Animal Medicines Australia

Embracing the benefits of animal health

2026-27 PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION

Animal Medicines Australia

Animal Medicines Australia (AMA) is the peak industry body representing the leading animal health companies in Australia. Our members are innovators, manufacturers, registrants and suppliers of a broad range of veterinary medicines. Our members work at the cutting edge of animal health science to prevent, control and treat disease across the livestock, equine and companion animal sectors. Products from our member companies account for more than 80% of all animal health products in Australia.

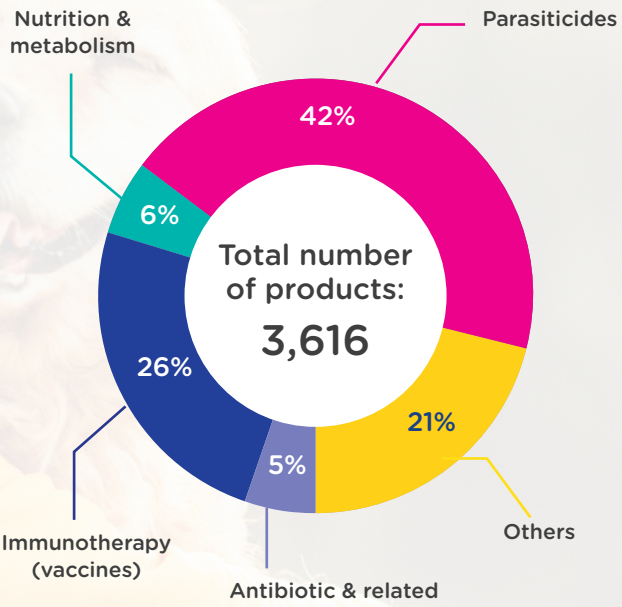
Industry snapshot

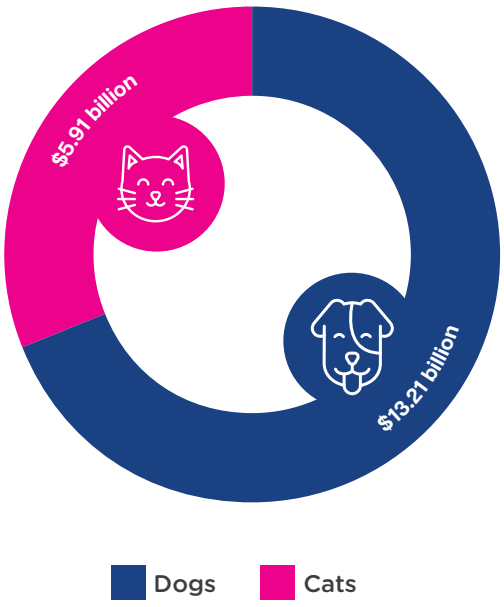
Preventative **health products**, including vaccines (26%) and parasiticides (42%) make up a large proportion of total annual product sales, while antimicrobials comprise around 5% of total annual product sales, nutrition and metabolism 6% with the remaining 21% including products such as pain relief, anti-inflammatories, nutritional supplements etc.[1]

Historically, the economic contribution of Australia's animal industries has been dominated by livestock production – the nominal gross value of Australian's livestock and livestock products is expected to increase by 14% to $46 billion in 2025-26.[2]

Australia's veterinary pharmaceutical sector is currently valued at approximately USD $1.1 billion and is expected to increase to around USD $1.55 billion by 2030 – translating to a CAGR of 7.84%.

MAJOR VETERINARY MEDICINE CATEGORIES (by sales[1])





EXPENDITURE ON COMPANION ANIMALS

Expenditure on companion animals is considerable with increasing ownership rates and the evolving relationship Australians have with their pets – as they are increasingly seen as a member of the family. **Expenditure on companion animals was $21.3 billion in 2025*, with households spending a combined $13.21 billion on their dogs and $5.91 billion on their cats.**

** In 2025, a more rigorous and scientific approach to removing outliers was adopted for reporting expenditure averages. This involved using the IQR (Interquartile Range) method, which is a widely accepted statistical technique for finding outliers in data.*

