Collars just got smarter

A NEW smart collar that allows owners and vets to continuously monitor pet’s health is rolling out in the UK.The PetPace collar allows owners and vets to track the health of cats and dogs of 3.6kg or more. The smartr collar uses miniature non-invasive sensors to read an animal’s temperature, pulse, activity, respiratory patterns, and body fat. If the collar detects any abnormalities, a text alert is sent to owners and veterinarians. The data helps spot early signs of illness, disease and behavioural issues. Asaf Dagan, chief veterinarian for PetPace, said: “PetPace closes the communication gap between pets, owners, vet and enabling pet owners to ‘feel’ how they feel. This lets users rest assured their pets ailments would not go unnoticed.” The collar launched in 2014, retailing for $150 ($101) with a $15 ($10) monthly fee. For more information, visit www.petpace.com.

Better stewardship solution to AMR, say dermatologists

FOLLOWING Government forecasts on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) farmers and vets are being urged to use antibiotics responsibly and maintain high standards of hygiene.

AMR was included on the National Risk Register of Civil Emergencies in 2013, with officials predicting an AMR blood infection outbreak could affect as many as 200,000 people in the UK – potentially killing 80,000.

The risk register document states “High numbers of deaths could also be expected from other forms of AMR infection.” The Bella Moss Foundation, a charity that promotes prudent antimicrobial use and hygiene in human and veterinary medicine, said there was a need. Two of its clinical advisors have reiterated calls for good hygiene and sensible use of antibiotics.

Tim Nuttall, head of dermatology at the University of Edinburgh (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, said there was genuine concern about returning to pre-antibiotic era. “While new drugs are welcome, the long-term solution involves better antimicrobial stewardship,” Dr Nuttall said. “This will mean the antibiotic pressing less pressure on clinicians for antibiotics for themselves or their animals, vets in particular. We must develop and maintain infection control and treatment by clinicians, first-class standards of hygiene and infection control and better ways of managing new infections without using antibiotics – many cases can be managed by addressing the primary disease and using antimicrobials.”

David Lloyd, chairman of veterinary dermatology at the RVC, shared the concern. “The great majority of bacterial infections are still caused by organisms resistant to existing antibiotics. If we use these drugs wisely, levels of resistance are likely to decline, but until this happens, it is an urgent need in both human and veterinary fields to promote the adoption of best practices in the maintenance and prudent use of antibacterial drugs.”

He added further that development of new antibacterials would likely develop resistance to new drugs if they were used unwisely. “We should also concentrate on measures that reduce our dependence on antibacterials,” he said.

BMF believes developing countries are more likely to suffer from AMR outbreaks - as opposed to the localised episodes seen in care homes, prisons or veterinary and animal rescue settings in the UK. “It requires international action,” said Prof Lloyd, focusing on the “two key areas” of disease prevention and reduced use of antibacterial drugs, applied to human and veterinary medicine and livestock production.

In “farming, good hygiene and husbandry methods that reduce stress among animals will also reduce infection and, therefore, the need for antibacterials to be used.”

“Vacation will continue to be a very important method of disease prevention in both human medicine and animal husbandry.”

The research, funded by the VMD, was presented at a meeting in London on May 11. The findings of research into the use of antibiotics, applied to human and veterinary medicine and livestock production, will be described by veterinary dermatologists at an international veterinary dermatology meeting in Antwerp, Belgium, in October.

WEB LINKS:
To find out more about the hygiene self-audit tool, visit http://bit.ly/1Ya7QeO
To view the video at http://bit.ly/yqoZRG
To view the risk register, visit http://bit.ly/1Y4Af

WEB LINKS:
To view the risk register, visit http://bit.ly/1Y4Af

Companion animal antimicrobial use

THE findings of research into the use of antibacterial agents in small animal veterinary medicine and the UK will be presented at a meeting in London on May 11.

The research, funded by the VMD, will be undertaken by the Veterinary Epidemiology, Economics and Public Health Group at the RVC and focuses on antimicrobial use, prevalence and stewardship.

The researchers say multi-drug resistance in a bacteria is a growing problem in human and animal medicine, and small animal practice has not received sufficient attention as a reservoir of multi-resistant infections.

Central to addressing multi-drug resistance in companion animal veterinary practice is establishing a clear understanding of the situation, and the study aimed to characterise and quantify systemic antimicrobial usage in cats and dogs using de-identified electronic patient records collected via the VetCompass database.

Antimicrobial usage will be described by species and geographic location and according to the frequency of use, the duration of therapy and estimated daily dose.

The meeting will be held from 09.00 to 16.00 in the council normal at the RVC’s Camden Campus.

Cattle industry to streamline data

A £282,000 project to develop a prototype system to streamline data exchange across the cattle industry has been given the green light.

The 12-month feasibility project is being coordinated and project managed by the beef and dairy divisions of the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB). The prototype could effectively enable all on-farm data exchange in the cattle industry such as bovine viral diarrhoea, Johne’s disease and bovine TB.

While the initial focus is an animal disease, it is envisaged the framework developed could be expanded to other areas of data collection, which could greatly benefit the industry.

AHDB is working with more than 30 industry collaborators including databases, farm management software suppliers, auction markets and abattoir market suppliers.

Norfolk farmer John Cross, who is chairing the project steering group, said: “This is a really exciting opportunity, where industry itself has taken the initiative to develop what has been needed for a long time. It has the potential to increase operating efficiency, reduce farmer cost and increase our capacity to control development issues. All the information relating to each animal is out there, but in different locations. Making this information more available at key points will be a significant step forward.”

A company contracted to develop the system is by Innovate UK and the Research Councils.

A catalyst is a form of research and development funding focusing on a specific priority area, helping take projects from the research stage to as close to commercial viability as possible.