 2008, as a prestigious World Class event, will attract a large number of Veterinary Surgeons from around the world and VICAS are hoping to be able to offer some delegates the opportunity to stay with Irish Veterinary Surgeons.

If any member may be able to help with home-hosting WSAVA delegates in Dublin or surrounding Counties in August 2008, then please contact Mike Woods on 01-280-3303.

WSAVA 2008 - LINGUISTS REQUIRED

VICAS is looking for people who will be willing to join in the promotion and marketing side of WSAVA 2008.

If there are German, Dutch, Greek, Italian or French speakers specifically who would be willing to travel to Europe in order to promote this conference we would be delighted if you could contact Nicola Neumann at Neumann@eircom.net.

VICAS would like to stress also that this is not only the WSAVA conference but also the FECAVA conference and would encourage everyone to think European, and to attend the FECAVA day.

SFA NATIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Members who wish to increase their knowledge of running an effective Small to Medium Sized Enterprise (SME) such as a Veterinary Practice should look no further than the courses offered by the Small Firms Association’s National Centre of Excellence.

The NCE has all the programme information and dates for 2008 on its website, including several new programmes, based on feedback from its first year of Education provision. The range of training providers has also been broadened to offer even more scope.

There is also a free Training Needs Analysis available on the homepage of the NCE Website, provided by the Irish Institute of Training and Development. This tool can help members identify any areas of business or management in which they need improvement or additional training.

Full details of all the courses provided by the NCE in 2008, most with a substantial FAS Subsidy, can be obtained from Eavan Carroll on 01-605-1523 / Locall 1890-546 546 or e-mail eavan.carroll@ibec.ie, or on the NCE website www.centreofexcellence.ie

SFA - CRIME SURVEY

Crime in Ireland is a constant concern for businesses. In 2005, the SFA crime survey showed that 41% of businesses are victims of crime and that the cost of crime had increased 56% from the previous survey in 2003. Crime is costing business on average €425 million a year with the average cost per incident for a small business being €5,403. The 2005 survey results also showed that 31% of business people were targeted in their home for violent crime.

The SFA continues to lobby vigorously in this area on behalf of its members, in submissions to the Government and through the media. As an affiliate member of SFA, and to assist them in their efforts, we would ask if members would take a few minutes to complete the SFA online questionnaire at:

www.ibec.ie/0/SFA_Crime_Survey_2007

The information given will be critical in developing SFA policy positions. Participation by Veterinary Ireland Members before 11th January will be greatly appreciated.
MEMBERSHIP 2008
Veterinary Ireland membership subscriptions are due for renewal from 1st January 2008.

Subscriptions for 2008 are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEMBERSHIP (inc. Primary Interest Group)</td>
<td>€ 450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each Additional Interest Group</td>
<td>€ 85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Preferential Rates**

- VOA/IMPACT/IFUT Members: € 225*
- YEAR 1,2 & 3 GRADUATES: € 210*
- RETIRED MEMBER: € 110
- STUDENTS (3 Interest Groups): € 30

**Cap for 2007**: € 735

(* NB: Direct Debit mandate must be signed to avail of these rates.)

Membership includes a free 12-month (Jan-Dec 2008) subscription to the Irish Veterinary Journal. For non-members an IVJ Subscription is €200.

For the majority of members - those who have completed a Direct Debit Mandate - no further action is required. Direct Debits will be processed in the normal way and deducted from your account at the end of January 2008. Although this is the preferred method of payment, cheques made payable to Veterinary Ireland are accepted. Members who pay by cheque will receive payment requests in coming weeks.

BEST WISHES FOR 2008

The Staff at Veterinary Ireland HQ, Kira, Marie, Susanne, Cathy, Peter and John, would like to wish all our members a very Happy and Prosperous New Year 2008.
GUIDELINES ON PRESCRIBING INTRAMAMMAMRIES
IN ACCORDANCE WITH NEW
ANIMAL REMEDIES REGULATIONS 2007

From 1 January 2008 all mastitis tubes move into the P.O.M. category (ie dry cow and lactating cow antibiotic tubes will need a prescription signed by the farmers’ own vet before they can be sold to the farmer).

All our clients requiring such tubes will need to get a prescription from their vet before they can go and buy tubes from the outlet of their choice.

The prescription can only be written by the veterinary surgeon charged with looking after these animals in all aspects, surgical and medical, on a 24 hour a day, 7 days a week basis; ie: the vet who attends the farm in a full-time capacity.

Your clients will have a reasonable supply of tubes sourced without a script before the rule change. As 2008 unfolds dairy clients will need to source prescriptions before going to the pharmacy, vet shop or licensed merchant outlet to purchase the tubes.

The prescription will be valid for a maximum of one year and can be written to supply quite a few months’ supply of the antibiotics.

These are the maximum limits but Veterinary Ireland instructs its members that only a reasonable amount be written for supply, and validity of script should only be for whatever period the farmers’ vet feels is appropriate for that farm and those cows under his/her care. In other words, if the farm is experiencing a difficult time with a mastitis problem, then a specific type of tube should only be prescribed for a short term before a re-evaluation of the problem should occur.

This re-evaluation may lead to the prescribing of a different drug or may even lead to husbandry changes only, with little or no medicines required. Then a new script is supplied.

On the other hand, a herd with little or no mastitic problems may only need a very small amount of tube supply on the prescription, and the vet may feel there is no need for a re-evaluation for up to the maximum twelve months. Then the script is written for the maximum validity period. The length of validity of the script is written on the prescription by the signing veterinary surgeon.

/P.T.O.
Veterinary Ireland had vigorous, robust and protracted negotiations with the Department of Agriculture that culminated in the signing of the new Animal Remedies Regulations 2007. During those negotiations it was suggested that a co-operative vet could sign prescriptions based on results of laboratory tests and might never have to visit the farm. Veterinary Ireland argued strongly against this suggestion and the final outcome is as described above. However, a provision does exist where the co-operative or milk processor can be involved in the decision-making process that leads to the writing of the script.

Through a process called Schedule 8 the co-operative, the farmer and the vet who runs the mastitis control programme on the farm, a series of recommendations are produced to help reduce the incidence of mastitis on the farm. The vet who runs the programme can also write the prescriptions for that farm assuming that he/she is the farmers’ home-vet. If he/she is not the home vet then the home vet must be included in the mastitis control programme and he or she only can write the prescription.

This we feel is an excellent outcome of the negotiations and it behoves us as veterinary practitioners to ensure that our clients’ experience no difficulties in sourcing the medicines that they need to maintain a healthy herd. If asked to supply a prescription, then please do so in accordance with best practice for the animals under our care. Ensure the minimum of fuss as our farmer clients grapple with the new requirement of prescriptions for tubes. Make every effort to supply the correct script for the correct focused medicine required to treat the known bacteria that is causing the mastitic disease in the cows under our care. Make sure the period of validity is appropriate for the farm and the amount is correct for that particular herd.

The prescription is in triplicate, stating the date, the address of the practice, the details of the farmer and the farm (herd) and is signed by the vet. One copy is kept by the signing vet, the second copy is held by the farmer and the third is for the dispenser of the tubes.

Peadar O Scanaill
Chairman
Animal Remedies Committee