



# Board Update

Newsletter of the Veterinary Practitioners Registration Board of Victoria

Issue 2 July 2013

VETERINARY  
PRACTITIONERS  
REGISTRATION  
BOARD OF VICTORIA

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## President's Message

*Dr Roslyn Nichol BVSc*

Welcome to the first newsletter of the 6th Board appointed under the *Veterinary Practice Act 1997*.

Firstly, following the retirement of Emeritus Professor Virginia Studdert, Associate Professor Peter Mansell has been appointed as Deputy President of the Board. Secondly, I am pleased to introduce two of our four new Board members. The remaining two newly appointed Board members will be introduced to you in the next edition of the Board Update.

*Dr Michael Doyle BVSc (Hons) MACVS MVS  
Member*

Michael graduated from the University of Melbourne in 1982 with Honours and immediately started work at Greensborough Veterinary Hospital, to where he returned at a later date and is currently a principal. He has a farming background in rural NSW and worked in racehorse and dairy practice before settling into a small animal practice in Melbourne. Michael achieved membership in the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists, (small animal surgery) by examination in 1999; completed a Master of Veterinary Studies in small animal medicine and surgery; and qualified as a Penn Hip radiographer in 2005. Michael is an Academic Associate of the University of Melbourne and an external examiner and guest speaker to students. Michael was appointed to the Board in March 2013 and is a member of the Complaints Committee and the Registration Committee.

*Ms Jennifer Wilkins, Grad Dip Recreation Grad Dip Data Collection and Analysis  
Community Member*

Jenny has worked in the health sector for more than 40 years developing services to improve patient care in acute and specialist hospitals and with peak bodies and community agencies. Jenny has broad experience in governance having been a member of a health board and convenor of several community committees. She has a keen interest in performance horses and has bred, competed and judged performance horses in Victoria for 25 years. Jenny was appointed to the Board in March 2013 and is a member of the Finance, Administration and Information Technology Committee and the Guidelines, Legislation Review and Communications Committee.

## *Board Performance Survey*

The recent survey of veterinary practitioners registered in Victoria which was aimed at measuring opinion about the Board's performance, was discarded because the results from a response rate of 1.5% (n=37) were not statistically relevant. The Board resolved that the Guidelines and Communications Committee will work on the implementation of a new format, questions and administrative process for issuing the next survey, which is due in 2016.

## *AVA Honorary Membership*

At the 2013 Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) conference, which was held recently in Cairns, Honorary Membership was conferred upon our recently retired Registrar, Miss Margaret Wilson. Honorary members are eminent persons (non-veterinarians) who are appointed as a token of respect for their services to the AVA in particular and/or to the veterinary profession in general. The Board congratulates Margaret on her achievement. The citation and a photograph of Margaret receiving the award is reproduced below (see page 2).

Until next time,  
Roslyn

## AVA citation conferring Honorary Membership to Miss Margaret Wilson

*Margret Wilson's tenure of 20 years as Registrar of the Veterinary Practitioners Registration Board of Victoria saw radical change and innovation occur over this time. Margaret's assistance with, and oversight of the implementation of major advances at the state and national levels is appreciated by the veterinary profession. There were huge changes to be accommodated during this period including changes to the legislation involving veterinary surgeons and practitioners, the relocation of the Board's office from Brunswick to Collins Street and supporting and encouraging the lay members of the Board who had had little previous experience with registered veterinary practitioners.*

*The Victorian Board – which initiated the Australasian Veterinary Boards - played a crucial role in the development of the Australian Veterinary Board Council and Margaret followed on the tradition and enhanced the part played by the previous Registrar.*

*Consultation with the registrars of other health professions enabled Margaret to ensure her Board was always kept informed of the latest developments regarding the regulation of these professions. Margaret also consulted with these registrars of the veterinary surgeons boards in other states and territories to keep abreast of professional regulatory requirements in other jurisdictions. This work placed the Victorian Board in an ideal position to be able to implement national registration in 2011.*

