

Dispensing Medications:

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons' Legal Guidelines



Classification of drugs

The main categories of authorised veterinary medicines, and who can prescribe them, are:

- Prescription-only Medicine – Veterinarian; abbreviated to POM-V;
- Prescription-only Medicine – Veterinarian, Pharmacist, Suitably Qualified Person (SQP); abbreviated to POM-VPS;
- Non-Food Animal – Veterinarian, Pharmacist, Suitably Qualified Person; abbreviated to NFA-VPS; and
- Authorised Veterinary Medicine – General Sales List; abbreviated to AVM-GSL.

An RQP is a Registered Qualified Person. In the case of a veterinary surgery, this can be a Veterinary Surgeon or an SQP.

- **Our vets** can prescribe and dispense **all** classifications of drugs to 'animals under their care'.
- **Our SQPs** can prescribe and dispense the classifications of drugs identified above, to clients who are registered with the Surgery who they have established are competent. A clinical assessment of the animal is not necessary.

What constitutes 'under our care'?

- The veterinary surgeon must have been given the responsibility for the health of the animal or herd by the owner or the owner's agent
- That responsibility must be real and not nominal
- The animal or herd must have been seen immediately before prescription OR recently enough or often enough for the veterinary surgeon to have personal knowledge of the condition of the animal, or current health status of the herd or flock, to make a diagnosis and prescribe.
- The veterinary surgeon must maintain clinical records of that herd/flock/individual

What amounts to 'recent enough' must be a matter for the professional judgement of the veterinary surgeon in the individual case.