



# PALM BEACH EQUINE CLINIC

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## On-Site Office at PBIEC Caters to Wellington Equestrians *by Jennifer Wood, Jump Media*



The old saying, "Location, location, location" is fitting for Palm Beach Equine Clinic (PBEC) in 2016. With a new annex office located directly at the Palm Beach International Equestrian Center, home of the Winter Equestrian Festival (WEF), veterinarians from PBEC will be on the grounds with easy availability for exhibitors at WEF and nearby. The office is currently open on Tuesday through Sunday from 7:45 am to 5 pm, ready to serve you!

Palm Beach Equine Clinic is the longstanding Official Veterinarian service for the Winter Equestrian Festival and has also been the Official Veterinarian service for the Adequan® Global Dressage Festival (AGDF) since its

inception. While veterinarians are always on-site for emergency situations, the new WEF Annex office will give customers a convenient experience to reach vets easily and quickly.

Located near the Exhibitor Entrance past the guard gate off Pierson Road, the WEF Annex office features on-call veterinarians, an examination and treatment area, on-site pharmacy, and a way to book appointments and discuss horses in a comfortable, air-conditioned office.

"This is another service we are providing for the equestrians of Wellington, by coming to where they are," said Dr. Swerdlin. "Our staff is excited about the improved service we will be

able to provide at the show grounds."

The Annex office is open to all horses of all disciplines, not just hunters and jumpers. "Dressage horses can walk across the street from the AGDF to our permanent facility or if their farm is closer to WEF, they are welcome to use the new Annex office," said Dr. Swerdlin.

Whether it's a pre-purchase exam or an issue with lameness, Palm Beach Equine Clinic welcomes all to the new annex office to better serve the needs of their Wellington customers. Save time and energy, and book your visit today!

# Palm Beach Equine Clinic Internship Program Brings the Best to South Florida

by Lindsay Brock, Jump Media



While Palm Beach Equine Clinic (PBEC) may be known for the 28 superb veterinarians who call it home, they are also a driving force in educating the next generation of equine medical professionals. Through world-renowned internship and externship programs, PBEC molds new veterinarians every day.

Each year, four interns work with PBEC veterinarians for a 12-month period. Whether from externships that usually last up to two weeks and serve as an introduction to the practice, or by references from top veterinarians across the U.S. and abroad, PBEC attracts the most promising young vets in the field.

Currently, PBEC is host to recently graduated vet students from Oklahoma, Scotland, and Argentina. According to PBEC veterinarian Dr. Weston Davis who leads the Internship program, South Florida attracts only the best.

"We really have the cream of the crop because they have big opportunities here," said Dr. Davis. "A lot of internships can offer work with one or two vets, but what's cool at PBEC is they can pick from the collection of doctors we have."

PBEC's interns rotate through three

phases, including hands-on application of hospital anesthetization, imaging – both from ambulatory duty and elective – and working with a doctor of their choice based on their specific interests.

Dr. Davis has been with PBEC for two years and immediately took interest in making the internship program the best it could be. In two years, he has made one of the world's best programs even better.

"I wanted to make it as organized and structured as it could be so they can get as much out of that year as possible," he said. "The general rule is that doing a one-year internship puts you three to five years ahead of those that come out of school and start out on their own. Interns come out of school with a handle on book knowledge and the internships give them a good clinical appreciation for those same topics. They see a lot and do a lot under the supervision of seasoned vets while they are here."

While PBEC internships offer obvious perks for the interns themselves, it also has added benefit for the vets already at the clinic.

"The value for the interns is they get to see a

tremendous amount of cases in short time, but it's also valuable for us because they come out of school with fresh knowledge, new ideas, and keep us current and on our toes," said Dr. Davis.

Traditionally vet students will fulfill their internship requirements and move on to find a full-time position at other practices. Dr. Davis himself did just that after graduating from the University of Florida College Of Veterinary Medicine and interning at Oakridge Equine Hospital in Oklahoma. But, the experiences available at PBEC keep its interns staying put.

