



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Welcome to the 2015 mid-year newsletter. Thanks to those of you who recently commented on the draft standard dealing with professional conduct and ethics. The Board is currently reviewing these comments and will re-draft the document over the next month or 2. As we expected there were comments at either end of the spectrum but the majority were in favour of the concept behind the proposed standard.

There have been some on-going inspections of veterinary premises this year, with again the main deficiency being around the storage, handling and record keeping of S8's. The Board has been avidly reminding vets of their obligations re S8's over the last 3 to 4 years so there is really no excuse for not being aware of the requirements. If you require any clarification of your obligations and the minimum standards required for drug safes etc please contact the DHHS, specifically Jim Galloway who is only too happy to provide the information.

Unfortunately, complaints keep rolling in, occupying much of the Board's time and effort. As always, most of these centre around vet-client communication so please make this aspect of vet practice a high priority. This doesn't guarantee you will be safe from complaints but if you can clearly demonstrate good communication through practice documentation and record keeping, it certainly helps greatly in your defence if the need arises.

Another issue raised has been that of 'forced referral'. To explain this further, the Board received a letter from a vet stating that their practice had been phoned by another vet asking that they take on a sick dog requiring emergency surgery. The referring vet was advised that the clinic was not in a position to accept the referral. According to our information, this response was not accepted graciously and the situation and discussion escalated into an argument.

The end result was that the owner of the animal arrived at the second clinic anyway and had to be turned away. There are a couple of issues here:

1. The practice/vet that takes on the case originally has the duty of care to deal with the case in an appropriate manner. This may in fact be referral but the 'referral' clinic is not required or obligated to take the case on.
2. Vet premises that are not set up or equipped to perform surgical procedures or cater for hospitalization of animals (refer to Standard of Vet Premises on the Board website) should make this clear to their clients at all times. The standard states that this type of premises should "refer clients to, or have access to fixed veterinary premises for the treatment and management of cases that are beyond the scope of this type of practice". This does not mean phoning another clinic and demanding that they accept a case.
3. The issue of professional conduct is also important here. Where possible inter-vet communication should be handled in a professional and considerate manner. This may be difficult at times but this case again shows how poor communication (this time between vet clinics) can end up – a letter to the Board.

In this particular situation, I would ask everyone to consider how they would feel if another vet phoned them and demanded that they take on a case. It may not be the request as such (what is said) that is the real issue but the way in which it is said.

Another reminder that the term of the current Board expires in November. Nominations will be called for in August, so I urge you to give this serious

consideration and feel free to speak to any of the Board members or the Registrar if you would like to know what's involved.



Neil Leighton
Chair
July 2015

National Recognition of Veterinary Registration

South Australia joined the NRVR fold on 1 January 2015. This means that a Tasmanian vet may do locums or short term work in SA without the need for secondary registration. However, be aware that SA has compulsory professional indemnity insurance requirements which apply both to visiting NRVR locums and SA registrants. If you move to SA for ongoing work, you must register with the Veterinary Surgeons Board within 3 months of the move.

NRVR now applies in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. WA, ACT and NT have yet to enact changes to their laws.

Tasmania recognises current veterinary registration from all Australian States and Territories for short term/locum work. A vet moving to Tasmania to a permanent position may commence work under their interstate registration, but should ensure they have applied for Tasmanian registration within 3 months of arrival.

AVBC Vet Accreditation now recognised by USA

Effective July 1, 2015, the United States Department of Education (USDE) will recognise AVBC accreditation standards and processes. The AVBC accredits veterinary schools on behalf of all the veterinary registration boards of Australia and New Zealand.

AVBC Chair Dr Robert Cassidy said that this is good news for U.S. students attending veterinary schools in the region as they can now be assured of their eligibility to participate in U.S. federal student aid programs. Taking up the opportunity to be recognised has also been a great opportunity for AVBC to be benchmarked against international best practice.

“This intense scrutiny of our processes should give Australian and New Zealand graduates confidence that the accreditation of their degrees is aligned with the most rigorous systems in the world. “

The American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education (AVMA CoE) and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) have also undergone the USDE recognition process and they received letters of recognition at the same time as AVBC.

Contacting the Board during September/October

The registrar will be away from the office for 7 weeks in September/October. If you have any questions or need assistance with any matter, please send an email (although please allow for time differences and some delay as wifi access may be variable). The PO Box will be checked regularly and incoming correspondence actioned appropriately.

If you are moving interstate or overseas around that time and need a Letter of Good Standing (LOGS), while it can be issued from afar, it would expedite matters if it could be requested before 25 August.

Letters of Good Standing (LOGS)

To organise a LOGS, please email the registrar, state which State/Territory/country you are moving to and pay the \$49.50 fee to the Board CBA account: BSB 067 008 A/C 2800 0964 with your name as reference. Please note that a LOGS is current for 3 months from issue.

Standards of Veterinary Practice

Copies of the individual Standards and a compilation of all Standards are available on the Board website – address below.

Registration Number #

The Board website contains an extract of the Register which lists each registered vet's registration number, name, suburb and qualifications.

If you need your number, you can check it quickly on the Register. If any of your details are incorrect and/or need updating, please advise the registrar.

Members of the Board

Dr Neil Leighton (Chair)	AVA nominee
Dr Neale Ward (Deputy Chair)	AVA nominee
Dr Kevin Ellard	DPIPWE nominee
Ms Jo Bradley	Ministerial appointee (community)
Dr Tessa Frazer-Oakley	AVA nominee