*The dedicated work that Margaret has performed over the past 20 years and her willingness to adapt to change has been of great benefit to the veterinary profession and Honorary Membership of the AVA is recognition of her commitment and assistance to the profession.*



## Australian Bat Lyssavirus

On Friday 17 May, the Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry announced the detection of bat Lyssavirus in a horse in southern Queensland. This is the first time the disease has been detected in a horse. Lyssavirus has its natural reservoir in bats and is rarely transmitted to humans; when it infects humans and other animals it causes a fatal disease similar to rabies. Transmission occurs through bites or scratches from infected bats. The virus is known to occur in bat species in Victoria, although transmission to humans or pet animals has not been reported in Victoria and Tasmania. This serves as a timely reminder to be aware that unusual neurological signs, particularly where aggression is involved, and there is a history of contact with bats, may indicate infection with Australian bat Lyssavirus. Lyssavirus is a notifiable disease and should it be suspected, please contact the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline (1800 675 888) or your nearest DEPI veterinary practitioner. The Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has created a useful set of guidelines for veterinary practitioners dealing with suspected Lyssavirus cases; it can be downloaded from [http://www.daff.qld.gov.au/4790\\_18030.htm](http://www.daff.qld.gov.au/4790_18030.htm)

## Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

A new page specifically for veterinary practitioners has been created on the APVMA website <http://www.apvma.gov.au/veterinarians.php>, providing vets with a one-stop shop for convenient links to APVMA news, resources and information sharing. Areas covered include professional issues for veterinary practitioners, finding out about registered products, reporting problems and advice for clients.

## Specialist Endorsement

Congratulations to the following practitioners who have recently received specialist endorsement.

Dr Thurid Johnstone	V6227	Small Animal Medicine
Dr Sara Connolly	V6084	Veterinary Pathology
Dr Jennifer Carter	V6268	Veterinary Anaesthesia

## Case Study

A dog was presented to a veterinary clinic after ingesting rodenticide. The dog was presented by the parents-in-law who were caring for him while the owner was on holiday. There was no veterinary practitioner in attendance at the time the dog presented. The veterinary nurse contacted Dr T who recommended that the dog be induced to vomit with the use of electric soda crystals. Having done so the dog was discharged into the care of the owner's parents in law. No further treatment was recommended. Five days after ingestion of the rodenticide the dog's condition deteriorated and he was re-presented to the clinic. The dog died despite treatment being instigated. The owner alleges that Dr T was negligent in not ensuring that information regarding the dog's condition and instructions for further care were communicated to the carers.

The matter was referred to an Informal Hearing into the professional conduct of Dr T. It was alleged that:

1. Dr T failed to communicate adequately all options for care, including but not limited to options for treatment, referral and ongoing care for the dog.
2. Dr T failed to ensure that adequate protocols were established for the follow up care of the dog.

Dr T was found to have engaged in unprofessional conduct and the Panel determined that Dr T be counselled.

Counselling is one of the determinations that may be made following a finding of unprofessional conduct. It is a formal process within which the veterinary practitioner is informed of how his/her conduct failed to meet the minimum required standard and how that standard might be met in future. The Panel may counsel in any way they see fit. The counselling may be oral, written, given immediately or within 28 days of the determination. It becomes a matter of permanent record on the veterinary practitioner's file and may be referred to in any future Hearing or action taken by the Board. The Panel made this finding based upon the following reasons.

After becoming aware of the ingestion of rodenticide, the dog's carers phoned a veterinary clinic for advice and were advised to take the dog to the closest veterinary clinic. Here, emesis was induced by a veterinary nurse, after she obtained advice over the phone from Dr T (who was working at another clinic). While acknowledging that the situation required a degree of urgency, the Panel questioned why the carers were directed to a clinic, which did not have a veterinary practitioner in attendance or why the carers were not directed to attend another clinic for veterinary examination and advice after emesis had been induced. Dr T was unable to explain the reasons.