History has proven that many interns who work for PBEC as interns go on to accept full-time positions at the clinic. One of those vets is Dr. Ryan Lukens. After earning his DVM from The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, he began an internship with PBEC in 2012.

"I am so pleased that I did my internship with Palm Beach Equine," said Dr. Lukens. "It was basically another year of school where I got to focus on exactly what I wanted to do."

Dr. Lukens specialized in sports medicine, lameness, and diagnostic imaging, which is a passion he inherited from his father, a fellow veterinarian. His experience with PBEC solidified that concentration thanks to the latest in veterinary technology.

"When I came to PBEC, I had access to all the newest equipment. That gave me more tools to improve my skills under the direction of a full network of senior vets," added Dr. Lukens. "When you leave vet school, you have a question every hour of the day, and I had a number of vets who were a phone call away to answer those questions. I never had to second-guess myself because they were there to help me learn. But, there also isn't always one way to do something correctly. I learned the opinions of so many vets who do things just a little differently, and it helped me to find my own way and what's best for the horses I treat."

Thanks to PBEC, horse owners in South Florida and beyond have access to well-educated veterinarians with hands-on experience that is unmatched.

# PBEC's Dr. Richard Wheeler Discusses USEF Vaccination Requirement Rule Change

by Lindsay Brock, Jump Media



This fall, The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) unveiled its latest health rule requiring all horses entering a Federation-licensed competition be accompanied by documentation of Equine Influenza Virus (flu) and Equine Herpes Virus (rhinopneumonitis) vaccinations within six months of being stabled at the show. Now approaching a month of enforcement during the 2016 winter show season, the new vaccination requirements enacted by the USEF gave structure to requirements that were previously being developed and enforced on a show-by-show basis.

After Florida's Equine Herpes (EHV) scare in February of 2013, horse show facilities began adopting vaccination requirements of their own, usually requiring EHV-1 and EHV-4 vaccines within 90 to 120 days of a horse's arrival to the grounds.

Now, USEF specifically requires all licensed competitions comply with the same set of requirements while not increasing the workload for competition management. The six-month timeline also matches the operating procedures of international shows overseen by the FEI as well.

According to Palm Beach Equine Clinic's own Dr. Richard Wheeler, the rule change simply makes sense.

"Most people regularly vaccinate their horses every six months anyway, so this rule should not present a disruption to current practices," he said. "After the 2013 scare, competitions recognized the potential of closure due to infectious disease and started creating requirements which became inconsistent between shows."

Whether directly or indirectly affected by rule change itself, an increase in awareness regarding equine infectious disease in recent years had minimized outbreaks, according to Dr. Wheeler.

"A good job is being done so far to keep a big problem away," he added.

While efforts by the USEF, veterinarians, and horse owners alike have proved successful in keeping horses safe and healthy, Dr. Wheeler was quick to remind the equine community to not get complacent. He stresses the continuation of education and awareness.

"An increase in bio-security is the most significant benefit we've had as a result of these requirements," he said. "This is the most protective measure that we have taken on as a community, and people are now cognizant of how disruptive bringing a sick horse to a show can be. We see people getting vets involved quickly and shows doing a good job of providing isolation. What's been done in the past few years is a positive thing, but it's important that we don't let our guard down because we haven't had an outbreak in a few years."

In addition to abiding by the USEF's six-month rule, Dr. Wheeler also suggests the individuals responsible for caring for horses continue their efforts past the gates of the facility.

"Horse shows are often condensed places and limiting the exposure of horses is difficult," he said. "It's important that we stay really aware, take temperatures regularly, identify sick horses, and isolate them immediately. It's all key to prevent outbreaks."

Thanks to regulations, always improving technology, educated veterinarians, and diligent horsemen and women, the equine community is becoming more guarded against infectious disease than ever before.

To read more about the USEF vaccination requirement, [click here](#). The experts at Palm Beach Equine Clinic stand ready to answer any questions horse owners may have about vaccinations and the requirements needed for equestrian competitions.