

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Leading Vets and Dog Owners Condemn Vaccine Manufacturer for Promoting Unnecessary Vaccinations**

This month, June 2009, has been designated National Vaccination Month by vaccine manufacturer Intervet. The multi-national's marketing campaign offers a discounted full 'starter' series for dogs, cats and rabbits whose vaccines have lapsed by 18 months. Yet it has not been scientifically proven that dogs, cats and rabbits actually need annual boosters, nor that they need to start the whole course again. Rather, scientific studies show that dogs and cats, once immune, are unlikely to need vaccinating again.

Thirty-three vets and doctors, from around the world, have signed an important letter (attached) to clarify the science. They quote world veterinary bodies that have announced publicly that annual vaccination is not necessary, and that it can be harmful.

Concerned pet owners have signed another letter, asking that the veterinary profession, regulatory bodies, pet charities and government stop promoting or facilitating unnecessary and potentially harmful vaccines. Many of the signatories have signed on behalf of the dogs who they believe were made ill, or died, as a result of unnecessary shots.

"We are not suggesting that pets are left unprotected," says Canine Health Concern's Catherine O'Driscoll. "We understand that everyone wants their pets to be protected against deadly viral diseases. But we are asking that vets stop promoting and administering unnecessary boosters. All medical procedures come with a risk – even the humble aspirin – and no medical procedure should be performed without good cause."

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Although three-year vaccines are now licensed, many vets in practice are sticking with vaccines that have been licensed for only one year. The Veterinary Medicines Directorate, which is supposedly meant to oversee the safety of veterinary products on behalf of consumers, needs to take the science on board and ensure that the public aren't paying out money unnecessarily, and aren't subjecting their family friends to unjustified injections that have the potential to cause harm. The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, the UK's veterinary professional body, is also urged to embrace the science and act to protect the safety of pets, thereby meriting the trust of their clients.

Ends

9 June 2009

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