Dr T reported to the Panel that he/she had spoken with the veterinary nurse over the phone and was informed by her that the carers were at the clinic with a dog that had recently ingested rodenticide. Dr T consented to emesis being induced by the nurse and this was done successfully. Dr T stated that he/she discussed with the nurse the requirements for ongoing care, including the need for prothrombin time testing to be performed at day two and four after the initial toxin ingestion. Dr T reported that the nurse repeated the instructions back to him/her and informed him/her that the carers were next to her whilst she was on the phone so it was possible that they overheard the instructions being repeated. Dr T conceded that an information sheet on rodenticide toxicity, which documented the requirements of ongoing care was not provided to the carers. The entry in the clinical record made by the nurse documents that the requirements for ongoing care were communicated to the carers; however, the carers deny this was the case and state that they were told that as the dog had vomited it was unlikely he would suffer any ill-effects but should be monitored over the following days and further veterinary care sought should he appear lethargic or to have pale mucous membranes. A further entry in the clinical record made by Dr T states "*clearly the information about the blood test did not make it through to the clients*". The dog's owner also reports that subsequent to the event he spoke with the veterinary nurse over the phone and she admitted that she had forgotten to inform the carers of the requirement for blood testing and neglected to follow-up the case in the days after.

The Panel considered it was reasonable for the veterinary nurse to induce emesis after the dog presented at the clinic and after discussing the matter with Dr T. The Panel were concerned that Dr T did not offer to discuss the matter directly with the carers so as to ensure that they were adequately informed of the risks of rodenticide toxicity and the requirements for ongoing care. The Panel was of the opinion that once Dr T was consulted on the matter, the responsibility for the dog's care rested with him/her and he/she should have sought to assure him/herself that the carers were fully informed of the nature of the condition and the requirements for ongoing care. The Panel was concerned that this responsibility was delegated to a veterinary nurse, especially since Dr T was on the phone and apparently available for discussion of the matter. The Panel was of the opinion that it was not sufficient to assume that the carers had overheard the instructions for ongoing care by listening to a phone call in which they were not participating. The Panel were also concerned that protocols were not initiated by Dr T to ensure that the case was appropriately followed up and that the carers were reminded of the important requirement for blood testing to monitor the dog's condition.

The Panel was informed by Dr T that protocols have subsequently been put in place to ensure a similar event does not occur in the future. Whilst the Panel considered this to be a positive step, it does not diminish the responsibility of Dr T in this dog's case.

## Registration Matters

### *Duration and Renewal of Registration*

Under section 11 of the *Veterinary Practice Act 1997* (the Act) the registration of a veterinary practitioner continues in force until 31 December of the year in which the registration was granted or renewed. The onus is on practitioners to renew registration before it expires on 31 December. Section 12 provides that upon payment of an additional renewal fee, which will be \$150.00 for the 2014 registration year, the last day upon which registration can be renewed is 31 March 2014. Section 12 also provides that if registration has not been renewed within three-months of expiry, the Board must remove that practitioner's name from the Register.

### *Principal Place of Residence*

Under section 4 of the Act only persons whose principal place of residence is in Victoria or will be in Victoria while practising as a veterinary practitioner may apply for registration in Victoria.

### *Non-practising Registration*

Practitioners may apply for non-practising registration at the time of retiring or withdrawing from practising if working in a totally non veterinary occupation or for parental leave, carers leave or travel purposes. Conditions apply to holding non-practising registration such as being unable to carry out veterinary procedures; provide veterinary services (even to own animals); purchase, possess or supply scheduled drugs under the Drugs and Poisons legislation; and exercise authority requiring registration as a veterinary practitioner. Non-practising registrants remain on the public register and receive Board publications.