[1] APVMA, Annual Sales Data: https://www.apvma.gov.au/about/accountability-and-reporting/annual-product-sales-data
[2] ABARES, Agricultural Commodities Report December 2025: https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/research-topics/agricultural-outlook/december-2025#outlook-for-livestock-and-livestock-products

2026-27 Budget Priorities

AMA seeks commitments from the Government in supporting the following priorities:

1. **Creating incentives for investment in animal medicines**
2. **Creating incentives for innovation in animal medicines**
3. **Creating opportunities for improved access to animal medicines**

AMA and its members have a long-standing commitment to an animal health industry that is responsible and sustainable. Our members' products are essential tools that can help meet economic, environmental and social challenges. We look forward to continuing to work with government to improve animal health outcomes across the livestock, equine and companion animal sector.

Summary of recommendations

Priority 1: Creating incentives for investment in animal medicines

1	Increase data protection for new veterinary medicines containing an innovative active constituent to 15 years.
2	Increase data protection for new veterinary medicines containing an approved active constituent to 10 years.
3	Amend the Patents Act 1990 to provide for an extension of term for veterinary pharmaceutical patents of up to 5 years to compensate for mandatory regulatory time under review, in alignment with provisions currently provided for human pharmaceuticals under s70 if the Act.
4	$9 million per year for APVMA's public benefit functions.

Priority 2: Increase incentives for innovation in animal medicines

5	Fund the development of Australian Carbon Credit Units that support methane-reducing animal health products.

Priority 3: Creating opportunities for improved access to animal medicines

6	$12.2 million per year to expand the Commonwealth Prac Payment Scheme to provide financial support for veterinary medicine students undertaking work placements in rural and regional areas.
7	$6 million per year for a Rural Bonding Scheme to forgive HECS-HELP debt to encourage early career veterinarians to practice in rural and regional areas.
8	Support the expansion of veterinary telehealth services, to complement and expand existing services after hours and ensure access to veterinary care, particularly in remote areas.
9	$7.5 million per year for 4 years for a pilot program subsidising private vets who treat injured wildlife and unowned (stray) animals.
10	Support better access to animal health products for vulnerable pet owners by investing $10 million towards developing and implementing a pilot program for the provision of support and veterinary services for vulnerable people and their pets.
11	Invest $8 million over 5 years towards establishing a coordinating committee comprising government, industry and community representatives to develop and implement a National Companion Animal Policy.
12	Invest $5 million towards supporting the establishment and recognition of new qualifications, training programmes and accreditation frameworks that directly contribute to improved pet health and welfare.
13	Invest $5 million upfront and an additional $3 million per annum towards expanding Australia's comprehensive human health AMR surveillance program (AURA) to include animal health.
14	Invest $1 million upfront and an additional $1 million per annum to support the CSIRO's work towards developing an animal vaccination strategy and defined implementation plan.

Priority 1

Creating incentives for investment in animal medicines

The animal health industry plays a critical role in safeguarding Australia's food security, biosecurity, improving animal welfare, and supporting sustainable production. The sector has a strong history of innovation and an ambitious goal of a world where the threat of disease is significantly reduced, fewer animals are lost or suffering from disease, agricultural productivity and food security and safety are improved, and lower emissions are associated with animal production.

Expanding the range of veterinary medicines available to Australian veterinarians and farmers will improve agricultural productivity, ensure food security and boost animal health business productivity.

AMA members support high regulatory standards to ensure products on the Australian market are safe, effective, of consistent quality and will not pose undue risks to animals, users, consumers or trade markets. Our priority is to ensure that the APVMA provides independent, high quality, timely, predictable, science- and risk-based pre-market assessments of veterinary medicines, and effective, timely and meaningful post-market compliance monitoring and enforcement.

The veterinary medicine sector is one of Australia's most highly regulated industries, with significant regulatory requirements regarding efficacy, safety and quality assurance. The majority of animal medicines available in Australia are currently manufactured overseas, alongside small-volume, high-value global exports of Australian-made veterinary medicines. With an efficient regulatory environment, a sustainable workforce, and strong investment in innovation, the sector is well placed to deliver long-term productivity gains that benefit all Australians.

