



# VETERINARY PRACTITIONERS REGISTRATION BOARD OF VICTORIA

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## Board Update May 2017

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## President's Message

Welcome to the first Board Update for 2017.

We are pleased to welcome two new staff members to the Board office. Monica Clements has joined us in the role of Registration and Communications Officer. Monica has significant experience in communications and training. Elizabeth Hutchings has joined as the Registration and Projects Officer. Elizabeth has extensive experience in investigation roles including complaint reviews, process improvement and reporting. Both Monica and Elizabeth have also worked in administration and complaint handling in regulatory environments.

We are, however, saddened to be losing Vanita Furness (Finance) who has advised us that she will not be returning from her extended maternity leave. Vicki Kahanoff, who filled the Finance Officer role in Vanita's absence, has also left to take up a new corporate position. Melanie Suda (Reception and Administration) and Annie Salerni (Registration) have also departed. Many practitioners will have had dealings with one, or several, of these staff members. The Board sincerely thanks all of them for their efforts and the contributions that they have made to the Board's functions. We wish them the very best for the future.

The Board would also like to remind practitioners that as a result of the change of registration period from calendar to financial year, all Victorian registrants (except for those with Specific Registration) can expect to receive their renewal communications before the end of May. These communications will contain instructions about the renewal process. Registration fees will need to be paid before 30 June 2017.

This is an appropriate time to remind veterinary practitioners that it is your responsibility to ensure your registration remains current, and that you complete the declaration page of the renewal process yourself. Completing the declaration requires you to affirm that the information asserted is true and correct, which is not a task that can be delegated to others.

Peter Mansell  
President



## Fees for financial year 2017 / 2018

At its meeting on 3 May, the Board finalised the fee schedule for the 2017-18 financial year. The full schedule is published below. Features of the year's fee schedule include:

- An annual \$360 registration/renewal fee for general registrants, pro-rated to \$180 for registration starting after 1 December 2017.
- A discounted registration fee of \$180 for new graduates first registering in the year after graduation, even if they graduate before 1 December.
- For specialists, a renewal fee comprising \$360 in general registration fees plus \$250 for each specialist endorsement. A specialist with one specialisation will pay a total of \$610.
- A \$150 service fee for new applications for: general registration (including new graduates), specific registration, specialist endorsement, restoration/re-registration, or conversion from non-practising to general registration. In previous years, the Board has charged a higher fee for new registration than for renewal. To simplify the fee schedule and increase transparency, the application fee is now itemised separately.
- A \$75 complex assessment service fee for applications that require special consideration by the Board, including its staff and committees. Applications for specific registration will always incur this fee.

More information and examples on how fees apply in particular circumstances: [Registration and service fee schedule](#)

## Renewal

The registration renewal period will begin soon. We will contact you to inform you when the VetConsole on the Board's website is open for payment of registration fees for the 2017-18 year.

- If you are a general registrant without conditions, you will be able to pay next year's registration fees online via the VetConsole.
- If you are a registrant with conditions, we will contact you individually about how to renew your registration.
- Practitioners who prefer not to pay online will be able to download and return a renewal request form for Board staff to process a manual payment.

Registration fees must be paid by midnight 30 June 2017. A late fee of \$180 will be charged for renewals paid after **30 June 2017**.

Registrants who do not renew by 31 July 2017 will have their names removed from the Register of Veterinary Practitioners (Victoria) on 1 August 2017. Under the *Veterinary Practice Act 1997*, it is not possible to renew after this date. To resume practising, it would be necessary to be restored to the register.

Fees payable for restoration to the Register include an application fee (\$150) and a registration fee (\$360). Depending on when they wish to resume practising, the applicant may also have to pay a fast track fee (\$250).