### *Voluntary Removal*

If a practitioner no longer wishes to maintain registration in Victoria, they may request that their name be removed from the Register voluntarily. Taking this course of action will stop any follow-up from the Board in relation to your registration status; however, being so removed from the Register will not preclude a practitioner from applying for restoration to the Register at some future date.

## Online Registration Renewal

E-documentation is increasing in popularity so rather than wait for your 2014 renewal information pack to arrive in the post you can now elect to have this information sent to you via email. Please email your request to [communications@vetboard.vic.gov.au](mailto:communications@vetboard.vic.gov.au). Also new to the renewal process is the opportunity for Conditional and Non Practising veterinary practitioners to renew their registration for 2014 online. The technical issues that some practitioners experienced last year when using the online portal have been resolved. However, should you experience difficulties completing the online renewal form or making payment please phone the office on +613 9620 7444. If your call is unanswered please leave a message or send an email requesting assistance to [Communications@vetboard.vic.gov.au](mailto:Communications@vetboard.vic.gov.au). Please be aware that the 2014 Compliance Self-Assessment Form will also be available for downloading from the Board's website. A hard copy of this form will not be posted this year. If you do not have access to the internet please contact the office to request a form be mailed or faxed to you. The Board reminds you of your obligations to notify the Board's office of any changes to your contact details as this will facilitate keeping you updated during the renewal period.

## From the Department of Environment and Primary Industries

### *Off-label and unregistered treatments for food-producing animals*

*George Downing, Principal Veterinary Officer, Department of Environment and Primary Industries*

Dairy Food Safety Victoria, which audits records of agricultural and veterinary chemical use on dairy farms, has reported an instance of a dry cow treatment being used in lactating dairy cows, contrary to a restraint statement on the label. The producer concerned indicated that his veterinary practitioner knew about this practice. There are some permitted off-label uses of registered veterinary chemical products in food-producing animals in Victoria. However, any use contrary to a restraint statement on the label, such as 'DO NOT use in lactating cows', is not permitted by any person. There are also a number of veterinary chemical products that contain active constituents which, under the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1992*, must only be used according to label directions. They are:

- streptomycin or dihydrostreptomycin
- clenbuterol and related beta-agonists
- anabolic or androgenic steroids
- hormones including boldenone, ethyloestrenol, megestrol, methandriol, nandrolone, oestradiol, progesterone, stanozolol, testosterone, trenbolone or zeranol and their derivatives (but excluding progesterone and testosterone and their derivatives when they are used in conjunction with the artificial insemination of sheep under the written directions of a registered veterinary practitioner).

Additionally, any veterinary chemical product containing the following chemicals is not permitted for use in food producing animals:

- carbadox
- mercury compounds other than thiomersal and phenyl mercuric acetate when used as preservatives
- organochlorine chemicals including DDT, dieldrin, lindane, endrin, aldrin and BHC
- reserpine
- nitrofurantoin antibacterials
- diethylstilboestrol and related compounds
- sulphonamide antibacterials except - sulfadiazine, sulfadimidine sulfadoxine, sulfaquinoxaline, sulfatroxazole
- chloramphenicol (including in horses)
- topical arsenical compounds.

All registered veterinary chemical products (whether or not they are S4s) may only be used off-label in food-producing animals on the written authorisation of a veterinary practitioner. This is mainly to ensure that an appropriate withholding period is observed for both milk and meat, so that unacceptable residues that could affect trade are not detected.

Both the authorisation and the withholding period can be provided by the practitioner through the use of an advice note at the time the veterinary chemical product is dispensed. The advice note should be signed by the owner or person in charge of the animal(s) at the time of supply, to acknowledge that he/she has read it and is aware of any increased withholding period. A copy of the advice note should be kept by the veterinary practitioner. The advice note must contain the following details:

- business name, address and phone number of the veterinary practitioner
- name of the owner or person in charge of the animals
- date the product was sold
- adequate directions for treating the animal
- required withholding period
- species of the animals
- breed, age and sex or identification numbers of the animals
- name of the veterinary drug so that it unambiguously identifies the active constituent, its strength and form
- quantity of the drug supplied.

