

Reply to Dr Addie,

Thank you for your email. Myself and the other trustees are pleased with your approval of our work we do regarding student bursaries and your kind offer and also expressing approval of our cat rescue programme. Thank you also for sending a copy of your book that certainly answers most of my questions, however, why is the FIP test and vaccine unavailable in this country? It appears to be in general usage in America, Belgium and the Netherlands but not in the UK . That seems rather bizarre!

I therefore, decided to do some research and contacted Pfizer who explained that the animal pharmaceutical side was now re-branded under Zoetistis that produces the vaccine. The first person I contacted could not give me a specific answer and referred to the Veterinary Medicines Directorate. The person who spoke to me from VMD explained the parent company Zoetistis were responsible for applying for a licence in the UK. I was also told that if the vaccine had a European licence then it would apply to the UK. They also explained that a 'spc' can be applied for from a veterinary surgeon to import the vaccine from abroad, but how many cat owners are aware of this fact? I certainly was not.

Not to be daunted, I returned to Zoetistis and eventually passed on to some one whom could answer the question (perhaps, just to get rid of me)!!! They were unsure on how widespread the disease was in the UK. I did not have any statistics to hand, however, I could confirm that the UK was not a FIP free zone. I was also informed that the vaccine was not 100% guaranteed but as we say up here 'owt is better than nowt'! However, the explanation was that if there was a market for the vaccine in the UK and as explained it would have to be cost effective they would apply for a licence, so at the moment it is on hold.

In my opinion it is vital that the cat owning fraternity are made aware of the existence of such a vaccine and how it can be purchased. We will certainly be placing this information on our website and possibly be writing to animal related journals.

Dr Addie, if there is anything we can do to raise awareness, please let me know.

Regards Kath Pearson