



# media *release*

June 2016

## **Last chance to join the charge against laminitis and show you really CARE**

Recruitment to the first and largest web-based equine cohort study in Britain, CARE, comes to a close on 31 July. The study, which aims to identify the lifestyle factors that are associated with the onset of laminitis, gives a final plea to all horse owners to join the charge. You remember the first call to arms in February for National CARE Day. Now, owners of almost 1,700 horses and ponies have signed up to CARE already, but as many horses as possible are needed to give researchers the best chances of tackling this debilitating, and potentially life threatening condition.

CARE members are asked to submit regular information about their equines' health and management online. The initial baseline questionnaire covers all aspects of the horse's environment, activity, nutrition and daily care. Following this, members check in on a regular basis and update these details to reflect whether their horse's environment and health has changed or stayed the same. Each update is vital, as these translate into 'horse-years' dedicated to the study. Horse-years are the amounts of time that each horse or pony contribute to the study, starting from their baseline questionnaire to their most recent update. The study is aiming for a total of 1,000 horse-years, so if you join up today and complete one update per month for the rest of the year, you could contribute six months to

the final total. Updates are quick and easy, so there is no excuse for not taking part and helping CARE achieve their target to help horses be happier and healthier in the future!

Cohort studies have been extensively used in human medicine and are responsible for important findings that link lifestyle factors to an increased or decreased risk of developing certain diseases. Just like for diabetes in humans, the CARE study has set out to do exactly that for horses.

Join the CARE study's current members, in their mission to help determine how common laminitis is and which equine lifestyle factors are responsible. CARE members will also have access to an online weight tracker to monitor their horse's weight and body condition. Many existing members find this routine of reporting information, especially the visual weight tracker, invaluable in helping make the right decisions to keep their horses healthy. While recruitment is closing at the end of July 2016, data collection will continue until the end of the year.

Participation is open to all types, ages, sizes and breeds of horses or ponies, whether or not they have ever had laminitis. By joining the study, your contribution will improve the welfare of horses throughout Britain and help stop laminitis taking control.

To get involved and register before the 31 July visit [www.careaboutlaminitis.org.uk](http://www.careaboutlaminitis.org.uk)

**Ends**

**For further information, please contact:**

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**Photographs & Videos:**

Video: Join the charge <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekzKQ7NqsoE>

Regional case studies: <http://www.aht.org.uk/cms-display/casestudies.html>

Images can be requested from the AHT press office.

**Additional notes:**

The Animal Health Trust (AHT) is an independent charity, employing over 200 scientists, vets and support workers. It aims to improve the health and welfare of horses, dogs and cats through research. It also provides specialist referral services and continuous education to vets. Visit the website at [www.aht.org.uk](http://www.aht.org.uk)