



VETERINARY
PRACTITIONERS
REGISTRATION
BOARD OF VICTORIA

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Board Update

Issue 3 December 2013

President's Message

Dr Roslyn Nichol BVSc

Welcome to the final Board Update for 2013. The year has been a busy one with the 6th Board appointed under the *Veterinary Practice Act 1997*. We introduced two of the four new Board members in the last edition of the Board Update and I am pleased to introduce the remaining two members below.

*Dr Tracey Bradley BVSc(Hons), MPH, MANZCVS
Member, Minister's Appointment*

Dr Bradley graduated from the University of Melbourne in 1989 and worked in mixed practice in both Australia and the UK. In 1995 Dr Bradley joined the then Department of Primary Industries and worked in 5 locations across Victoria. During this time she was awarded her Membership of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Sciences and completed a Masters in Public Health. In 2007 she was appointed Principal Veterinary Officer, Aquatic Animal Health, Department of Primary Industries. In August 2013 Dr Bradley became a member of the Board and is a member of the Guidelines, Legislation Review and Communications Committee and the Registration Committee.

*Ms Janet Cohen
Legal Representative*

Ms Cohen holds bachelor degrees in both law and science from Monash University and Masters of Business Administration and Masters of Laws from the University of Melbourne. Ms Cohen worked as a commercial lawyer and then in the regulation of the legal profession for 19 years. Between 1999 and 2005 she was the deputy Legal Ombudsman in Victoria. She has an interest in ethics and governance and has been a member of the Brotherhood of St Laurence Human Research Ethics Committee since 2001. Ms Cohen was appointed to the Board in June 2013 and is a member of the Complaints Committee and the Registration Committee.

Registration Renewal

It is that time of year again! The Board is now taking registration renewals for 2014. Your user name and password were emailed to you during the first week of December. Renewal and payment can be quickly and easily completed online, via the Board's secure payment gateway: <http://practitioners.vetboard.vic.gov.au/>.

If you experience any problems when renewing your registration, please phone the office on 9620 7444 (Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm, excluding Public Holidays).

All late payments, made after 31 December 2013, will incur an additional fee of \$150.00.

Season's Greetings

The Board's office will be closed from 5pm 24 December and re-opening 9am 6 January.

On behalf of the Board and its employees, I wish all practitioners, support staff and their families a safe and relaxing festive season and a fulfilling 2014.

Best wishes,
Roslyn

Case Study

An owner took their dog to a veterinary clinic with a suspected abscess in the mouth. Dr A examined the dog and diagnosed a papilloma on the left side upper lip. After injecting local anaesthetic into the site, Dr A attempted to remove the papilloma with a scalpel. This was unsuccessful as the dog became distressed during the procedure and subsequently was given a sedative. After waiting for a short time for the sedative to take effect, Dr A attempted to continue to remove the papilloma; however, the dog reacted strongly and as a result, the owner instructed Dr A to cease treatment.

The owner alleged that Dr A's treatment of the dog was negligent, inadequate and cruel. It was also alleged that Dr A did not discuss, at any time, the procedure that Dr A intended to perform on the dog and that Dr A's behaviour and attitude was abrupt, rude and unprofessional.

After a preliminary investigation, the matter was referred to an informal hearing into the professional conduct of Dr A. It was alleged that:

- Dr A's clinical management and treatment of the dog was inadequate and less than the minimum standard expected of a veterinary practitioner
- Dr A failed to inform the owner of the treatment options available and did not obtain informed consent for the procedure performed on the dog
- Dr A's behaviour and attitude was less than the minimum standard expected of a registered veterinary practitioner by the public and/or his/her peers.

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

A caution is a formal notification, in the context of an advisory warning, to a registered veterinary practitioner. It warns the registered veterinary practitioner that a change in their manner of practice is required to conform to the minimum standards of the profession as legislated in the *Veterinary Practice Act 1997* and ancillary legislation (for example, Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances); described in the Board's written Guidelines and as understood by community standards and those of the veterinary practitioner's peers. This matter is now permanently recorded on the veterinary practitioner's file and may be referred to in any future Hearing or action taken that the Board may take.

The Panel reviewed all of the information provided to it, including statements from Dr A and the owner and made its finding and determination based upon the following reasons.

The owner presented the dog to Dr A's clinic for a lesion on its lip, which the owner was concerned about. The Panel accepted the series of events that followed, which generally, were agreed by the owner and Dr A. The dog was examined and Dr A diagnosed a papilloma on the left upper side lip. Dr A fitted a muzzle to the dog and proceeded to inject local anaesthetic into the base of the papilloma. While performing this procedure, the dog became distressed and fought to free itself. The owner states that during this struggle the syringe became loose and ended up embedding itself in Dr A's leg, who knocked the syringe out of their leg. The syringe fell onto the floor whereupon Dr A picked it up syringe and continued to inject the remaining contents into the papilloma site on the dog's lip. Dr A informed the Panel that this inci-

Dangerous Dog Hotline: 1300 101 080: 8am to 6pm

The Dangerous Dogs Hotline provides the community (and veterinary practitioners) with an additional way of reporting dangerous dogs.

The hotline operates between 8am and 6pm, seven days per week and helps to ensure that local councils are alerted to any reports of dangerous dogs.

All reports are recorded and the information is forwarded to the relevant local council.

It is the Victorian Government's expectation that all reports of dangerous dogs, which local councils receive, will be promptly investigated.

Where hotline operators have obtained consent, caller information will be provided to councils and follow-up to the respective resident is expected to inform them of the outcome.

To call the hotline dial: 1300 101 080

[Department of Environment and Primary Industries](#)

Specialist Endorsement

The Board congratulates the following practitioners who have recently received specialist endorsement.

Dr Natalie Webster	V6311	Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging
Dr Peter Harding	V5993	Equine Surgery
Dr Laura Brockley	V4110	Veterinary Oncology
Dr James Simcock	V4824	Small Animal Surgery
Dr Brenton Chambers	V3609	Small Animal Surgery