All animal health products are subject to a rigorous and independent pre-market assessment process by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), similar to pre-market assessments conducted by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for human health pharmaceuticals. This assessment ensures that products, when used in accordance with strict label instructions, are safe and effective.

Australia's regulatory environment must support efficient and appropriate evaluation of new technologies and encourage the adoption of innovations across broad areas to address animal health challenges, such as genetics, remote sensing, management systems, information technology and robotics.

Australia's ability to deliver on sustainability goals and emissions targets, efficiency, trade (in animals and animal commodities) and economic goals is dependent on the commercialisation and adoption of new technologies, and regulation that is effective, efficient, fit for purpose, and consistent with government principles of best practice regulation[3].

[3] Australian Government Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, The Office of Impact Analysis: https://oia.pmc.gov.au

In Australia, new veterinary medicine products including a new active constituent receive 10 years data protection, while new veterinary medicines including an existing active constituent receive just 3 years data protection (compared with 5 years for crop protection products).

Smarter regulation and efficient systems that ensure regulatory settings support innovation, build local resilience, and foster new technologies and scientific breakthroughs will deliver real productivity improvements across agriculture and the animal health sector.

By incentivising investment in Australia's animal medicines sector, veterinarians, farmers and pet owners would have improved, more rapid access to innovative veterinary medicines – improving agricultural productivity and ensuring Australia's farmers are able to compete more effectively with their international counterparts and continue to access critical trade markets.

Increase data protection period for animal health products

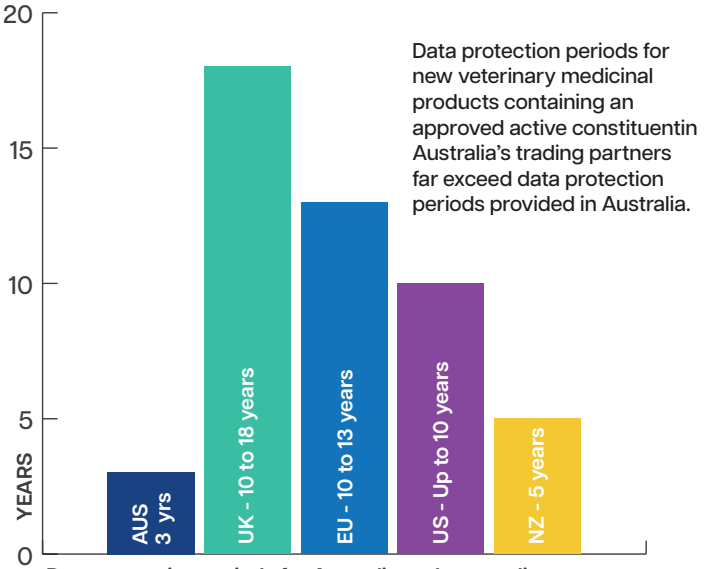
Innovation in veterinary medicines could include new chemical entities, formulations, delivery mechanisms, packaging, compliance aids and other platforms to assist in the delivery of healthcare for animals.

Innovation and investment in animal health requires scientific and risk-based approaches and policy settings that aim to eliminate barriers, provide seamless systems between registrations and product uses, incentivise development of local infrastructure and resources, facilitate collaboration, support regulatory innovation, promote unencumbered trade of animals and animal products, support animal welfare of both livestock and companion animals, and meet the challenges of social license.

Australia's business operating environment has important ramifications. The Australian market is small, which limits the ability of companies to recover the costs of bringing a new product to market. Particularly for new and emerging technologies, there may be minimal regulatory guidance or standards available, which can lengthen the registration assessment period and stifle opportunities for new technologies to be brought to the local market. Streamlining interactions between industry, stakeholders and government, and recognising intellectual property and other incentives that support commercial decision-making, will encourage investment in Australia.

In Australia, new veterinary medicine products including a new active constituent receive 10 years data protection, while new veterinary medicines including an existing active constituent receive just 3 years protection (compared with 5 years for crop protection products).

