

Dear Valued Clients,

We hope this message finds you well as we approach another reproductive / racing and competition season! We want to take a moment to update you on some new faces who will be joining the veterinary team at Waikato Equine Veterinary Centre for the coming season and, in some cases, beyond.

Firstly, we are welcoming a new permanent veterinarian to our practice, Dr Sam Wheeler in August 2023. Sam will be an invaluable addition to our team. Sam is from the UK, having graduated from the University of Surrey and subsequently completed an externship at Keros Equine Embryo Transfer Center in Belgium. Following this, he worked in both equine and mixed practice in the Cotswolds and Cornwall. He has also spent time working for various veterinary charities, including the Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust. Sam enjoys all areas of equine practice and is looking forward to working with WVEC clients to ensure the best possible outcomes for both owners and patients. Outside of work Sam enjoys all outdoor pursuits, particularly surfing, trail running, tramping and exploring all that New Zealand has to offer.



*Figure 1 Sam at work at the Donkey Sanctuary in The Gambia*

In addition to our new permanent veterinarian, we have also had the privilege of recruiting three locum veterinarians. The first, Dr James Gibbs, brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to our clinic. He has extensive experience and interest across a broad range of ambulatory equine practice including reproduction, dentistry and lameness. He graduated from University College Dublin in 2003, after which he worked in mixed practice in Ireland for 8 years before working as a stud vet in New South Wales for the 2009 season. The following year Jamie spent a season at our local Cambridge Equine Hospital before moving closer to home in 2011, where he has remained for 12 years, becoming a director of a new equine hospital Stringer Equine in Devon. Outside of work, Jamie loves sport, especially triathlons and surfing.



Dr Alona Parfonova is staying on with us as a veterinarian for the 2023/2024 season. Alona originally qualified as a veterinarian in the Ukraine back in 2011 and worked as a nurse for us for many years. She has now successfully completed her internship with us and passed her ECFVG exam to enable her to be registered as a veterinarian in NZ. Alona is well acquainted with many clients already and seamlessly integrates into our veterinarian team. We are happy to have her on board for a while longer!!

Another Veterinarian we will have with us for the season is Dr Kirstin Park. Kirstin grew up in Alberta, Canada before moving to Scotland for vet school. She graduated from the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies - University of Edinburgh. Following university, she moved back to Alberta and has since completed an internship in equine medicine and reproduction at Westhills Equine Veterinary Services. Kirstin has a keen interest in all aspects of equine medicine, with a particular fondness for wounds and emergency medicine. Her favourite thing about being an equine vet is the hands-on aspect of equine medicine. Her other interests include reproduction, foaling / neonatal medicine, lameness, and surgery. Kirstin loves to spend her free time outdoors exploring, whether that be on horseback or camping and hiking with her friends and family. She loves to travel and is very excited for many new adventures in New Zealand this summer!



Dr Murray Bertram will also be returning to assist this season for the months October – November 2023 which will make many of you as happy and grateful as us!

Our internship program is now into its second year and we are looking forward to welcoming Dr Tara McCrissican and Dr Daniel Sabate Vano, for the season. Both of these vets already have a great foundation behind them and as interns, they will work closely with our experienced veterinarians, further honing their skills and knowledge in equine medicine in the Southern Hemisphere.



Dr Tara McCrissican has already completed an internship at the University College Dublin Veterinary Hospital (UCD) after graduating from the University of Glasgow in 2022. She has worked in the racing, pre-training and eventing industry previously and has experience in musculoskeletal, reproductive, dental, gastroscopic, and endoscopic examinations alongside hospitalised and intensive care patients. She has completed many diode LASER mass removals, and has donated time mentoring and teaching undergraduates. She has an interest in sports medicine and reproduction.

Dr Daniel Sabate Vano is a Spanish veterinarian. He is currently working as a veterinarian in an equine hospital in France where he also completed an internship. He has experience in reproduction, emergencies in the field, basic lameness, prophylactic treatments and surgery assistance.

Once again, we would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for your loyal support over the years. Our team is committed to providing the highest level of veterinary care to your horses and we are continually working on improving our skills and continuing our education to provide the most advanced diagnostics and medical techniques from across the world.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. J. Tucker".

Becs Tucker

Clinic Coordinator - Waikato Equine Veterinary Centre