



Factors impacting on vet-farmer interactions associated with biosecurity

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Vet-farmer interactions are crucial for facilitating good clinical decision-making about animal health and welfare.

Many factors impact on these interactions, particularly the complexity of the topic being discussed. The impact of the vet-farmer interaction on decision-making in relation to biosecurity requires further study for this reason.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted over the telephone, via Skype or in person with eight cattle farmers ('good' level of biosecurity), and 9 farm animal vets. Inductive thematic analysis was used to determine important influencing factors.

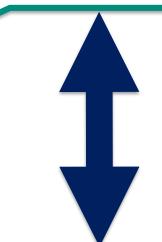
Cooperative discussion

"Getting him to give himself the answer, I think it's more powerful that way than standing and lecturing someone." V5

Getting to know each other

"...he knows us as well. He knows what questions we're going to ask so he can kind of pre-empt them. But he knows if he gives us a little bit of information first and then we'll ask the extra bits if we need to. It's good." V3

"[When] you know them better you can be more direct and blunt...whereas some other farmers need examples given." V4



Time

"The only slight criticism I have is their business has expanded really rapidly...I think they're probably spreading themselves a bit too thin. It's unavoidable, they want to grow their business, but it would be good to be able to get hold of her a bit more." F6

"Generally for a farmer to take time out for a vet, they're not gonna have all the time in the world...there's just not enough time." F3

Vet experience

"So once you kind of suggest a few things and you prove that it works, then they're more inclined to take what you say." V1

Trust

Farmer experience

"If I have spent 45 years with animals I do pick up a bit of knowledge. A few of the new vets have got it wrong a few times, and I've challenged that and said 'you know, I'm not convinced'..." F5



Clarification of biosecurity cost-effectiveness

"We're in a business, so anything you can equate to pounds saved. Everything I do is based on cost per litre. So anything that reduces my cost of production...What's the cost of vaccinating for this disease? It's going to be X. What is the cost if you have a breakdown with this disease? It's going to be this..." F7

Take home messages:

- Five interlinking vet-farmer relationship factors impacting on biosecurity uptake, particularly 'Time' and 'Getting to know each other'.
- Mirrors those found in human medicine impacting on doctor-patient communication.
- Further work should focus on generalising solutions from medicine to the veterinary healthcare context.