As the cost of developing and registering veterinary medicines increases, opportunities to recoup those costs within that three-year period are diminishing – acting as a significant disincentive for registrants to bring products into the Australian market.



Data protection periods for Australia and our trading partners

By comparison, data protection periods for new veterinary medicinal products containing an approved active constituent of Australia's trading partners far exceed data protection periods provided in Australia. In the UK, data protection periods vary from 10 to 18 years, while registrants receive between 10- and 13-years data protection in the EU, up to 10 years in the US and five years in New Zealand.

AMA recommends the Government increase data protection periods for veterinary medicines to reflect global standards and increased costs of product development, and provide incentives for innovation and investment in the Australian market:

1. Increase data protection for new veterinary medicines containing an innovative active constituent to 15 years.
2. Increase data protection for new veterinary medicines containing an approved active constituent to 10 years.

Animal pharmaceutical patent extension program

Section 70 of the Patents Act 1990 provides for an extension of term for pharmaceutical patents of up to 5 years, to compensate innovative companies for time lost during the regulatory assessment period and effectively re-set the patent period to coincide with the regulatory approval of the pharmaceutical ingredient. This supports pharmaceutical companies generating a return on their considerable investment in developing innovative medical solutions and introducing them to the Australian market.

In order to obtain an extension of term for a patent, the following requirements must be met:

- the patent must, in substance, disclose and claim a pharmaceutical substance per se, or a pharmaceutical substance when produced by recombinant DNA technology;
- goods containing or consisting of that pharmaceutical substance must be included in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG); and
- the first regulatory approval for that pharmaceutical substance must have occurred more than 5 years after the date of the patent.

AMA recommends that the Patent Term Extension (PTE) is expanded to include veterinary pharmaceuticals registered with the APVMA and meeting the other requirements, to improve incentives for investing in the commercialisation of innovative animal health products in Australia:

3. Amend the Patents Act 1990 to provide for an extension of term for veterinary pharmaceutical patents of up to five years to compensate for mandatory regulatory time under review, in alignment with provisions currently provided for human pharmaceuticals under s70 if the Act.

Public co-investment in monitoring, compliance and enforcement activities

Approximately 95% of the APVMA's $43 million annual budget is currently funded through registration fees, charges and sales levies and is the only regulator of veterinary medicines in the OECD required to fully fund its regulatory functions under this cost recovery arrangement. This cost recovery funding model prioritises the registration of products over post-market monitoring, compliance and enforcement activities. There are, however, additional beneficiaries of compliance and enforcement activities, including consumers, livestock producers, governments and veterinarians.

Human health pharmaceuticals are regulated in a similar manner by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). The TGA receives $15 million per year to fund its public benefit activities, including some compliance and enforcement activities.

Investment by the Government for regulatory activities relating to compliance and enforcement, and chemical reconsideration, will ensure that the APVMA can focus on those activities that seek to avoid the regulatory system, including unregistered animal health products, counterfeit products and inappropriate compounding, similar to the TGA.

In 2023 the Government commissioned a review of future structure and governance arrangements for the APVMA. The Rapid Evaluation Report concluded that the APVMA's compliance and enforcement activities were under-resourced and that the annual cost of the APMVA's public benefit activities was around $8.4 million. [3]

[3] DAFF: Rapid Evaluation of the APVMA's structure and governance. Available at https://www.agriculture.gov.au/agriculture-land/farm-food-drought/ag-vet-chemicals/better-regulation-of-ag-vet-chemicals/rapid-evaluation-detailed-response/apvma-rapid-evaluation

Australian farmers, veterinarians and pet owners rely on the APVMA to assure them that animal health products and veterinary medicines are safe and effective. Community confidence in the ongoing safety and efficacy of important veterinary medicines, which are crucial to the health and welfare of our pets and livestock, will be enhanced by Government funding of APVMA's post-market compliance activities.

AMA recommends that the government fund APVMA post-market public benefit activities:

4. $9 million per year for APVMA's public benefit functions.

