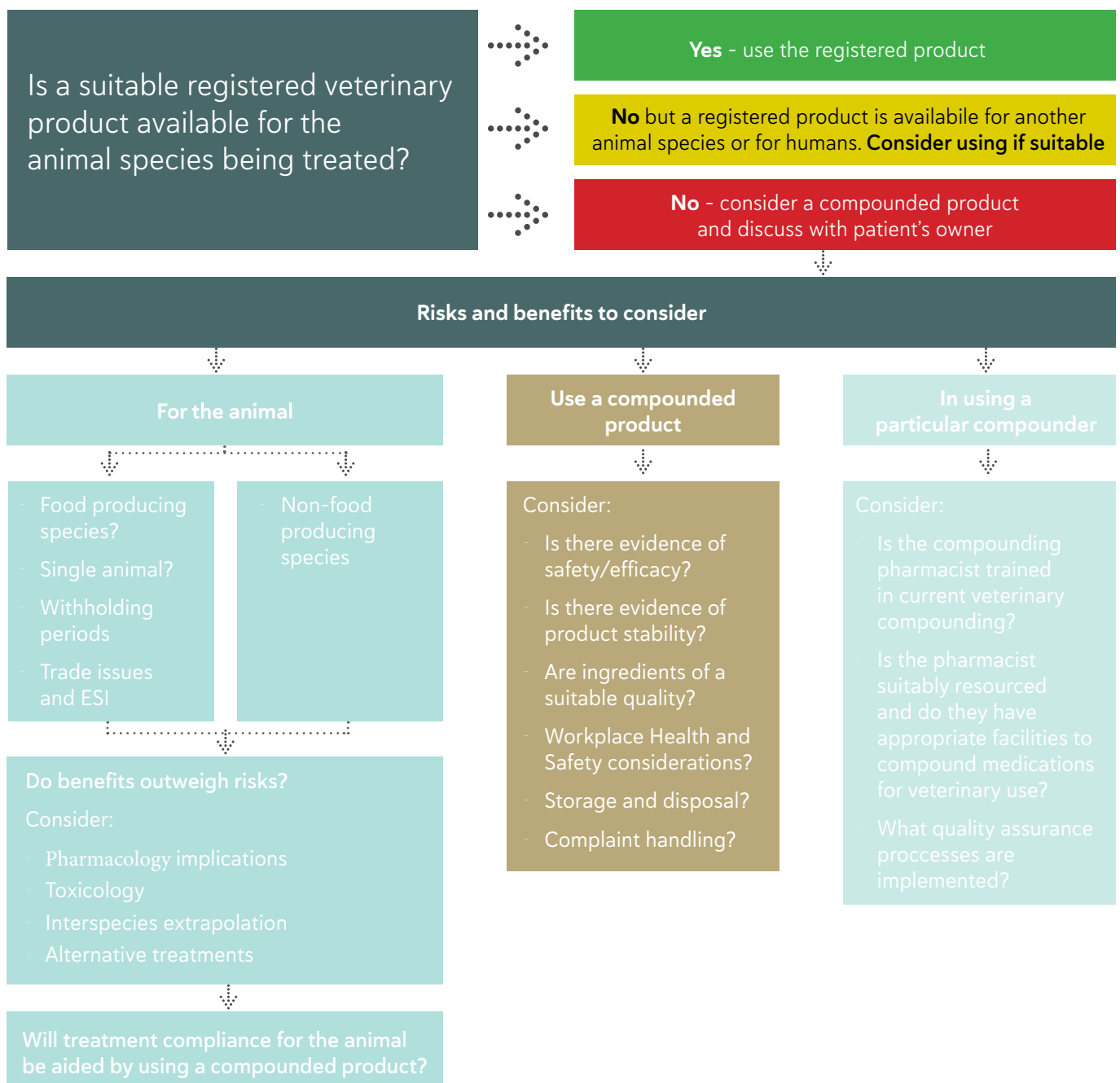


## When to use compounded products

All animals deserve the benefit of medicinal products which are suitable for their particular needs. The **decision flow chart** (below) and **summary guidelines** (page 4) provide a systematic, best-practice approach to ensure this happens wherever possible. Following these guidelines, veterinary practitioners may use their clinical judgement to prescribe a compounded medication where no suitable registered product is available. A medication prescribed following this decision process may be administered by the prescribing veterinarian or by a person acting under their direction. Responsibility for the prescription and use of the medication remains with the prescribing veterinary practitioner.

