



Gaming Commission Communications: 518-388-3415



Cornell University  
College of Veterinary Medicine

Cornell University Media Relations: 607-254-6235

**NYS GAMING COMMISSION & CORNELL UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCE  
APPOINTMENT OF DR. SCOTT E. PALMER AS EQUINE MEDICAL DIRECTOR**

***Dr. Palmer will oversee health and safety of horses at NYS Tracks and serve as an Adjunct Professor at Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine***

SCHENECTADY, N.Y. (January 13, 2014) – The New York State Gaming Commission and the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine today announced the appointment of Scott E. Palmer, VMD as the state's Equine Medical Director after conducting an international search.

Dr. Palmer, a renowned veterinarian from New Jersey with more than three decades of experience in providing medical care for horses, will oversee the health and safety of horses at all New York State Thoroughbred and Standardbred racetracks. He was selected from an international pool of finalists by a blue-ribbon search committee of veterinarians and horse industry professionals.

Dr. Palmer will be responsible for all aspects of equine health, safety, and welfare at New York racetracks and will advise the Commission on equine medication policies as well as the safety and condition of racetrack facilities and surfaces. He will supervise all on-track regulatory veterinarians as well as the New York State Equine Drug Testing Program laboratory. He will oversee equine testing procedures, ensure compliance with regulatory veterinary protocols, investigate incidents and monitor the Commission's necropsy program.

As New York's Equine Medical Director, Dr. Palmer will also serve as an Adjunct Professor at Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine, where he will be responsible for developing and coordinating continuing education programs for veterinarians and trainers related to medication and equine injuries. He will coordinate research on equine sports medicine topics and collaborate with faculty on epidemiological studies to analyze equine safety issues.

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo said, "Dr. Palmer brings a wealth of experience and expertise that will benefit the entire horse racing community. His skills and knowledge are crucial to the safety and well-being of New York's world-class race horses and I am proud to welcome him to the Gaming Commission.

Robert Williams, Acting Executive Director of the Gaming Commission, said, "We are honored to have Dr. Palmer on the team. His decades of work creating critical health and safety improvements in horse racing are well recognized and make him the ideal candidate to bring important equine safety measures to life at all New York State tracks. Dr. Palmer is an outstanding veterinarian and a consummate professional and we look forward to working with him."

Michael I. Kotlikoff, Austin O. Hooey Dean of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine, said, "I congratulate the Governor on his commitment to improving the health and safety, as well as the economic vitality, of New York racing. This appointment is an important step in a process that began with the Governor's mandate to reorganize the regulatory agency overseeing horse racing, restructure NYRA, and commission a task force to improve equine safety. The designation of a highly experienced veterinarian with broad authority to oversee all aspects of racing regulations, testing, and compliance, as well as research and education, will ensure the integrity of, and public confidence in, New York State's premier racing programs."

Dr. Palmer said, "I am honored to join the Commission and to help bolster New York's ongoing commitment to equine health and safety. Having a sole veterinary point of contact overseeing all New York race horses and having access to Cornell's array of resources is simply smart policy. I am eager to get to work, and I look forward to working with our partners to create as safe an environment as possible for our horses."

Since his graduation from the University Of Pennsylvania School Of Veterinary Medicine in 1976, Dr. Palmer has worked as a staff clinician at the New Jersey Equine Clinic, serving as the Hospital Director since 1997. He is a two-time recipient of the New Jersey Equine Practitioners Veterinarian of the Year award, as well as a recipient of the AAEP President's Award in 2009 and the AAEP Distinguished Service Award in 2010.

Dr. Palmer is board certified in equine practice by the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners. He has authored dozens of peer-reviewed publications and is a featured speaker at veterinary conferences world-wide. He is a member of several professional organizations and has held leadership positions in many, including the American Veterinary Medical Association, the American Association of Equine Practitioners, the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners, the New Jersey Veterinary Medical Association, and the New Jersey Association of Equine Practitioners.

Dr. Palmer chaired the New York Task Force on Racehorse Health and Safety, which was formed at the request of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo in 2012 in the wake of 21 equine fatalities during Aqueduct's 2011-12 Winter Meet. The New York State Equine Medical Director position was established last year as a key recommendation of that Task Force.

Dr. Palmer serves as a Board Member for the NTRA Safety and Integrity Alliance Advisory Board and the Thoroughbred Charities of America. He previously served on the ARCI Special Task Force on Medication and chaired the International Summit on Race Day Medication as well as the Ad-Hoc RMTTC Committee on Race Day Security and served two terms as member of the Grayson-Jockey Club Research Advisory Committee.