Priority 1
Creating incentives for investment in animal medicines

Recommendations:

1. Increase data protection for new veterinary medicines containing an innovative active constituent to 15 years.

2. Increase data protection for new veterinary medicines containing an approved active constituent to 10 years.

3. Amend the Patents Act 1990 to provide for an extension of term for veterinary pharmaceutical patents of up to 5 years to compensate for mandatory regulatory time under review, in alignment with provisions currently provided for human pharmaceuticals under s70 if the Act.

4. $9 million per year for APVMA's public benefit functions.

Priority 2

Increase incentives for innovation in animal medicines

Supporting the livestock sector to respond to challenges from climate change

Australia has a variable, unique and often challenging environment and Australian farmers have always been adaptable and keen to embrace innovation to help them meet these challenges. The increased severity of environmental conditions and frequency of natural disasters like drought, flood, storms and bushfires bring with them an even greater need for innovative solutions. Changing environmental conditions are altering the distribution and behaviour of many animal and insect species, in turn leading to changing distributions of vector-borne diseases.

Global population changes are expected to generate a 35% increase in demand for food by 2030, particularly for animal protein from meat, eggs or dairy. To meet the growing demands for animal protein Australian livestock farmers will be required to improve productivity while simultaneously reducing their environmental impact and ensuring agricultural operations remain economically viable.

Improving animal health offers a cost-effective and sustainable opportunity for livestock industries to reduce emissions and manage climate risks.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (UNFAO) reports that improving animal health has the "potential to reduce emissions from the livestock sector significantly, while still meeting the additional 20 percent animal protein demand projected by 2050" and that improved animal health, breeding and feed management has the potential to reduce livestock emissions by up to 55%.[4]

Improving animal health and husbandry practices could reduce emissions by 16 to 30%,[5] enabling livestock producers to meet the needs of an additional 1.9 billion people without increasing emissions. A 10% decline in global animal disease levels is associated with an 800 million tonne decrease in livestock greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Disease among cattle was shown to increase greenhouse gas emissions by up to a quarter per unit of milk and more than double per beef carcass.

According to the UNFAO, improved animal health should be one of the key action points to reduce GHG emissions – yet "livestock, with only 2% of climate finance received, has been one of the least financed sub-sectors."[6]

The Government has an opportunity to change this dynamic in Australia. Investments in animal health not only support more productive livestock systems

[4]UNFAO: Pathways towards lower emissions; available at https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc9029en
[5]HealthforAnimals: Animal health and Sustainability – A Global Data Analysis; available at https://www.healthforanimals.org/reports/animal-health-and-sustainability/
[6]UNFAO: The role of animal health in national climate commitments; available at https://www.fao.org/3/cc0431en/cc0431en.pdf
[7]HealthforAnimals: How to Advance NDCs and Climate Strategies through animal health; available at https://healthforanimals.org/pages/how-to-advance-ndcs-and-climate-strategies-through-animal-health/

but also result in lower emissions and superior animal welfare outcomes, all while meeting increasing demands for animal-sourced foods for growing populations. This investment would offer a pathway for strengthening the sustainability of livestock farming while meeting global climate commitments. Through HealthforAnimals, the global animal health sector has developed practical guidance for leveraging animal health to deliver on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and national climate strategies. [7]

AMA encourages Federal and State governments to recognise and incorporate animal health improvements made by livestock industries within climate change policy frameworks and emissions auditing systems. Incorporating animal health benefits will avoid market distortions in investments that may result in negative animal health and welfare outcomes.

AMA notes that the National Farmers Federation (NFF) is calling for funding to develop Australian Carbon Credit Units that support methane-reducing feed technologies and whole-of-farm emissions reduction practices. AMA supports the provision of additional funding that explores opportunities for emission mitigation via animal health products.

AMA recommends that the government support the development of Carbon Credit Units that support the development and adoption of methane-reducing animal health products.

5. Fund the development of Australian Carbon Credit Units that support methane-reducing animal health products.

According to the UNFAO, improved animal health should be one of the key action points to reduce GHG emissions – yet "livestock, with only 2% of climate finance received, has been one of the least financed sub-sectors."

