"Medicine changes a lot over a working life. Lifelong learning and unlearning is therefore a professional necessity and must be an integral part of normal work. If a new treatment looks like it could be useful, the likely benefits and disadvantages need critical assessment."



Dr Andrew Herxheimer, founder Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin.



Should I use it?

Promotion tends to focus on benefits

Claims often supported by unpublished data

Sparse information on adverse effects



say?

Clinical trials often have flaws that magnify benefits

ACME PHARMACEUT

Pharmaceutical companies design and fund trials

Sponsored trials are more likely to have positive results and positive trials are more likely to be published*

Risk of evidence-base becoming increasingly biased towards new drugs

Trial participants that are unlike typical patients

Unhelpful comparisons e.g. placebo or non-inferiority trials

Unrealistic outcomes and impressive statistics

What about practical considerations like cost, convenience?

The advantages of independence

Can be critical of evidence and promotion

Free to talk about disadvantages as well as advantages

To find out more, or get involved, contact veterinaryprescriber@gmail.com



* Lundh A et al. Industry sponsorship and research outcome. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2012; Issue 12: Art. No.: MR000033. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.MR000033.pub2.