Jerry Bailey, a Hall of Fame jockey, television analyst for ESPN and NBC, and member of the New York Task Force on Racehorse Health and Safety, said, "Scott Palmer is an outstanding selection to lead New York's equine medical program. As he proved during his work on the Task Force, he has the knowledge and foresight to delve deep into complex issues surrounding equine

health and come up with sound, effective solutions, as well as an unparalleled work ethic. I am very happy for Scott and congratulate him as he embarks on this latest endeavor.”

Alan Foreman, chairman and chief executive officer of the Thoroughbred Horsemen’s Association and a member of the New York Task Force on Racehorse Health and Safety, said, “I had the good fortune of seeing Scott’s excellent work in person while on the Task Force on Racehorse Health and Safety. He’s the ideal candidate to serve as Equine Medical Director. His knowledge of the horse will be an absolute asset for New York State’s robust horse racing industry. I congratulate Scott on the position and applaud Governor Cuomo for appointing such a seasoned professional.”

James L. Gagliano, president and chief operating officer of The Jockey Club, said, “The appointment of an Equine Medical Director clearly reinforces New York State’s commitment to horse health and safety. Dr. Palmer is highly regarded throughout the Thoroughbred industry and we look forward to working with him, and with the New York State Gaming Commission, to further enhance the safety of our athletes.”

Chris Kay, CEO and president of The New York Racing Association, Inc. (NYRA), said, "Scott brings outstanding credentials to this important new position, and he shares our steadfast commitment to equine safety. Our newly hired senior vice president of racing operations, Martin Panza, also brings a wealth of experience to his new role, and he and Scott will work very closely together on behalf of all thoroughbreds at Aqueduct Racetrack, Belmont Park and Saratoga Race Course."

Paul J. Estok, Executive Vice President and General Counsel for Harness Tracks of America, said, “The appointment of Dr. Scott Palmer as New York racing’s first Equine Medical Director is good news for racing. Dr. Palmer’s impeccable credentials as a practitioner combined with his work as an advocate for better drug testing, as a leader dealing with retired and “unwanted” racehorses, and his understanding of racing’s varied stakeholder interests make him the ideal candidate to lead New York’s effort to lead North America in health, safety, and integrity initiatives for the equine athlete.”

Lawrence R. Bramlage, DVM, partner and equine orthopedic surgeon at Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital located in Lexington, Ky., said, “Dr. Palmer is a widely respected and talented veterinarian who has broad experience on the backside, as a surgeon, and as a member of numerous committees and task forces on racing. He will be a real champion for New York’s racehorses. His record as a racing advocate and in equine practice speaks for itself and I congratulate him on his new position, as well as New York State for bringing him on board.”

The Equine Medical Director Search Committee consisted of:

- Michael I. Kotlikoff, VMD, PhD. (chair) – Dean, Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine
- Robert Williams – Acting Executive Director, Gaming Commission
- Mary Scollay-Ward, DVM - Equine Medical Director, Kentucky Horse Racing Commission

- Lisa A. Fortier, DVM, PhD. – Associate Professor, Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine
- Thomas J. Divers, DVM - Steffen Professor of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine
- Jerry Bilinski, DVM – Proprietor, Waldorf Farms
- Terry Finley – Founder and President, West Point Thoroughbreds
- Kenny McPeck – Trainer, McPeck Racing
- Bennett Liebman – Deputy Secretary for Gaming and Racing, NYS Executive Chamber
- Anthony Bonomo – NYRA Reorganization Board member
- C. Steven Duncker - NYRA Reorganization Board member

The New York Task Force on Racehorse Health and Safety’s full recommendations can be found [here](#).

*About the New York State Gaming Commission*

The New York State Gaming Commission regulates all aspects of gaming and gambling activity in the state, including horse racing and pari-mutuel wagering, class III Indian gaming, video lottery terminal facilities at racetracks, the state lottery and charitable gaming.

*About the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine*

Cornell University’s College of Veterinary Medicine is recognized internationally as a leader in public health, biomedical research, animal medicine, and veterinary medical education and consistently ranked the top veterinary college in the nation. Through its research, education, and outreach programs, such as the Animal Health Diagnostic Center, Cornell is committed to advancing equine health and sports medicine.

###