An example of an advice note is available on the Department of Primary Industries website at [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture/farming-management/chemical-use/veterinary-chemicals/veterinary-practitioner-requirements](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture/farming-management/chemical-use/veterinary-chemicals/veterinary-practitioner-requirements)

The label on the drug container must have the following minimum label details if an advice note is also provided:

- the appropriate signal heading
- business name, address and phone number of the veterinary practitioner
- name of the owner or person in charge of the animals
- species of the animals
- date of supply.

Unregistered veterinary chemical products, which include registered human preparations, agricultural chemicals and authorised active constituents, may be supplied for use in single food-producing animals only. They have similar requirements for labelling and advice notes as for off-label use.

Veterinary practitioners may be held responsible for residues detected in animals at slaughter where they have authorised off-label or unregistered use of a veterinary chemical product.

In general, any chemical product that is used to:

- treat, prevent, diagnose or alleviate a disease or condition in an animal or
- modify its physiology so as to alter its natural development, productivity, quality or reproductive capacity or
- make it more manageable

is classed as a veterinary chemical product under the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code legislation.

If veterinary practitioners are aware of producers using veterinary chemical products illegally, they should advise them that it is not permitted and make a note in their client records that they have provided that advice.

## In Memoriam

It is with much sadness that we acknowledge the passing of two esteemed members of the veterinary profession.

### *Emeritus Professor Douglas C. Blood*

After graduating from the University of Sydney in 1942 and a period as Captain in the Australian army, Professor Blood was appointed to academic positions at the University of Sydney, Cornell University and Guelph University (the latter as Professor). Professor Blood was appointed as Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Science at the University of Melbourne, arriving in 1962 to oversee re-establishment of the new school. Professor Blood continued in this role until December 31, 1968, after which he served as Professor in Veterinary Science until his retirement in 1985. During this period Professor Blood was instrumental in promoting the clinical and other teaching and research programs in the Veterinary faculty. He led development of dairy herd health programs and was, worldwide, a key innovator in this area and author with Otto Radostits of the foundation textbook "Herd Health". With Jakob Malmo he developed the collaboration of the University with the Maffra Veterinary Centre to develop the Rural Veterinary Centre at Maffra. This model of educating students in rural practice and especially dairy cattle medicine has been extraordinarily successful and extensive.

While at Guelph, Professor Blood, with Dr James A. Henderson, wrote the first edition of "Veterinary Medicine", a text that is now in its 10th edition and has been translated into many languages.

Professor Blood was a long serving member of the Board from 1963 to 1990 and was President for the period 1987 to 1990. Professor Blood was elected to the 26<sup>th</sup> Board in March 1963, and served on nine boards for a total of 27 years. His final term was as President of the 34<sup>th</sup> Board (1987-1990).

Professor Blood was concerned with the qualifications of veterinary practitioners, which was appropriate for registration without further examination; the standards of clinical practice provided to the community; the requirement for veterinary practitioners to undertake continual professional development to maintain competency; and the recognition of veterinary specialists. The first veterinary specialists in Victoria were registered in 1988 during his final term on the Board.

One of the first tasks that Professor Blood undertook after appointment to the Board was to analyse the courses leading to a veterinary degree from schools around the world. In 1967 the Board decided that graduates of the recently established veterinary school at Massey University in New Zealand would be registered in Victoria without further examination, and recommended that other State Veterinary Surgeons Boards do likewise. This was the first attempt at a uniform approach to veterinary registration in Australia. The Board also recommended that the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in the United Kingdom register Massey graduates without further examination. In 1969 the Commonwealth Government established the Committee on Overseas Professional Qualifications (COPQ) to assist in assimilating overseas qualified professionals into the community. The Victorian Board endeavoured to further achieve increased uniformity among the State Veterinary Boards to recognise overseas qualifications and prepared a list of the categories of Veterinary Schools and Qualifications.

