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## Anecdotal evidence. An oxymoron? Or a valid approach to understanding data?


*Wapenaar W, Griffiths H, Lowes J, Brennan M, 2011. Developing evidence-based guidelines using expert opinion for the management of uterine prolapse in cattle. Cattle Practice Vol 19 (Part 1) 27-31*




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## Uterine prolapse in cattle




How good is the evidence?



Handbook of evidence-based veterinary medicine<sup>®</sup>. Cookcroft & Holmes

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## What if there is no evidence?

- Generate new evidence
- Harness 'weaker forms of evidence'
- Harness expert opinion

How?

- Literature review
- Survey using online questionnaire
- Expert opinion (Delphi method)

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## Snippet of survey results...

Epidural:  
76% always, 3% never

Parenteral antibiotics:  
72% always, 8% never

Intra uterine medication:  
62% antibiotics, 16% antiseptics, 21% never

Vaginal sutures:  
59% always, 22% sometimes, 19% never

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## Snippet of survey results...

### Prognosis:

Estimate the proportion of prolapse cases that become pregnant in their next lactation?

| % Pregnant    | % Respondents |
|---------------|---------------|
| 0-25%         | 5             |
| 26-50%        | 24            |
| <b>51-75%</b> | <b>50%</b>    |
| 76-100%       | 21            |

### Conclusions survey:

- Positive feedback
- Reliability of responses
- Evidence based medicine?

### Next step:

- Delphi method: consensus technique

### Outcome:

- Practical guideline

## Summary

'The plural of anecdote is not data' (Roger Brinner)



### How to move forward?

- Use of practice based data
- Priorities, challenges, opportunities

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