## Decision flow chart for use of compounded products by veterinarians



## Summary:

### Guidelines for the prescription and use of compounded medications

**A veterinarian may compound a medication** in the course of their practice, and supply that medication to the owner of an animal, for use on that animal under the veterinarian's care.

**Pharmacists may compound** veterinary medications only on written veterinary instruction or veterinary prescription<sup>3</sup>.

**A compounded preparation should only be used** in circumstances where a registered product is unavailable or unsuitable.

Veterinarians may only prescribe a product for compounding in **sufficient quantity** for the particular animal(s) to be treated. State and territory control of use and drugs and poisons legislation do not generally provide for the preparation and storage of compounded veterinary pharmaceutical products for use in other animals at a later date. There are some exceptions - see sections 5-6 in the FAQs below.

As with all dispensed medications, compounded **medications must be labelled** with all details required on a prescription specific to the animal that is being treated, as required under national, state and territory legislation.

Compounding pharmacists must also comply with relevant legislation and Pharmacy Board of Australia guidelines. The label on any dispensed compounded medication must include details identifying the active constituents, the animal to be treated, instructions for use, the owner, the compounding pharmacist and the prescribing veterinarian. For more information on labelling see section 1 in the FAQs below.

Additional restrictions apply to supply of unregistered veterinary medications for use in **food-producing animals**. A veterinary practitioner may supply or compound a veterinary medication for use in a single food producing animal, according to his/her prescribing rights, governed by the laws in the particular state or territory. Veterinarians should check their particular state and territory prescribing rights as there may be some variation.

The veterinarian and pharmacist have certain **responsibilities**. The veterinarian prescribing or supplying a compounded product should first discuss the benefits and risks associated with the use of the product with the client.

For compounded products, the veterinarian is responsible for providing instructions to the pharmacist for compounding of the products and the required label directions for use. The compounding pharmacist is responsible for the accurate filling of the veterinarian's prescription. In addition, the pharmacist must exercise their own judgement and must only dispense a medication if it is safe and appropriate to do so. The prescribing veterinarian and/or the compounding pharmacist may be liable for harm, under certain circumstances, due to side effects or lack of efficacy. Special care must be taken to ensure that excessive residues do not occur in food-producing or performance animals.

The decision to use any therapeutic intervention, including the use of a compounded medication should be made by the veterinarian (not a client or a pharmacist), based on a genuine **veterinarian-client-patient relationship**. Whenever possible the veterinarian should make that decision using evidence-based medicine.

It is a breach of state and territory drugs and poisons legislation to '**on-sell**' any restricted veterinary product (any S4 or S8 or unregistered veterinary chemical) to other veterinarians without an appropriate wholesaler's licence<sup>4</sup>.

Compounded medications should be labelled with an expiry date. The **expiry date**<sup>5</sup> should be based on evidence that the medication will remain physically, chemically and microbiologically stable when stored under the specified storage conditions and during the administration of the medication to the patient. Compounding products are intended for immediate usage and therefore in most cases the expiry period will be short. No product should be supplied after the expiry date. See also section 4 in the FAQs below.

<sup>3</sup> Note that non-veterinary staff are not permitted to provide instructions (such as a prescription or an order) and that digital signatures are not legal signatures for the purposes of prescribing.

<sup>4</sup> In the Northern Territory, pharmacists may supply by wholesale without a separate wholesaler license - see sections 35 and 57 of the Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 2012 (NT).

<sup>5</sup> In the case of pharmacists, expiry dates are required under Pharmacy Board of Australia guidelines and pharmacy practice standards.