

## Advice and guidance on coronavirus

THERE is currently no evidence that pets or other domestic animals can be infected with the new coronavirus, now known as Covid-19, the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) has said.

Last week, the global association released an advisory document offering guidance, via a series of frequently asked questions, about the new virus – a move prompted partly by concern about reports of pet abandonment in China, where outbreaks of the virus have led to some cities being placed under effective lockdown.

Michael Lappin, chair of the WSAVA's One Health committee, said vets should advise owners to keep

their companion animals with them if they are self-quarantined and keep cats inside.

In addition, he said they should advise people to arrange care for any animals left at home if family or friends are hospitalised and to contact their vet immediately if they have questions or concerns.

Vets are also being urged to tell owners not to panic because it is highly unlikely that they could contract Covid-19 from their dog or cat, or that their companion animal could transmit the virus to people or other animals.

The advisory document also cautions vets against using vaccines against canine enteric coronavirus, which are available in some global

markets, in the hope that they may offer some cross-protection against Covid-19. There is no evidence for this, as the new virus is a distinctly different coronavirus variant.

WSAVA president Shane Ryan said there was 'still much we don't know' about the virus, adding that the association was 'concerned for animal welfare with reports of animals being abandoned or killed because their owners fear that they might carry the virus.'

'There is no evidence that this is necessary and we urge our members to ensure owners follow our guidance and keep themselves and their companion animals safe.'

The WSAVA guidance document is available at <https://bit.ly/2SDXe61>



**There is still much we don't know about coronavirus**