Priority 2

Increase incentives for innovation in animal medicines

Recommendations:

5. Fund the development of Australian Carbon Credit Units that support methane-reducing animal health products.

Priority 3

Creating opportunities for improved access to animal medicines

Supporting the veterinary workforce

In 2021, veterinarians were included on the Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List but remain an occupation considered to be in shortage in the 2022 Skills Priority List report.[8] In 2022, veterinary nurses were also assessed as being in shortage.

Declining numbers of veterinarians and support staff across all sectors, including livestock and companion animal clinical practice, research and academia, industry, government and pathology, poses significant challenges not just for animal health outcomes but also for food production and trade, innovation, environmental outcomes and biosecurity. Furthermore, 75% of new and emerging human infectious diseases are zoonotic – meaning that they originate in animals. A robust, sustainable veterinary and animal health network is necessary for preventing, diagnosing and treating animal diseases.

The drivers behind the veterinary workforce shortage are varied and complex. While a long-term decline in demand in the livestock sector has resulted in a lack of available veterinary services in rural areas, the increased demand resulting from a rapid growth in pet ownership has also led to changes in industry structure.

Compounding these challenges, the veterinary sector bears significant economic costs (often in the form of "in-kind" labour) in maintaining animal health and welfare on behalf of the broader overall community – particularly during natural disasters or by caring for unowned animals (e.g. wildlife and strays). Veterinarians have a legal responsibility to provide care for unowned animals and not only forego their usual income but also bear the cost of labour and materials associated with that care – in a manner that is not replicated in any other sector.

Meeting the challenges facing the sector in retaining and maintaining a sustainable workforce, as well as providing better support models for veterinary care will alleviate some of the pressure on veterinary services and support better access to animal health products for Australia's livestock, horses, pets and wildlife

AMA recommends the Government develop measures to provide better access to animal health products by supporting the veterinary workforce, including:

6. $12.2 million per year to expand the Commonwealth Prac Payment Scheme to provide financial support for veterinary medicine students undertaking work placements in rural and regional areas.

7. $6 million per year for a Rural Bonding Scheme to forgive HECS-HELP debt to encourage early career veterinarians to practice in rural and regional areas.

8. Support the expansion of veterinary telehealth services, to complement and expand existing services after hours and ensure access to veterinary care, particularly in remote areas.

9. $7.5 million per year for 4 years for a pilot program subsidising private vets who treat injured wildlife and unowned (stray) animals.

[8] Australian Government, Jobs and Skills Australia: Skills Priority List; https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/data/skills-shortages-analysis/skills-priority-list
[9] Australian Veterinary Association: Veterinary Wellness Strategy; https://www.ava.com.au/siteassets/resources/thrive/documents/ava-short-report-research-findings.pdf

Supporting vulnerable pet owners and ensuring access to veterinary care

The relationship between humans and their pets, known as the human-animal bond, is a mutually beneficial relationship between people and animals, influenced by behaviours considered essential for the health and wellbeing of both. Human and animal health sectors, however, tend to operate in silos – meaning that policy development rarely delivers positive outcomes for both people and their pets.

Currently, many veterinary practices and charities provide support and assistance to people in crisis situations, often in the form of "in-kind" labour. People experiencing crisis situations such as homelessness, financial hardship, domestic or family violence, or mental health crises, tend to be socially isolated and experiencing increased stress. A pet often provides significant emotional and social support and can even provide short-term health benefits – but, due to a lack of available support, pets can also act as a barrier to seeking assistance.

vulnerable people in highly stressful or emotional scenarios and can take responsibility for the human health aspects of veterinary care, thereby enhancing patient outcomes, improve mental health and social connection and provide critical support for veterinarians and other animal health providers.

AMA recommends the Government develop a mechanism for supporting the veterinary profession in the provision of support and veterinary services and ongoing care to vulnerable people and their pets.

10. Support better access to animal health products for vulnerable pet owners by investing $10 million towards developing and implementing a pilot program for the provision of support and veterinary services for vulnerable people and their pets.

