



# SAVA Guidelines on Equine Practice Services during Covid-19 Lockdown

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Ver 1.0

Service	Advice
House calls	As most consultations will fall within this category for equine practice, recognize the greater risk to veterinary personnel entering a holding and the need for owner risk assessment (see attached document). Maintain social distancing within the household as much as possible and consider the need for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as necessary
Wellness Call outs	Postpone.
Food sales	Continue but maintain social distancing (see attached document), arrange delivery or use eCommerce.
Medication refills	Continue but maintain social distancing (see attached document), arrange drop-off or use eCommerce.
vaccinations	Administration of boosters of vaccine series should be postponed. Postpone other vaccinations if the risk of exposure can be otherwise managed in the interim. Competitive Bodies will allow necessary vaccinations to be postponed until after the lock down is lifted. NB please see point (5) below
Life threatening conditions	manage using social distancing. With cases from high-risk households, determine the required PPE and whether the case can be managed at your clinic (see attached document for description of low vs high risk households).
Management of painful conditions	Manage by telemedicine when possible. Remember the requirement for record keeping is essentially the same in these conditions as it would be for a normal consult. If examination is needed and the horse is from a low-risk holding, examination and a call out maybe be necessary, maintaining social distancing.
Management of chronic conditions	Maintain by telemedicine/ telephonic consultation when possible. Remember record keeping requirements
Surgical procedures for emergency reasons	If the patient can be temporarily maintained on analgesics with a low risk of negative consequences, delay the surgery. If not, proceed with the surgery if holding is low-risk. If holding is high-risk, determine the required PPE and whether the case can be managed at your clinic or on the farm, or if possible isolate the animal from any high-risk individuals for 2-3 days to minimize the risk of contamination of the haircoat and then proceed with the surgery

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Other non-urgent surgical procedures	Postpone.
Routine hematologic monitoring	This should be postponed unless it is felt that a delay would substantially increase the risk of complications.
Routine faecal/urine testing	Postpone
Euthanasia	Humane euthanasia should proceed, limiting social interactions as much as is reasonable while respecting the needs of the human-animal bond. Elective Euthanasia should be postponed. Consider necessary PPE for staff if the animal is from a high-risk household.
Visitation of hospitalised patients by clients	Should be restricted where possible

- (1) All effort should be made in all ways to limit spread of the COVID 19 virus from one holding to another, this should include but is not limited to the use of disinfectant sprays of clothing and equipment as well as the use of protection clothing and hand sanitation.
- (2) As a general comment anything that can wait for 3 weeks without affecting the health or welfare of the horse should be postponed, including but not limited to vaccinations, surgeries and lameness workups.
- (3) Principles of social distancing described in the accompanying SAVA document, together with allowing as few people as is necessary for any procedure or consultation, and PPE where indicated should be followed.
- (4) Please remember that as a profession we are expected to act responsibly and professionally during these uncertain times and the fact that we are able to continue practicing for emergency purposes should not be abused.
- (5) Please note that with regards to Equine Influenza vaccination, vaccination should proceed only after lock-down is lifted and the horse will be able to compete/ race 7 days after the vaccination is administered (as confirmed with the SAEF and NHA). However, horses on an annual vaccination protocol must be vaccinated on or before the annual due date. Should vaccination occur after the date due, the primary vaccinations course would then be required to be repeated. It is therefore recommended that annual equine influenza vaccinations can be considered as an essential procedure.