



STABLE CLOSE EQUINE PRACTICE

EQUINE VETERINARY CARE ACROSS HAMPSHIRE

A guide to Equine Insurance

TAKING OUT A NEW POLICY

- Make sure you insure your recently purchased horse before travelling them home
- Insurance companies may require a five stage pre purchase examination before they insure your new horse. Check their requirements before you book your pre-purchase examination, in case they require any additional tests such as X-Rays.
- Findings from the pre purchase examination can often lead to exclusions on your insurance policy. Be sure to check this with the insurance company before taking out the policy.
- They may also sometimes request history from previous vets with the previous owner while assessing claims or creating a new policy.
- Most insurance companies have a 14 day period where they will cover accidents and injuries only - check your terms and conditions.
- Make sure you insure your horse for the correct intended purpose. For example: if you insure your horse for hacking, but they become injured during a hunter trial, the injury won't be covered and your insurance may become void.
- Generally insurance will not cover pre-existing conditions or anything picked up on your pre purchase examination. Check your exclusions with the insurance company.
- Not all insurance companies will cover supplements and complementary therapies such as physiotherapy and remedial farriery.
- Insurance companies that do cover these products and services, will often place a limit on the amount that can be claimed for each sub category.
- Check the excess terms and conditions. Some insurance companies have started including a percentage of the total bill to be paid by the client along with their excess. This can quickly add up.
- Most insurers will put a time and financial limit on each claim. This can vary depending on the company and policy.

OLDER HORSES

- Be aware that many insurance companies will class horses in their late teens as "veterans" and specific terms and conditions may apply relating to this.
- Check when taking out a new policy, but also as your horse ages, that the insurance company might start to limit what you are able to claim for based on your horse's age.
- There are very few equine insurance companies who will apply a "covered for life" policy to equine insurance as they might do for dogs and cats.

SUBMITTING A CLAIM

- Most insurance companies will not cover admin fees.
- We charge a £25 admin fee to cover office and vet time involved in submitting the claim and all associated paperwork.
- We do not charge a second fee for completing any further claim continuations.
- Many insurance companies will give you the option to pay the policy holder or to pay the Veterinary Practice directly. If you choose for your insurance company to pay the practice directly, we ask that you pay us the £25 admin fee plus your excess before we process your claim.
- If your claim is rejected for any reason, the account holder will remain responsible for their veterinary fees.
- Our monthly invoices are generated automatically and all cases with ongoing insurance claims will continue to receive them.

MORTALITY AND LOSS OF USE

- Insurance companies have strict criteria that must be met to claim for loss of use or euthanasia. Your vet is the best person to advise you on whether you are likely to meet these criteria or not.
- Permanent Loss of Use insurance replaces a variable percentage of horse's value if they are no longer able to take part in the activities insured. The definition of the activities will vary depending on the individual policy and company. The injury or illness must commence during the policy year and the Loss of Use must be established within the time limits specified by the policy (usually 12 months from onset of the condition). Loss of Use insurance does not cover for loss of value, lack of ability, behavioural problems or temporary incapacity.
- Most insurance companies will request your horse is freeze branded with a loss of use symbol when a claim is made for loss of use. This is so the horse cannot be sold on and resume inappropriate activities in the wrong hands.
- When it comes to making a claim for the death of your horse, insurance companies will only usually cover your horse for euthanasia on humane grounds under specific circumstances. You should check the small print of your insurance policy to see what

evidence your insurer requires for a claim to be paid but usually there are strict BEVA guidelines which must be met.

- These BEVA guidelines state that your horse qualifies for euthanasia on welfare grounds - **“If the horse sustains an injury or manifests an illness or disease that is so severe as to warrant immediate destruction to relieve incurable and excessive pain and that no other options of treatment are available to that horse at that time”**
- Mortality claims will not affect any claims for previous veterinary treatment relating to the same condition, but purely relates to recovering the value of your horse.
- If you have an insurance policy that provides cover for the death of your horse then you need to make sure that you comply with the terms of your policy and issues regarding insurance claims for mortality can be complex. For example, it may be a requirement stipulated by your insurance company that a post mortem examination is carried out in order to provide additional evidence for the insurance company. Alternatively, in less urgent cases, the insurance company must be contacted first, and the opinion of a second veterinary surgeon, or written consent from the insurance company, may be required. Without the insurance company’s agreement, or if you do not comply with the conditions set out by your insurance company, they are very unlikely to pay your mortality claim.

Whether or not your claim for mortality is successful, it usually has no bearing on whether it is the right decision for you and your horse in your unique situation. Mortality claim decisions made by insurance companies are based purely on whether their criteria are met or not, and it often doesn’t appreciate the multifactorial considerations that horse owners have to consider when making this difficult decision. We hope that this information can raise awareness of what insurance companies require, but acknowledge that there are many situations where the owner and vet may believe that the right thing to do, even if this does not mean you will be able to claim on your mortality insurance for the value of the horse.