Nationally consistent companion animal policies

Australia's pet ownership rate has continued to rise, with 73% of households across metropolitan, regional and remote Australia now home to one or more pets. Animal Medicines Australia's latest Pets in Australia study found an estimated 31.6 million pets are now calling 7.7 million Australian households home.[12]

RSPCA NSW have demonstrated that providing practical solutions for pet owners encourages vulnerable people to seek assistance, with subsequent benefits for themselves, their families and their animals, as well as significant financial and societal benefits.[10]

RSPCA NSW have demonstrated that providing practical solutions for pet owners encourages vulnerable people to seek assistance, with subsequent benefits for themselves, their families and their animals, as well as significant financial and societal benefits. RSPCA NSW's Aged Care program generated $5.77 of social value per $1 invested (>$2million FY20-21) and ensured that 84% of clients were able to keep their pets or experienced an improved bond with their pet.[10] Similarly, RSPCA NSW's Community Domestic Violence program generated $9.95 of social value per $1 invested – with participants reporting the most valued outcome of the program being able to keep their pets. Crucially, 92% of clients and their children reported experiencing improved personal safety. [11]

Veterinarians, veterinary nurses and administrative staff are generally not trained to work with vulnerable people who are experiencing crisis, grief, trauma or emotional distress. Veterinary social workers are trained in engaging with

Our pets form an important component of most Australians' lives, whether for companionship, assistance, teaching care and responsibility, or for physical and mental health benefits.

To ensure that as many Australians as possible can access the myriad benefits associated with pet ownership and to help keep pet owners with their animals through difficult times, AMA seeks a policy environment that facilitates responsible pet ownership practices. This could be achieved through greater national consistency in companion animal policy settings.

Companion animal ownership, breeding, licensing and welfare is currently controlled by various state

[10] RSPCA NSW: Aged Care Social Return on Investment 2023; available at https://www.rspcansw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/RSPCA-NSW-SROI-Report-Aged-Care.pdf

[11] RSPCA NSW: Domestic Violence Social Return on Investment 2023; available at https://rspcanswold.rspcansw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/SROI-Report-Domestic-Violence.pdf

[12] AMA: 2025 Pets in Australia: A national survey of pets and people; available at https://animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/resources/pets-in-australia-a-national-survey-of-pets-and-people-3/

and local governments, with limited Commonwealth government involvement or control. Varied existing regulatory frameworks result in a multiplicity of regulatory requirements and restrictions for pet owners and delivers outcomes that may not support responsible pet ownership, including poorer animal health and welfare outcomes.

A National Companion Animal Policy Framework would ensure consistent standards irrespective of jurisdiction and that "all animals are treated identically in law". Nationally consistent companion animal policies would provide clarity for governments, better informed policy making and increase regulatory efficiency regarding companion animal ownership, breeding and welfare, as well as provide opportunities for targeted investments in infrastructure based on knowledge of pet populations.

AMA recommends the development of nationally consistent companion animal policies to provide greater confidence for pet owners that they were supporting responsible breeding and welfare practices and increase the likelihood of a pet being returned to them if it is lost or stolen. Nationally consistent standards, codes and regulatory requirements for supporting industries, such as grooming and kennelling, would also facilitate and support the generation of new qualifications, training programmes and accreditation frameworks.

11. Invest $8 million over 5 years towards establishing a coordinating committee comprising government, industry and community representatives to develop and implement a National Companion Animal Policy.

12. Invest $5 million towards supporting the establishment and recognition of new qualifications, training programmes and accreditation frameworks that directly contribute to improved pet health and welfare.

Antimicrobial resistance surveillance in animals

The World Health Organisation has described antimicrobial resistance (AMR) as one of the key global health issues that threatens human health and the health of animals within our care. Australia's first National Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy 2015-19 identified the need for a nationally coordinated One Health system for surveillance of organisms resistant to antibiotics. The One Health Master Action Plan for Australia's National Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy to 2020 and Beyond (OHMAP) was published in 2021 to guide the implementation of the national strategy's key objectives.