In 1974 the Board proposed that a National Veterinary Examination (NVE) be developed but it was not until 1977 following the establishment of an Expert Panel of Veterinary Science as a subcommittee of COPQ that there was progression of the NVE. Professor Blood and Dr Dan Flynn, a classmate from the 1942 BVSc (Sydney) course, were the representatives of the Victorian Veterinary Board on the Panel. The NVE was first used in 1982.

Professor Blood was an innovator in the politics and regulation of the veterinary profession in Australia. He published a book on veterinary law in 1985. His colleagues and students, acclaimed him as one of the best-known veterinary practitioners internationally and as a remarkable teacher and mentor. His was one of the most articulate voices of the veterinary profession in Australia.

After retirement, Professor Blood continued in his indefatigable manner in a wide variety of activities including bread making, beer brewing and bird photography.

The Board's condolences are extended to Professor Blood's family and friends.

*Emeritus Professor Kenneth Jubb*

Professor Jubb graduated from the University of Sydney in 1951 and embarked on a career directed to veterinary pathology. He was honoured in many ways, including being awarded the Gilruth Medal by the Australian Veterinary Association and a Medal of the Order of Australia. His many contributions to the veterinary profession, and the University of Melbourne included serving as Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Melbourne, 1969-1990; Professor of Veterinary Pathology, University of Melbourne 1963-1990; and Emeritus Professor, University of Melbourne, 1991-2013.

Professor Jubb was an author and editor, with Peter Kennedy of the University of California, of Editions 1, 2, 3 and 4 of "Pathology of Domestic Animals", which was renamed "Jubb and Kennedy's Pathology of Domestic Animals" for the 5<sup>th</sup> (2007) edition edited by Dr Grant Maxie. Professor Jubb contributed to the development of the 6<sup>th</sup> edition, including authoring, with Dr Andrew Stent, the chapter on diseases of the pancreas.

During his long career, Professor Jubb was active in administration of the University of Melbourne .

Professor Jubb was a member of the Zoological Parks and Gardens Board of Victoria for over 2 decades, completing his term on the Board as Chair in 1990.

Outside the University, Professor Jubb was a passionate supporter of Werribee and the City of Wyndham. He served on numerous local committees, including the Biotechnology Precinct that oversaw development of the initial stages of a biotechnology park at Hoppers Crossing. Professor Jubb served as a Governor, Chairman and member of the Executive of the Ian Clunies Ross National Science Foundation and was a Fellow and Councilor of the Australian Academy of Technology Sciences and Engineering. He was a Foundation Fellow of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists.

Professor Jubb was instrumental in the establishment of the Veterinary School at Murdoch University and was awarded an honorary DVSc from Murdoch in 1980 in recognition of this work.

Internationally, Professor Jubb was instrumental in the establishment of the Veterinary Faculty of the University of Putra Malaysia. His contributions were noted in the establishment of the Howell-Jubb Prize at the University and his award of the honorary DSc by that University.

After his retirement from the University in 1990, Emeritus Professor Jubb had no formal responsibilities in the Faculty. However, he continued to attend his office in the Faculty at Werribee on a daily basis where he was an active and integral part of the veterinary pathology post-graduate training program. He conducted daily histopathology slide reading sessions with the tutors and other staff, was frequently consulted (daily) by clinical staff on interpretation of biopsy and post mortem results, and provided informal leadership in journal clubs. Before and after retirement he led regular Thursday morning histopathology slide reading sessions attended by pathologists throughout Victoria. For many years, he also led a Thursday afternoon session on pathology of the eye, which was attended by veterinary practitioners and human ophthalmologists. These activities were well above those expected of an Emeritus Professor.

The Board's condolences are extended to Professor Jubb's family and friends.

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