



Veterinary Surgeons' Board



Authorisation to carry out certain acts of EQUINE DENTISTRY in Western Australia under the direction of a registered veterinary surgeon

1 GUIDELINES

Preamble

Section 26(4)(b) of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1960* (Act) allows for the authorisation of a person who is not a registered veterinary surgeon to carry out, under the direction of a registered veterinary surgeon, an act of veterinary surgery that is specified by regulation.

Regulation 47 of the *Veterinary Surgeons Regulations 1979* (Regulations) specifies equine dentistry to be an act of veterinary surgery which may be performed by an authorised person, for the purpose of section 26(4)(b) of the Act.

The Veterinary Surgeons' Board (Board) is responsible for administering the Act and is therefore responsible for the process of authorising a person who is not a registered veterinary surgeon, to perform acts of equine dentistry.

The following guidelines provide details of the process and criteria applied by the Board when considering an application for authorisation.

Application of these Guidelines

These Guidelines apply from and including 08 September 2020.

These Guidelines may be superseded by subsequent versions. To ascertain whether this version has been superseded, view the current version on the Board's website at www.vsbwa.org.au

It is the responsibility of authorised persons and their directing veterinary surgeons to be conversant with the current version of these Guidelines.

DEFINITIONS

The Board applies the following definitions:

authorised person is a person who the Board considers to be suitably qualified and experienced to be authorised to perform specific acts of veterinary surgery. The responsibilities of the authorised person are detailed in this document;

direction means regular frequent supervision but does not necessarily imply continuous personal supervision;

directing veterinary surgeon is an appropriately experienced veterinary surgeon appointed by the Board to direct an authorised person. The duties of the directing veterinary surgeon are detailed in this document

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Authorisation by the Board

The Board will apply the following criteria in relation to the authorisation of a person to carry out equine dentistry under the provisions of section 26(4)(b) of the Act.

1. Authorisation to perform equine dentistry:
 - a) is not required for any act of equine dentistry that falls within Category 1 of the categories of equine dentistry procedures, as defined in Part 2 of these guidelines;
 - b) includes authorisation to perform any act of equine dentistry that falls within Category 2 of the categories of equine dentistry procedures, as defined in Part 2 of these guidelines;
 - c) does not include authorisation to perform any act of equine dentistry that falls within Category 3 of the categories of equine dentistry procedures, as defined in Part 2 of these guidelines.
2. Authorisation will not be granted unless the applicant:
 - a) satisfies the Board that they have undertaken training in equine dentistry; and
 - b) provides proof of competency and experience in each of the competencies listed in Part 3 of these guidelines.
3. Authorisation will not be granted unless the registered veterinary surgeon nominated to direct is approved by the Board to so direct.
4. Authorisation will be for a period no greater than one (1) year.
5. Authorisation will be maintained subject to compliance with these guidelines during the period of authorisation. Authorisation may be revoked immediately where the Board finds that these guidelines have not been complied with or will not be complied with during the period of authorisation.
6. Authorisation may be renewed where the requirements for authorisation as set out in these guidelines continue to be met and where the Board is satisfied, by evidence provided by the authorised person, that with reference to the preceding period of authorisation:
 - a) the authorised person has satisfactorily performed equine dental procedures;
 - b) the authorised person has complied with these guidelines;
 - c) the authorised person has carried out authorised acts of equine dentistry on at least fifty animals as evidenced by written records; and
 - d) the accuracy of the authorised person's written records have been verified by the directing veterinary surgeon.

Directing Veterinary Surgeon

1. The directing veterinary surgeon must be resident and registered in Western Australia unless otherwise approved by the Board and must complete the required form. Forms may be obtained from the Board office or the Board's website at www.vsbwa.org.au.
2. The directing veterinary surgeon is responsible for the authorised person in relation to the performance of each authorised act of veterinary surgery.
3. The directing veterinary surgeon must keep a record of each supervision of the authorised person.
4. The directing veterinary surgeon is accountable to the Board for the performance of equine dentistry by the authorised person.
5. The directing veterinary surgeon must maintain access to the records of the authorised person in relation to:
 - a) the date and details of each equine dentistry examination and treatment;
 - b) the name and address of the owner of the horse;
 - c) the address of the property on which the equine dentistry was performed;
 - d) the name or identification of each horse on which equine dentistry was performed; and
 - e) any advertising by the authorised person for the provision of equine dentistry.
6. The directing veterinary surgeon must ensure that a registered veterinary surgeon is available to attend in the event that veterinary expertise is required.
7. The directing veterinary surgeon will have their approval to direct an authorised person withdrawn if they:
 - a) cease to be a registered veterinary surgeon;
 - b) have conditions placed on their registration such that they are no longer eligible to be a directing veterinary surgeon; or
 - c) do not wish to continue to comply with all of the requirements for directing veterinary surgeons, as contained in these guidelines.