The Animal Sector Antimicrobial Resistance Action Plan 2023 to 2028 provides Australia's animal health and animal industry sectors with agreed priority activities to implement the national strategy, in alignment with the OHMAP. A key objective included in the animal sector action plan is to implement clear governance processes for antimicrobial resistance initiatives – including by developing a national reporting and surveillance system that meets stakeholder and reporting requirements for the collection and reporting of antimicrobial usage and resistance data in the animal sectors.

Considerable resources have been allocated by the Government to establish a human health AMR surveillance system, but this has not been matched by investment in an animal health equivalent. AMR poses grave threats to animal health and welfare, as well as to human health. This disparity needs to be addressed to ensure that both people and animals continue to have access to these critically important medicines.

Australian livestock producers and veterinarians are acutely aware of the risks of AMR and already implement a range of measures to help reduce their need to use antibiotics, including good animal husbandry, biosecurity and hygiene. Targeted AMR surveillance projects have been undertaken by individual livestock industries and the sector continues to work proactively to respond to the challenges of AMR voluntarily and in the absence of government support.

The available evidence[13] indicates that Australian use of antibiotics in animal health care is conservative, and that AMR rates in animals are low. Further, many antibiotics that are critically important to human health have never been registered for use in animals in Australia. A comprehensive animal AMR surveillance system will provide an independent and clear evidence base to protect animal and human health, protect Australian trade, enable best practice use of antibiotics by veterinary professionals and preserve the utility of these critical medicines for the future.

A One Health AMR surveillance network would require a centralised data storage and collection system for standardised, relevant and comparative data from the agricultural industry. By engaging with all livestock industry groups, it would identify emerging resistance issues in animal populations quickly; quantify if and how antibiotic use in animals may be contributing to human health outcomes and provide important evidence on the low level of antibiotic use and resistance in Australian agriculture to inform important trade markets.

Animal Medicines Australia supports the United Nations Political Declaration on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and the essential leadership it provides for global action against AMR.

AMA recommends the Government works to implement key commitments included in the Declaration, including implementing measures that recognise the need to prevent and control infections in animals, ensure the timely supply of quality and affordable essential veterinary medicines, vaccines and diagnostics, and acknowledging the need to improve diagnostic use and increase the number of veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals:

13. Invest $5 million upfront and an additional $3 million per annum towards expanding Australia's comprehensive human health AMR surveillance program (AURA) to include animal health.

14. Invest $1 million upfront and an additional $1 million per annum to support the CSIRO's work towards developing an animal vaccination strategy and defined implementation plan.

Priority 3
Creating opportunities for improved access to animal medicines

Recommendations:

6. $12.2 million per year to expand the Commonwealth Prac Payment Scheme to provide financial support for veterinary medicine students undertaking work placements in rural and regional areas.

7. $6 million per year for a Rural Bonding Scheme to forgive HECS-HELP debt to encourage early career veterinarians to practice in rural and regional areas.

8. Support the expansion of veterinary telehealth services, to complement and expand existing services after hours and ensure access to veterinary care, particularly in remote areas.

9. $7.5 million per year for 4 years for a pilot program subsidising private vets who treat injured wildlife and unowned (stray) animals.

10. Support better access to animal health products for vulnerable pet owners by investing $10 million towards developing and implementing a pilot program for the provision of support and veterinary services for vulnerable people and their pets.

11. Invest $8 million over 5 years towards establishing a coordinating committee comprising government, industry and community representatives to develop and implement a National Companion Animal Policy.

12. Invest $5 million towards supporting the establishment and recognition of new qualifications, training programmes and accreditation frameworks that directly contribute to improved pet health and welfare.

13. Invest $5 million upfront and an additional $3 million per annum towards expanding Australia's comprehensive human health AMR surveillance program (AURA) to include animal health.

14. Invest $1 million upfront and an additional $1 million per annum to support the CSIRO's work towards developing an animal vaccination strategy and defined implementation plan.

Animal Medicines Australia Pty Ltd
Level 2, 15 National Circuit
Barton ACT 2600
Australia

E enquiries@animalmedicines.org.au
T +61 2 6257 9022
animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au

company/animalmedicinesaustralia

@AnimalMedOz

@AnimalMedicinesAustralia

Leaders in animal health