## Fee schedule 2017 / 2018

<b>REGISTRATION EXCLUDING SERVICE FEES</b>	
<b>General</b>	
Annual registration/renewal/restoration	\$360
Part year registration after 1 December 2017	\$180
2017-2018 new graduate registration	\$180
<b>Specialist</b>	
Annual registration	\$360
Specialist endorsement (per specialisation)	\$250
<b>NON-PRACTISING</b>	
Annual non-practising registration fee	\$100
<b>REGISTRATION SERVICE FEES</b>	
Application fee	\$150
Complex assessment fee	\$75
<i>This fee is payable with applications:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for specific registration</li> <li>• for re-registration where the applicant is re-registering and recency of practice needs to be considered, or</li> <li>• for other reasons, require special consideration by Board staff or at meetings of the Board and its committees</li> </ul>	
Fast track registration fee	\$250
Late fee (for registration renewal)	\$180
Replacement registration certificate	\$70
<b>OTHER SERVICE FEES</b>	
Letter of professional standing	\$60 (plus \$10 per copy requested).
Register of Veterinary Practitioners (Victoria):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full copy</li> </ul>	\$1,785
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partial copy</li> </ul>	\$897.50
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple extracts</li> </ul>	\$455
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single extract</li> </ul>	\$35

## From Agriculture Victoria

### Anthrax confirmed in Victorian sheep

Anthrax was confirmed on a sheep property located north-west of Swan Hill on 3 March 2017.

The affected property has been quarantined and the sheep on this and surrounding 'At Risk' properties have been vaccinated. Anthrax has typically been diagnosed in dairy cattle in the Goulburn Valley in recent decades, with Swan Hill located outside of the historic anthrax "belt". This is only the fifth recorded case of anthrax diagnosed in Victorian sheep since 1950.

This diagnosis highlights the need to consider **anthrax as a differential diagnosis whenever unexplained sudden death occurs in sheep, cattle, or other susceptible species in Victoria, regardless of the location**. Grazing herbivores (e.g. cattle and sheep) are infected through ingesting spores present in contaminated soils, while browsers (e.g. deer) may ingest the pathogen on contaminated foliage. Once ingested, the bacteria produces potent toxins that cause the clinical signs of anthrax including fever, inappetence, lethargy or sudden death, often with a blood-stained exudate visible at the nose, mouth and/or anus.

Anthrax is a notifiable disease. If you suspect anthrax immediately contact your local Agriculture Victoria Veterinary Officer or phone the all-hours Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline (1800 675 888). A screening test (immunochromatographic test; ICT) for anthrax is available for field testing of cattle and sheep carcasses. The ICT **must be used before a post-mortem examination is considered or the carcass is moved**, and can only be used by veterinary practitioners who are accredited by Agriculture Victoria. Contact your local Veterinary Officer if you would like to become accredited to use the ICT.

### Fighting antimicrobial resistance

In 2015, the Australian Government released its first [National Antimicrobial Resistance \(AMR\) Strategy 2015-2019](#) to guide Australia's response to the threat of antibiotic misuse and resistance. An [Implementation Plan: National Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy 2015-2019](#) was released on 10 November 2016 following consultation with stakeholders. Please visit the [website](#) for more information on the strategy.

The Strategy has seven objectives. The first objective is to 'increase awareness and understanding of antimicrobial resistance, its implications and actions to combat it, through effective communication, education and training'.

The Department of Economic Development, Jobs Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) has committed to leading several activities under this objective (activities 1.1.5, 1.1.6, 1.2.10, and 1.3.15 in the Implementation Plan). Agriculture Victoria, as part of DEDJTR, will develop and disseminate information associated with antimicrobial resistance (AMR) to various stakeholders who prescribe or use antibiotics, which includes veterinary practitioners and their clients.

On Friday 3 March, Agriculture Victoria hosted an exhibition stand at the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) Victorian Division State Conference and Trade Fair. The stand featured materials and information on important matters such as the National Livestock Identification System for sheep and goats, responsible pet ownership and care, beekeeping, animal diseases and surveillance projects, and fighting antimicrobial resistance. Thank you to the veterinary practitioners who visited the stand.

