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UK PUBLIC URGED TO HAVE SAY ON ANIMAL EXPERIMENTATION

Dr Hadwen Trust calls for alternatives to use of animals for scientific purposes

The UK has a unique opportunity to protect animals from unnecessary use in scientific procedures, according to the Dr Hadwen Trust for Humane Research.

The public has until September 5 to have its say on how EU rules on animal experimentation should be introduced in the UK.

Kailah Eglinton, chief executive of the Dr Hadwen Trust, said: "This is a unique opportunity to strengthen not only the protection of animals used in scientific procedures but also to promote the development of alternatives to animal use.

"Over the last 25 years not only has science seen incredible progress, but also attitudes have considerably changed. We've consistently funded and promoted the use of alternatives with an ethical, scientific and economic perspective for more than forty years."

Member states have two years to transpose the EU directive into their national systems of legislation, for full implementation in January 2013.

According to the EU Directive, "The ultimate goal should be to replace the use of animal experiments altogether".

It also states that: "In addition to animal welfare benefits, alternative methods also have the potential to provide robust information through quality-controlled, state-of-the-art tests which could be faster and less cost-intensive than classical animal-based tests."

Kailah Eglinton added: "The new EU Directive offers a significant opportunity for improving laboratory animal protection in the UK as a step towards the replacement of animal use.

"It is vital that MPs, opinion formers and the public respond to this consultation to ensure UK legislation on animal experiments and its enforcement is not weakened."

For more details on the consultation, and guidance on how to respond, visit:

www.drhadwentrust.org/consultation

Ends