



## FROM THE REGISTRAR

Firstly on behalf of the staff and Board I wish everybody all the very best for Christmas and the New Year.

The Board regularly receives questions about the proper use and recording of scheduled medicines. This newsletter has three helpful articles on the subject.

You are invited to take part in two online surveys to assist with research projects. Please consider helping the researchers with their work.

The Board office will be closed from 4.30pm on Friday 23 December 2022 until 8.30am Tuesday 3 January 2023.

As always, feedback, suggestions and comments are very welcome.

Dr Sue Godkin  
Registrar



## CLARIFICATION ON PRESCRIPTIONS WITH REPEATS

As detailed in the previous newsletter, after examining an animal, a veterinarian may prescribe a scheduled drug, with repeats which is entered in the clinical record. In this situation a veterinary nurse may organise the labelling and making up of the scheduled drug as per the instruction on the clinical record.

However, a veterinarian **must** check that the repeat is labelled correctly and is the correct product and dose before it is supplied to a client. A further examination of the animal by a veterinarian is not required unless the client indicates there is an issue with the animal's health. The oversight by a veterinarian is required because the Medicines and Poisons Regulations 2016 do not authorise veterinary nurses to supply scheduled medicines.

## BOARD STAND AT THE AVA TRADE FAIR

For the first time the Board had a booth at the AVA Trade Fair which was held this year on 4 and 5 November 2022 in Fremantle. Representing the Board at the Trade Fair were the Chair, Dr Tony Leeflang, Ms Michelle Foxcroft, Senior Inspector Chris Lloyd and Inspector Brian McElean.

There were many positive comments from the profession at seeing the attendance by Board and encouraging comments were made about future attendances at similar events. There were a number of queries about premise requirements and inspections which kept the inspectors in particular busy.



Several veterinarians said they didn't understand what the role of the Board is and expressed the view that they would like in person seminars and more appearances by the Board in the future.

With the commencement of the *Veterinary Practice Act 2021* and the final Tranche of Regulations expected to be proclaimed next year, attending events like this to answer questions and explain the role of the Board is a great opportunity to keep the profession informed.

## 'OFF-LABEL' PRESCRIBING OF SCHEDULED DRUGS

It has come to the Board's attention that a number of clinical records supplied to the Board as part of an investigation, record dose rates for commonly prescribed scheduled drugs that exceed the recommended dose rates.

The Board advises that exceeding recommended dose rates can lead to adverse side effects and veterinarians need to be able to justify this 'off label' use. It is recommended that written 'off label' protocols are put in place. Failure to provide sufficient justification for 'off label' use could be considered unprofessional conduct.

### NOTE:

'Off-label' prescribing is writing a prescription or authorisation to a client to allow them to use a registered drug or veterinary chemical in a manner outside the range of uses permitted by the approved label directions. This includes, species of animal, dose rates and treatment interval. This does not include any specific contra-indications.

Veterinarians are permitted to exercise professional judgement in the 'off-label' use or supply of most drugs or other veterinary medicines.

## DISPOSAL OF SCHEDULE 8 MEDICINES

Recently the Board received a query about how to reconcile an electronic S8 register if an expired S8 medicine is to be handed over to a pharmacist for destruction.

The Health Department has advised that if a veterinarian is taking the medicine to a pharmacy and handing it over to a pharmacist to deal with, then they are not technically destroying the medicine. The pharmacist is. In that case the veterinarian only needs to book the S8 medicine out of an electronic or hard copy register and note that it is being transferred to the pharmacy for destruction. No counter signature is needed for this.



The pharmacist, on receiving the S8 medicine will book it into their S8 register and destroy it, noting the destruction in the S8 register with the required counter signatures.

**Note:** Pharmacists are under no obligation to accept S8 medicines for destruction.

Alternatively, a veterinarian may destroy an S8 medicine at their veterinary premises by pouring it into kitty litter, or some other absorbent material, and disposing of it in a sharps container. In this situation the veterinarian is required to have a witness to sign the electronic or hard register. The witness could be a veterinary nurse as they are now authorised to handle S8 medicines under the Medicines and Poisons Act 2014.

For further information, contact the the Department of Health Compliance line on (08) 9222 4108.

## ONLINE SURVEY ON NON-NEOPLASTIC ANAL SAC DISEASE IN DOGS

Please consider assisting with participating in this [online survey on non-neoplastic anal sac disease](#) in dogs, being conducted by a student at Murdoch University. All responses are anonymous and strictly confidential.

The aim of this study is to determine how small animal veterinarians describe non neoplastic anal sac disease in practice and how the diagnosis and treatment selection(s) differs between the conditions described.

For further information, contact Melinda Bell [M.Bell@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:M.Bell@murdoch.edu.au)

## ONLINE SURVEY INVESTIGATING PUNISHMENTS FOR ANIMAL CRUELTY

This research is being carried out by a student at University of Edinburgh into public perceptions of, and attitudes towards, punishments for breaches of animal welfare legislation in Western Australia, as part of her Master of Science (MSc) in International Animal Welfare, Ethics and Law

The survey can be accessed [here](#).

For further information contact Zoe Martin at [s2137923@ed.ac.uk](mailto:s2137923@ed.ac.uk)

## NEW SPECIALISTS

Congratulations to Dr Mariano Makara who was granted registration as a specialist in veterinary diagnostic imaging on 14 October 2022.