With the help of experts at the University of Melbourne, key messages on fighting AMR are now available in the form of postcard-sized magnets (see below). There is a magnet designed for veterinary practitioners, another for people who care for animals such as pet owners, farmers and managers, and also one with a set of stewardship messages.

Agriculture Victoria is preparing more information, materials and communication channels to raise awareness of AMR, which will include a dedicated web page, factsheets, articles, posters and other items. Key messages will be promoted at upcoming veterinary Continuing Professional Development events, on rural field days and industry expos, and during the World Health Organisation's World Antibiotics Awareness Week from 13 to 19 November 2017.

In June this year, Agriculture Victoria will be hosting an exhibition stand at the upcoming [AVA Annual Conference](#) in Melbourne to promote AMR related information and showcase other important areas of work that the department is involved in. Please come and visit if you are attending the event.

Ideas, suggestions, feedback and/or comments about promoting the fight against AMR are welcome. Veterinary practitioners can contact Dr Shyuan Seah at 9217 4326 or [email](#).

Information on other matters are available at the [Agriculture Victoria website](#), and specific information for veterinary practitioners is provided on [VetSource](#).



**AMR magnet for vets**

**Antibiotics are for treating bacterial infections**

- ✓ Only use antibiotics when bacterial infection is present or very likely to occur
- ✓ Use the narrowest spectrum antibiotic to control bacteria
- ✓ Use the appropriate dosage for the infection, site and species
- ✓ Minimise the duration of therapy

**Fight antibiotic resistance!**



**AMR magnet for animal carers**

**Antibiotics are for treating bacterial infections**

- ✓ Not all sick animals need antibiotics
- ✓ Many minor infections and injuries can heal without antibiotics
- ✓ Only give antibiotics to your animal if your vet prescribes them
- ✓ Follow vet instructions fully and always finish the course of antibiotics

**Fight antibiotic resistance!**



**Stewardship messages**

**Antibiotic stewardship**

Using antibiotics responsibly and only when we *really* need them

**Many antibiotics have become less effective in treating bacterial infections**

- People and animals could die from previously treatable infections due to antibiotic resistant bacteria

**Antibiotic resistance is a key global health issue**

- We need to work together to minimise the misuse and overuse of antibiotics in humans and animals

**We must use antibiotics prudently to prevent antibiotic resistance**

- We need antibiotics to treat bacterial infections in humans and animals in the future

**You can help by carefully considering when and how to use antibiotics**

- Always prescribe and use antibiotics correctly
- Do not use or ask for antibiotics when they are not really needed



## Australia Day Honours

The Board extends its congratulations to Emeritus Professor Jock McLean, who was made an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AO), for distinguished service to science as a veterinary practitioner, toxicologist, and academic, to engineering education, and to the regulation of agricultural chemicals and veterinary drugs.

Professor McLean's service includes:

Chairman, Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives, Food and Agriculture Organisation (UN)/World Health Organisation, 1992-2009.

World Health Organisation Representative Member, 1987-2009.

Director, Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, 2000-2005.

Inaugural Science Fellow in the Toxicology of Veterinary Drugs, 2006-2010.

Member, Veterinary Medicines Advisory Panel, 2006-2010.

Foundation Member, Advisory Group on Chemical Safety, Australian Government, 2005-2009.

Foundation Member, Advisory Committee on Pesticides and Health 1993-2005.

Member, Stock Medicines Board of Victoria, 1972-1986.

Racing Analytical Services Ltd (RASL):

Chairperson, 2005-2011.

Deputy Chairperson, 1987-2005.

Board Member, 1987-2011.

Member, Victorian Government Ministerial Working Party that led to foundation of RASL, 1986.

National Health and Medical Research Council:

Member, Pesticides and Agricultural Chemicals Standing Committee, 1978-1993.

Foundation Member, Committee on Toxicity, 1985-1988.

