



VETERINARY SURGEONS BOARD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

VETERINARY SURGEONS BOARD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA 2021 E-BULLETIN #5

Request for Samples – Dogs – National Disease Surveillance – Canine Ehrlichia

This email has been sent for and on behalf of Dr Mary Carr, Chief Veterinary Officer, Biosecurity SA, Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA). If you have any questions about this communication, please contact PIRSA directly: www.pir.sa.gov.au

Dear Veterinary Surgeons

This is a follow up to my previous notification made in June 2020 about the detection of the nationally notifiable disease, Ehrlichia canis in dogs in the Kimberley Region of Western Australia (see copy below). It has since also been found in the Northern Territory around Katherine and west of Alice Springs.

As part of national surveillance activities, the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) is undertaking surveillance in domestic dogs throughout South Australia from now until October 2020. PIRSA is requesting assistance from all veterinary surgeons who may see at risk animals, to collect blood samples +/- attached dog ticks, and submit them with a relevant history form to Gribbles VetLab for testing.

Veterinary surgeons are able to claim a \$55 subsidy per dog submission. Surveillance testing will be at no charge to the veterinary surgeon or owner of the dog.

Further information, including history and submission forms, can be found at www.pir.sa.gov.au/ehrlichiosis under **SA Vet Surveillance Project**.

See below and [Vet Summary Information](#) for what is required:

- Which dogs to sample
 - Domestic or community dogs exhibiting clinical signs consistent with *E. canis* including:

thrombocytopaenia with unexplained fever or lethargy, blood from the nose, +/- swollen lymph nodes, +/- not eating
 - Domestic or community dogs with no consistent clinical signs, but **MUST** have a current tick infestation or a history of tick infestation



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PLEASE CALL THE LABORATORY IF DIAGNOSTIC RESULTS ARE REQUIRED URGENTLY, otherwise samples will be batched and results will be delayed.

- Samples required:
 - Clotted blood/serum (4 °C)
 - EDTA blood (4 °C)
 - Ticks from dogs in 2ml 70% ethanol (room temperature)
- History required (for domestic and Indigenous Community Dogs):
 - See [domestic dog history form](#)
 - See [Indigenous Community dog history form](#)
- Submitting samples: [Gribbles VetLab Companion Animal Submission Form](#)
- Send samples to: Gribbles VETLAB, 33 Flemington St, Glenside SA 5065
- Call Gribbles Couriers on 8205 5678 to arrange sample pick up
- Refer to the [E. canis blood and tick sample protocol](#) for further information
- To claim \$55 subsidy per dog please send completed tax invoices (please include information to identify the dog sampled) to:

Dr Allison Crawley, Department of Primary Industries and Regions

Address: 33 Flemington St, Glenside 5065

Email: allison.crawley@sa.gov.au

Veterinary surgeons who suspect clinical cases of canine ehrlichiosis must report it immediately:

Animal Disease Watch Hotline: 1800 675 888

Testing will be at no charge to the veterinary surgeon or owner of the dog.

Please note that the tick that usually transmits this disease is not known to be present in South Australia, except perhaps in the far northern pastoral region. Affected dogs may present to veterinary surgeons after travelling interstate.

While infected dogs do not transmit ehrlichiosis to people, in rare cases, infected ticks may transmit *E. canis* to people. See [Department of Health website](#) for information on



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human health implications associated with Rickettsial infections, as well as tick prevention measures.

If you require any further information, please contact Dr Allison Crawley on 0459 888 133 or Allison.crawley@sa.gov.au

Please be alert for this disease in South Australia, and thank you for your assistance in this surveillance.

1 September 2020