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REGISTRAR'S REFLECTIONS

The moment I had been dreading had arrived. Next to me, my kayak instructor waited expectantly for me to deliberately capsize my fragile craft into the murky river water. Earlier through the murk I had seen several marauding jellyfish which added to my fear. When I signed up for a kayak course I had visions of gently paddling down picturesque rivers, not safety drills which involved deliberately capsizing into jellyfish infested murk. Taking a deep breath, and hoping it wasn't my last, I leaned to the right and fell into the water, forgetting everything I had been told to do but emerging unscathed and alive moments later from the upturned kayak.

Several days later a friend who had completed the same course asked how I went with the capsize exercise. I sheepishly told her how badly it had gone, how I forgot everything I was supposed to do, emerging spluttering and ungainly at the end of it. She looked at me surprised and said "Did you drown? Did you need help to get out of the kayak?" When I answered "No" to both questions she retorted "Then you achieved what you were supposed to and it was a success."

This got me thinking about how hard we can be on ourselves and how an altered perspective can change everything. Instead of feeling that I failed at the capsize skill I now am happy that if I do capsize accidentally while kayaking I can handle it. It is not as scary as it seems and while I forgot some of the things I should do I am sure I will do better next time; and I will survive again. I will leave you with a quote from the author of "The Power of Positive Thinking"

Change your thoughts and you change your world.

Norman Vincent Peale

MEASURING THE AMOUNT OF FLUID REMAINING IN A MULTI DOSE VIAL

The Board has recently been asked what the preferred option is for accurately measuring the contents of a multi-dose vial for auditing s8 drugs.

The Board considers that measuring the contents of multi-dose vials by weight, drawing the liquid into a syringe, or using a ruler on the outside of the vial, are all appropriate.

INTERNATIONAL VETERINARY STUDENTS – SEEING PRACTICE

The Board has received enquiries regarding international veterinary students undertaking extra mural experience in Western Australian veterinary practices. The Act only provides for students from an Australian veterinary school to undertake acts of veterinary surgery.

This means that while international veterinary students may attend veterinary practices in Western Australia they are not permitted to perform any acts of veterinary surgery unless they are formally enrolled as a student in an Australian veterinary school.





FUNCTIONALITY ISSUE WITH MICROCHIPS

In response to a query from a veterinary surgeon about a functionality issue with BackHome Biotec microchips the Board contacted Virbac who have provided the following information.

In February 2012, Virbac identified a functionality issue with certain BackHome Biotec microchips distributed since June 2010. Since then, there has been evidence that some microchips do not work properly within batches with the prefix 90008800 and the prefix 900008800 up to 900008800259208.

In 2012, veterinary clinics were notified of this issue. Product held at clinics and wholesalers with prefixes falling into the affected range were removed and replaced with product from improved batches. Virbac has been working actively with veterinary clinics to contact their pet owners (via mail outs, email and SMS) requesting them to visit the clinic to have their pets microchip checked and replaced as necessary.

Virbac Australia has been replacing any unresponsive BackHome Biotec microchips free of charge, ensuring neither a clinic nor client is left out of pocket, and will continue to do so as required.

Virbac discontinued the Biotec microchips in 2013 and have introduced BackHome Mini Transponders. BackHome Mini microchips are manufactured to the highest standards in Europe with fully automated manufacturing and direct-bonding technology to ensure RFID (Radiofrequency identification) tag reliability. Virbac is very confident that we will not have any future quality issues with the BackHome product.

If you have any questions, please contact Virbac Customer Service directly on 1800 242 100

COMPOUNDING OF VETERINARY MEDICINES – NEW GUIDELINES

In March 2015 the Pharmacy Board released new Guidelines for the compounding of medicines. The guidelines provide information about the requirements for compounding of medicines, including veterinary medicines. The guidelines are available at: <http://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/News/2015-03-02-media-release.aspx>



2016 VETERINARY WORKFORCE SURVEY NOW AVAILABLE

Registered veterinary surgeons are encouraged to consider filling in the survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/LBD8N98

The survey is undertaken every second year to examine the current profile of the veterinary profession and anticipate future trends and changes. The information is intended to help the profession, government, veterinary boards and others to understand how the provision of veterinary services may be affected by various factors, including increasing or decreasing numbers of veterinary graduates, career

breaks, part-time working, early retirement and veterinarians choosing to work outside the profession.

The more veterinary surgeons that complete the survey, the more representative the data will be and of greater benefit to the veterinary profession, government and veterinary boards.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPROVAL TO WORK AS A VETERINARY NURSE

- It has come to the notice of the Board that some veterinary practices have employed persons as veterinary nurses prior to checking whether they have received approval or are likely to receive approval from the Board as a veterinary nurse.
- To work as a veterinary nurse an applicant must have a Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing or equivalent and have formal approval from the Board.
- If in doubt, employers are advised to contact the Board to verify whether an applicant's qualifications will be accepted by the Board as suitable for approval to work as a veterinary nurse prior to employing them in that capacity.





DOGS, CATS AND MICROCHIPS

From the queries received by the Board it appears that there is still considerable confusion amongst the public, veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses as to who may microchip dogs and cats.

Veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses may microchip dogs and cats with no further qualifications or training. Lay persons who have undertaken an approved course may also microchip dogs and cats. For further information contact the Department of Local Government and Communities

Department of Local Government and Communities

Gordon Stephenson House,
140 William Street, Perth WA 6000
GPO Box R1250, Perth WA 6844
Telephone: (08) 6551 8700

Fax: (08) 6552 1555
Freecall: 1800 620 511 (Country only)
Email: info@dlgc.wa.gov.au
Website: www.dlgc.wa.gov.au



ACCEPTABLE LOSS OF A SCHEDULE 8 MEDICINE – DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

When auditing a schedule 8 medicine register book (s8 register), there may be times when there are small discrepancies due to small quantities being left in the hub of a needle. To ensure that these small discrepancies are acceptable by the Department of Health please follow the following calculation:

- Since last correct audit or from the start of a full bottle, count the number of doses (administrations) that have been given;
- Calculate the discrepancy (the difference between the amount in the bottle and the amount that is recorded in the s8 register);
- Divide the discrepancy amount by the number of doses (since last correct audit/full bottle); this will give you the ml/dose loss;
- An acceptable loss of an s8 medicine is less than 0.2ml/dose; for a discrepancy loss of greater than 0.2ml/dose you must contact the Department of Health;
- ALWAYS record your workings out of the formula into the s8 register;
- Record the amount in the s8 register with the comment "Discrepancy of 'Amount' within acceptable loss"; and
- In the event that the discrepancy amount is greater than 0.2ml/dose you should record the amount in the s8 register with the comment "Loss exceeds acceptable amount – Dept. of Health contacted on [date] and spoke to"

An Example

Amount in bottle = 5ml amount in register = 11.4ml therefore discrepancy = 6.4ml

On checking the register 50 patients were given a dose of the drug from the time of the last monthly audit to the current date. So 6.4ml divided by 50 doses = a loss of 0.128ml per dose. This is deemed acceptable due to amounts left in the syringe hub etc. All workings out should be noted in the register and the new balance written down.

However if the number of patients given the drug (over time period) was 15, then 6.4ml divided by 15 = 0.4267ml per dose and would be too high to be acceptable and further investigation should occur to try and ascertain why you have the discrepancy.

Summary

Discrepancy amount (ml) ÷ Number of doses = ml per dose

Acceptable loss is less than 0.2ml/dose; for all amounts greater than 0.2ml/dose you must contact the Department of Health on 08 9222 6883.



REGISTRATION WITH THE BOARD IS REQUIRED FOR ALL VETERINARY SURGEONS WORKING IN WA

The Board has become aware that there appears to be some confusion as to whether interstate veterinary surgeons who are registered in another Australian state or territory can work in WA without registering with the Board.

WA does not have National Recognition of Veterinary Registration (NRVR) as yet, so ALL vets MUST obtain registration with this Board if they wish to work in WA, even if they are registered in another state or territory.

If a veterinary surgeon is found to have been working in WA without registering with the WA Board, they are not only in breach of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1960 and liable to prosecution, but there could be significant insurance implications for the practice that they are working for.

All employers are urged to check the Board's online register at www.vsbwa.org.au before employing any veterinary surgeon, but especially those from interstate.

If you require clarification, please contact the Board office on 9317 2353.

REGISTER NOW!

PERMANENT BAN ON ANABOLIC ANDROGENIC STEROIDS WAS INTRODUCED TO THE GREYHOUNDS AUSTRALASIA RULES ON 1 JANUARY 2016

For further information contact Racing & Wagering WA at www.rwwa.com.au/home/industry/veterinary-notice.html

BEFORE THE SAT - Case History

Last year the Board referred a complaint to the SAT alleging that a veterinary surgeon had behaved unprofessionally by completing two Student Extra Mural Assessment forms each for one week extra mural experience at a veterinary practice when they knew that the student had not attended the practice at all. At mediation the veterinary surgeon agreed that they had behaved unprofessionally.

The sanction agreed by consent at the SAT was that the veterinary surgeon receive six weeks suspension of their registration and have the condition placed on their registration that within 12 months they complete an ethics course or a personal ethics protection plan approved by the Board.

HUMAN USE OF VETERINARY MEDICINES

Veterinary surgeons are reminded that they are not authorised to purchase scheduled drugs from veterinary wholesalers with the intention that they will be used by humans. This applies even if you have a prescription for the scheduled drug from a medical practitioner.

Further, regulation 33A of the Poisons Regulations 1965 specifically prohibits the use by humans of any medicine prepared as an animal medicine.



VETERINARY SURGEONS' BOARD OF WA

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Chair: Dr Peter Punch – AVA nominee

Deputy Chair: Dr Maryanne Culliver – Elected member

Dr Graham Harradine – Elected member

Dr Michael Paton – Dept of Agriculture and Food nominee

Ms Catherine Carroll – Ministerial appointee

HOW TO CONTACT US

Registrar: Dr Sue Godkin

Postal Address: PO Box 1721 Melville South WA 6156

Office: Suite 1, First Floor, Melville Professional Centre, 275 Marmion Street, Melville WA 6156

Telephone: (08) 9317 2353 **Facsimile:** (08) 9317 2363

Email: admin@vsbwa.org.au **Web:** www.vsbwa.org.au