Swinburne University of Technology:

Chair, Animal Ethics Committee, 1987-2012.

Professor Emeritus, since 1997.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Division of Science, Engineering and Design, 1994-1997.

Personal Professor, 1991-1997.

Dean, Faculty of Applied Science, 1986-1993.

University of Melbourne:

Associate Dean and Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Veterinary Science, 1977-1986.

Past Chairman, Board of Examiners, Doctor of Philosophy candidates.

Tutor and Lecturer, 1965-1977, and Academic Staff member, 1965-1986.

Australian Veterinary Association:

Editorial Committee Member, Australian Veterinary Journal, 2002-2009.

Past Member, Genetic Engineering Advisory Committee.

Life Member, since 2000.

Member, Academic Board, Royal Victorian Aero Club, since 2010.

Companion, Institution of Engineers, Australia, elected 1994.

The Board acknowledges Professor McLean's significant and selfless contribution to the veterinary profession.

## Specialist Endorsement

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

V4655	DR	SHASTA	LYNCH	VETERINARY ONCOLOGY
V6312	DR	RALPH	WEBSTER	VETERINARY SMALL ANIMAL SURGERY

## Social Media

The use of social media is expanding rapidly. Individuals and organisations are embracing user-generated content, such as social networking, personal websites, discussion forums and message boards, and blogs. When used effectively, social media can be a useful platform to educate and market to the public.

Whether an online activity is able to be viewed by the public or is limited to a specific group of people, veterinary practitioners need to maintain professional standards and be aware of the implications of their actions, as in all professional circumstances. Veterinary practitioners need to be aware that information circulated on social media may end up in the public domain, and remain there, irrespective of the intent at the time of posting. As such, practitioners should be aware of their ethical and regulatory responsibilities when they are interacting online, just as when they interact in person.

Practitioners must be aware of their obligations in relation to privacy and confidentiality of patient information, including when using social media. For example, the posting of unauthorised photographs of patients may be a breach of privacy and confidentiality obligations.

Section 59 of the *Veterinary Practice Act 1997* regulates how services provided by registered veterinary practitioners can be advertised. These limits apply to all forms of advertising, including through social media and on the internet.

## Euthanasia

Many enquiries to the Board relate to animal owners' experiences of their pet's euthanasia. Often an animal owner's expectation of a peaceful departure is not necessarily matched by the reality, and owners experience shock and distress on those occasions where an animal may vocalise, struggle, and/or take a breath after death.

Practitioners are reminded that when presented with an animal for euthanasia, they should discuss the possibility of such reactions openly with the animal owner; lessening the likelihood of the owner being shocked and distressed should such a reaction occur.

## Your Opportunity to Comment

### MENTAL HEALTH RISK AND HOW VETS RELATE TO CLIENTS AND COLLEAGUES

Researchers at Murdoch University invite veterinary practitioners practising in Australia to participate in an online survey investigating how vets relate to their colleagues and clients, and aspects of these relationships that protect or harm vets' mental health.

The researchers anticipate that this research will provide important practical contributions for vet practices which include:

1. Informing vets on suicide risk.
2. Guidance on structuring suicide early prevention strategies for practitioners.
3. Developing training to facilitate colleague and client interactions that improve staff relationships and increase client satisfaction.
4. Wider application of findings to professions involving a caring role by practitioners e.g., veterinary nurses, doctors, nurses, dentists.

Participation involves completing an [anonymous online questionnaire](#) which should take no longer than 30 minutes. This study is confidential and participants cannot be identified from their responses.

Upon completing the survey participants can enter a draw for 1 of 10 Coles Group and Myer Gift Cards valued at \$100 each.

All veterinary practitioners registered in Australia, who interact with clients, are encouraged to participate. **The survey closes on 15 July 2017.** You can read further about this research from Murdoch University at [www.practitionermentalhealth.com](http://www.practitionermentalhealth.com).