Authorised Persons

1. The Board requires that an authorised person performing equine dentistry will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with that expected of a registered veterinary surgeon.
2. Advertising by an authorised person must:
 - a) be factually correct;
 - b) relate only to acts of veterinary surgery that the person is authorised to perform;
 - c) state that the service is performed under the direction of a veterinary surgeon; and
 - d) state the name of the directing veterinary surgeon.

3. The authorised person must maintain an accurate and complete record of:
 - a) the date and details of the equine dentistry, examinations and treatments;
 - b) the name and address of the owner of each horse;
 - c) the address of the property on which the equine dentistry was performed;
 - d) the name or identification of each horse on which equine dentistry was performed by the authorised person; and
 - e) all procedures performed.
4. The authorised person must provide the directing veterinary surgeon with access to all records required to be made under paragraph 3 above.
5. The authorised person must report clearly, accurately and in a timely fashion to a veterinary surgeon any adverse reactions.
6. The authorised person must accept advice and instruction from the directing veterinary surgeon.
7. Authorisation to perform equine dentistry does not include authorisation to administer sedatives or tranquilisers or muscle relaxants and reversal agents used in conjunction with sedatives or tranquilisers. A separate application for authorisation to administer sedatives or tranquilisers must be made to the Board.
8. Analgesics, anti-inflammatory and antibiotic treatment following dental procedures may only be administered or dispensed by a veterinary surgeon or administered by the owner of the horse or their agent as directed by a veterinary surgeon.

Insurance

The veterinary surgeon and the authorised person are responsible for their insurance requirements and should seek professional advice on public liability insurance and professional indemnity insurance cover.

Record keeping by the Veterinary Surgeons' Board

1. The Board will provide a certificate of authorisation to the authorised person.
2. The Board will maintain a register of authorised persons and the relevant directing registered veterinary surgeons.

2 EQUINE DENTISTRY PROCEDURES

For the purpose of the administration of the Act, the Board uses the following three categories of equine dental procedures.

Category 1

Procedures that may be performed by a person without authorisation from the Board include:

- the examination of equine teeth
- rasping using non motorised dental instruments
- removal of sharp enamel points and small dental overgrowths (less than 3mm high and involving less than half of the tooth's occlusal surface) with manual rasps
- removal of digitally (finger) loose deciduous teeth ("caps")
- removal of calculus which lies above the gum line.

Category 2

Procedures that may be performed by a person authorised by the Board under Section 26(4)(b) of the Act include:

- extraction of digitally loose teeth [$> 5\text{mm}$ movement], such as geriatric teeth or teeth suffering from advanced periodontal disease
- removal of dental overgrowths $<3\text{mm}$ tall involving over 50% of the occlusal surface
- techniques requiring the use of motorised dental instruments

Category 3

Procedures that may be performed only by a registered veterinary surgeon include:

- any procedure that involves an incision or elevation of the gum
- extraction of normal, fully erupted and non-displaced wolf teeth
- administration of a local or regional nerve block
- the investigation of, and where appropriate extraction of teeth loosened by trauma
- extraction of teeth that are not digitally loose, by oral extraction, repulsion, or lateral buccotomy
- endodontics including root canal treatment
- orthodontics
- repair of mandibular or maxillary fractures.

3 COMPETENCIES

The Board will only authorise a person to perform equine dentistry procedures if the Board is satisfied that the following competencies have been met.

General knowledge

1. Has knowledge of and competency in Category 2 procedures.
2. Has knowledge of:
 - a) basic anatomy of equines;
 - b) basic physiology of equines;
 - c) when referral to a veterinary surgeon is required;
 - d) relevant zoonoses; and
 - e) animal welfare legislation, codes and standards.

Animal Health and Welfare

1. Provides empathic care for horses undergoing dental procedures.
2. Carries out equine dentistry procedures effectively and safely so as to minimise any possible adverse impact on animals or personnel.

Record keeping

Keeps clear, accurate records of all work carried out.

DISCLAIMER

This document (printed, electronic or any other medium) cannot be regarded as legal advice.

Although all care has been taken in preparing these Guidelines they do not replace advice specific to the reader's circumstances. Where necessary, advice must be sought from competent legal practitioners. Neither the authors nor the Veterinary Surgeons' Board of Western Australia accept or undertake any duty of care relating to any part of these Guidelines.

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