

Participant Information Sheet

Study title: Understanding on-farm medicine use in dairy cattle: Addressing the knowledge gap

We would like to invite you to participate in our research study. Before you decide, we would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Talk to others about the study if you wish, and please do ask us if there is anything that is not clear.

What is the purpose of this study?

This study aims to bring about a greater understanding of the way medicines are used in dairy cattle. Currently little is known about what happens to prescribed medicines after they are sold by the veterinary practice. The focus of the study is to try and understand how medicines are used, the reasons why they are used as they are and whether this use is reflected by the veterinary sales data from your veterinary surgeon.

Why have I been invited?

You have been invited to participate in this study for one of the following reasons:

- a) You have been suggested as a suitable participant for this study by your veterinary practice
- b) You have been approached by the researchers directly because you fit the criteria for the study

There will be around 20-30 dairy farms in total recruited to this study.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide to join the study. We will describe the study and go through this information sheet with you. If you agree to take part, we will then ask you to sign a consent form. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving a reason.

What will happen if I take part and what will I have to do?

Involvement in this study will be over a period of 12 months, from September 2016 – August 2017, during which time the researcher is likely to visit 4-6 times.

During the study you will be asked to:

- Complete a participant information questionnaire gathering data about your farming enterprise
- Participate in an in-depth interview with the researcher. This interview will last approximately 60-90 minutes. This interview will be audio-recorded using an encrypted

dictaphone, and transcribed for analysis. All data used from these interviews will be made anonymous, and may include the use of anonymised quotes.

- Allow veterinary prescription data from your veterinary surgeon to be viewed. The researcher will collect data of all of the medicines prescribed to your farm over the course of a year, from September 2016-August 2017. No financial records or drug costs will be sought, the data used will include the name of the drug, formulation, volume sold and dates.
- Allow the contents of the medicine cabinet and any other areas where medicines are stored on the farm to be examined at intervals throughout the year. Photographs may be taken of relevant areas of medicine storage and use and other areas of the farm to help illustrate the research, where appropriate. These photographs will be anonymised.
- You will be asked to throw away all empty medicine packaging/bottles etc. into the bins provided for the course of the whole year. The researcher will examine the content of these bins every 2-3 months after which they can be emptied.
- Provide access to your medicine records and herd health plan for analysis

All of the data collected on the farm will be stored securely at the University of Bristol and will be completely confidential. Any names or identifying features will be removed from the data collected from this farm before it is made public.

The study is about gathering data about what happens on a day-to-day basis on your farm. This study will not provide guidance about medicine use, aim to reduce, influence or in any way change medicine use on your farm.

Will I be paid to take part in this study?

There is no payment for participation, however following participation in this study a small token of gratitude will be offered. This might be tickets to a national dairy show, a conference or gift tokens with a value in the region of £30-50

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no foreseen disadvantages or risks of taking part in this study. However suspected notifiable diseases, illegal practices or mistreatment of animals would require reporting to the relevant authority by the researcher, as they would by any other visitor to the farm.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

We cannot promise that this study will provide any immediate benefits to you, however the information we get from this study will help to inform the agricultural community, veterinarians, those in research development and policy-makers about how veterinary medicines are being used across the dairy industry. Many people enjoy participation in research, particularly expressing their views during in-depth interviews.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All information gathered about you and the farm will be handled in confidence by us. All data will be stored on encrypted computers or in locked cabinets at the University of Bristol. Audio-recordings of the interview will be made using an encrypted dictaphone. These interviews will be transcribed, coded and the results anonymised. Quotes from interviews may be used, but these will also be anonymous, any names or identifying features will be removed.

Data from this study will be available to genuine researchers upon request, and will be stored for 20 years. After this point it will be disposed of securely.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

You can withdraw from this study at any time without giving a reason.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

It is intended that the results of this study will be published in the scientific literature, and presented at national and international conferences. Results may also be publicised through the agricultural press. A 'newsletter' giving an overview of the study results will be sent to you and all other participants once the study and analysis have been completed. You will also be invited to a meeting where the results will be presented. Your individual results will not be available.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research forms the basis of a PhD project by Gwen Rees through the University of Bristol. The study has been funded by the Langford Trust, a charity promoting the practice, advancement and teaching of veterinary science.

Who has reviewed the study?

The University of Bristol Research Ethics Committee has reviewed this study

Where can I find out further information?

For any further information, please contact the lead researcher:

Gwen Rees

University of Bristol

Langford House

Langford

North Somerset

BS40 5DU

+44 7855 804270

gwen.rees@bristol.ac.uk

If you have any concerns related to your participation in this study please contact the Research Support Officer:

Dr. Christine Whiting +44 (0) 117 928 9296
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c.v.whiting@bristol.ac.uk
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