

Client Guidance on Internet Pharmacies

When looking to buy veterinary medicines online it is important to choose carefully as some of the companies selling online are not authorised and some sell fake products. There are always risks with buying online and we frequently hear issues in the press surrounding fake designer goods and concert tickets.

Legally most veterinary medicines require a prescription from the qualified veterinary surgeon that has that animal in their care. This entails examining the animal regularly to make sure that the medications being prescribed are effective and not causing any harmful side effects. In most cases this can also mean regular blood testing to check the medicine is at effective levels and/or not causing those side effects that cannot be seen externally.

To classify an animal as under our care, and ensure the animal is being managed as well as it can be, we require checks every 3 months for any prescriptions. This is to ensure the safety for your pet, the management of their condition and to monitor any changes that may suggest side effects while complying with the regulations in place.

Supply of veterinary medicines is managed by a branch of the government called the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD). They oversee inspection and authorisation of premises in the UK that manufacture, distribute, and supply veterinary products both online and in person. For more information on this role visit their website: www.vmd.defra.gov.uk or call them on 01932 336911.

They have created a scheme that is freely provided for online pharmacies to sign up to control the supply of veterinary medicines. This is to:

- Show the retailer has voluntarily applied for and been granted accreditation
- Confirm they have inspected the website and found it meets the requirements
- Reduce the risk of clients buying unauthorised veterinary medicines
- Reduce the risk of clients buying fake or ineffective veterinary medicines

Once they have been approved as meeting the standards, they are given a logo and individual ID number. This is the following and should be displayed on their website.



Accreditation involves an assessment of the website and also an on-site inspection of the premises. For information on what the requirements are for this please visit this website for the information leaflet:

http://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/pdf/leaflet_internetretailers.pdf.

There is a list of the accredited retailers online at www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/InternetRetailers/accredited-retailers.aspx

Any websites for companies not based in the UK are not under any control and should never be used.

We want all animals treated at our practice to receive the best possible care and therefore want you to pick an online pharmacy that is going to provide the right medication for your animal and supply a genuine safe product.

Any questions please call the practice on 01278 450080 or email us at info@quantockvets.co.uk