Oral presentations

Clinical narrative analysis of antibacterial prescription in rabbits presenting with signs of respiratory disease

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OBJECTIVES

Antibacterial resistance is now recognised as a significant global problem. Better understanding of clinical decision making in treatment selection might direct future strategies for responsible antibacterial prescription (ABP). This mixed-methods study examined the potential for utilising clinical narratives to determine factors that might influence ABP in rabbits primarily presenting with signs of respiratory disease.

METHODS

Clinical narratives (n=456) were extracted from SAVSNET and manually read. A thematic analysis was

utilised to identify narratives containing evidence of a rationale for ABP: culture and sensitivity testing, causes and other non-antimicrobial treatments were also noted.

RESULTS

ABP was identified in 69.2% (n=314) of consultations, with enrofloxacin the most frequently prescribed antibacterial (63% of ABP consultations, n=211). Recorded evidence of culture and sensitivity in the narrative was infrequent (2.2%, n=10). In total, 59 consultations (10.7%) included a rationale justifying ABP whereas six provided a reason to not prescribe. The notion of 'risk' associated with not medicating a rabbit was a key primary ABP factor. Other primary factors included: trial treatments, owner choice, cost and clinical history. Three key themes were found: owner influence; diagnostic testing and clinical signs.

STATEMENT

This study demonstrates that clinical narratives can be utilised to uncover decision-making processes surrounding ABP, including themes not currently considered in prescribing guidelines. Further understanding of how veterinary surgeons utilise the clinical narrative to record decision-making processes coupled with expanding the current work to encompass other species and clinical presentations could be of particular use for developing effective responsible usage strategies.

How do common conditions seen in rabbits and guinea pigs by UK practitioners compare with the scientific evidence on these species?

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OBJECTIVES

Rabbits and guinea pigs are popular pets within the UK, yet little is known about the common conditions they are affected by, or how they relate to the literature about these species. The aim of this study was to characterise the common conditions of rabbits and guinea pigs in the UK, and to compare this categorisation with

the topics found in the literature available on these species.

METHODS

Information about the common conditions seen in rabbits and guinea pigs in clinical practice was obtained from a survey of UK veterinarians. A comparison between these conditions were made with the published literature via a structured search within CAB Abstracts to determine how useful the evidence base is for these important conditions.

RESULTS

Conditions relating to the dental (30%), and skin (38%) body systems were commonly nominated for rabbits, and guinea pigs, respectively. Of the citations examined, over 30% related to expert opinion citations, while the 60% pertaining to research primarily involved lab-based populations. Very few citations related to rabbits (9%) and guinea pigs (11%) in pet environments. There appeared to be a mismatch between the conditions commonly nominated in the veterinary questionnaire for these species, and those found in the literature.

STATEMENT

Substantially more research-based evidence is required for most of the common conditions affecting rabbits and guinea pigs seen in practice in the UK. This is crucial if clinicians are seeking research-based evidence to integrate into practice.