

PRESS INFORMATION

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Regulatory Convergence Key to Improve Access to Veterinary Medicines say Global Veterinary Associations

Eleven global veterinary associations have signed a [Position Statement](#) calling for increased regulatory convergence and harmonization in order to ensure that veterinarians globally can access the medicines they need to treat their patients. The Statement, initiated by the [World Small Animal Veterinary Association](#) (WSAVA), is the latest step in its campaign to secure more equal access to vital veterinary medicines for companion animal veterinarians around the world.

Restricted access to veterinary medicines because of regulatory issues in regions of the world including Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia, is a long-standing problem and limits the efforts of many veterinarians to provide optimal care to their patients. Sometimes, even essential medicines, such as those required to properly manage pain, are difficult to access, causing immense and unnecessary suffering.

The WSAVA recently formed a [Therapeutics Guidelines Group](#) (TGG) to spearhead its work in this area and to campaign to ensure more open access to these medications. Its new Position Statement is designed to raise awareness of the problems around regulation and to call on governments and regulatory bodies to act. The Statement has been endorsed by:

- [The World Veterinary Association](#)
- [HealthforAnimals](#)
- [The Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations](#)
- [The Commonwealth Veterinary Association](#)
- [The Federación Iberoamericana de Asociaciones Veterinarias de Animales de Compañía](#)
- [The Federation of Asian Small Animal Veterinary Associations](#)
- [The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe](#)
- [The Federation of Asian Veterinary Associations](#)

- [The Fédération des Associations Francophones Vétérinaires pour Animaux de Compagnie](#)
- [The Caribbean Veterinary Medical Association](#)

It follows a 2018 [Position Statement](#) from the WSAVA outlining a range of factors which restrict global access to veterinary medicines and the significant impact on animal health and welfare this causes. This statement also received wide support from the veterinary sector, including those associations listed above.

In a survey of its members conducted by the WSAVA during 2016-2017, 75% of respondents confirmed that that problems in accessing veterinary medical products hampered their ability to meet the needs of their patients and 20% assessed the impact of this issue as resulting in a severe restriction on their ability to provide a high level of care. During its 2019 World Congress in Toronto, Canada, in July, the WSAVA's Therapeutics Guidelines Group convened a summit meeting of global veterinary associations and stakeholders to discuss potential solutions. The new Position Statement was one of the outputs from this meeting.

Commenting, Dr Walt Ingwersen, WSAVA Past President, said: "Difficulty in accessing therapeutics to treat patients is a critical issue for companion animal veterinarians in many parts of the world. It causes huge frustration and means that many, if not most, companion animals globally do not receive optimum care. It's a situation which requires urgent change and, working in partnership with our colleagues across the veterinary sector, we are focused on bringing this about.

"While a number of issues impact the supply of veterinary medicines, duplication of the regulatory medicines approval process in various regions of the world is one of the biggest and the focus of our Joint Position Statement on Regulatory Convergence. The WSAVA Therapeutics Guidelines Group has been working hard on the issue of access to and availability of veterinary medicines and will shortly be announcing the first of a set of practical tools to support veterinarians and their associations to lobby their own governments and regulatory bodies.

"To support them, we, as a global veterinary community, will continue to demand change at a global level and our Position Statements are proving effective in increasing understanding and prompting action."

He added: "We thank our colleagues in other veterinary associations for standing with us and we will continue to collaborate closely to ensure that all veterinarians have access to the drugs they need to treat their patients."

The WSAVA represents more than 200,000 veterinarians worldwide through its 113 member associations and works to enhance standards of clinical care for companion animals. Its core

activities include the development of WSAVA Global Guidelines in key areas of veterinary practice and lobbying on important issues affecting companion animal care worldwide.

For further information:

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