



## Veterinary Surgeons' Board



### FROM THE REGISTRAR

Unbelievably another year is drawing to a close and Christmas is nearly upon us. I think it tends to sneak up on me each year as Christmas decorations appear in the shops just after Easter. It is a crazy busy time which is often aptly called the silly season.

To help you negotiate the joys and pitfalls of this time of year, clinical psychologist Naomi Bickley has written a seasonal article especially for this newsletter aimed at everyone working in the veterinary profession.

Naomi has many years experience working in the veterinary industry and the Board regularly refers veterinary surgeons and nurses to her under the Boards counselling assistance program.

On a different note, this newsletter has answers to some of the most frequently asked questions we receive at the Board office. Do you know the correct way to destroy S8 drugs? Who owns clinical records? Read on to find out.

Finally, putting the craziness of the time of year aside, I would like to wish everyone a wonderful Christmas and all the best for the coming year.

Dr Sue Godkin  
Registrar



### BOARD OFFICE CLOSURE OVER CHRISTMAS

The Board's office will be closed from 4.30pm on Friday 21 December 2018 until 8.30am Wednesday 2 January 2019.



### SEASON'S GREETINGS

The members and staff of the Veterinary Surgeons' Board wish everyone the very best for the festive season and a happy, healthy, prosperous New Year.

### A CHRISTMAS WISH FROM NAOMI BICKLEY

Christmas and New Year is a wonderful time to share with family and friends, or to simply take time for ourselves to stop all the rushing around meeting the ever-increasing demands and expectations of life: to give ourselves

permission to simply stop, relax, refresh and rejuvenate. At times this is easy to say, yet very hard to achieve.

As you prepare for the Christmas rush, take the time to check out these great and thought-provoking articles, each offering a different perspective on our troubled hearts and mind.

### Train Your Brain

Too often we believe that what we fill our minds with is true and real. Yet, they're not real: they're just thoughts that can consume us and colour our perspectives, our reactions and interpretations. Without realising, our thoughts start to control us rather than the other way round. We need to learn to control of what we fill our minds with. We can spend a lot of time and money on what good food we eat, and what exercises we do with our bodies (all of which are great to pay attention to), and what we wear. But in the words of my teacher and mentor, Roger Ballard, "we don't give a second thought to our thoughts"! And yet our thoughts colour our mood and our behaviours. It's time we started to fill our minds with clean, healthy, life-enhancing thinking rather than heavy, negative, life-exhaustive thinking. Dr Dan Schultz has a great short YouTube video that's worth watching called "[Overcoming Stress, Anxiety, and Depression Holistically; Part 3: Balanced Brain Chemistry.](#)"

### Take a Step Back and Take Perspective

When we get caught up in our stressors, our pain, our suffering or our loneliness we can lose perspective. At times like these I find it can be useful to take a step back and remind ourselves that whilst we may be struggling now, if we take a moment to stop, take a long slow deep breath and get out of our heads we can appreciate that this too will pass.

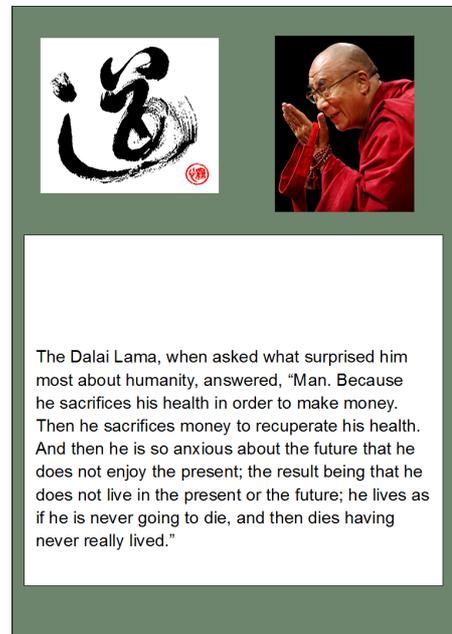
I find looking at Carl Sagan's video called "[This Pale Blue Dot](#)" reminds me of what's really important in life.

### Be Kind, Be Gentle, Be Compassionate

Finally, take time to be kind, gentle and compassionate. Start with being kind with yourself. Start now. Start enjoying every wakeful moment. Breathe long slow deep breaths and know that every breath we take is clean and free. We put conditions and stresses onto our breath. We squeeze our breath and by doing so we squeeze our life and our joy.

I wish you and your loved ones and all the furry creatures and their families you look after a joyous, gentle and kind time over Christmas and New Year.

Naomi Bickley  
Clinical Psychologist




---

## SPECIALIST REGISTRATION

Congratulations to Dr Jessica Finlay who has recently been granted specialist registration in Veterinary Oncology.

---

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Students studying Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing must be authorised by the Board before they can perform any acts of veterinary surgery as part of their course.
- Approved veterinary nurses are not permitted to castrate cats or administer anaesthetics. For more information on what veterinary nurses are permitted to do and the level of supervision required click [here](#).
- That all S8 drugs to be destroyed must be entered in the destruction page of the HA14 S8 Register book. The S8 book and the S8 drug to be destroyed can be taken to any pharmacy

with a veterinary surgeon and a pharmacist signing that the S8 drug has been surrendered. This is a free service. It is not recommended that the "sharps bin" is used to destroy S8 drugs.




---

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR THE NATIONAL HARMONISATION OF MINIMUM VETERINARY PRESCRIBING AND COMPOUNDING REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR VETERINARY PRACTITIONERS - TREATMENT OF LIVESTOCK

**Submissions must be lodged by 2pm, Friday 14 December 2018.**

The proposal itself and further information can be found [here](#).

### Background

- Under the Harmonisation of Agricultural Chemical Control of Use Task Group (HACCUT), the Veterinary Prescribing and Compounding Rights Working Group (VPCR WG) is tasked with harmonising veterinary prescribing and compounding rights and endeavours to minimise the risk to trade, public health and the environment while enabling the protection of animal health and welfare.
- The Veterinary Prescribing and Compounding Rights Working Group (VPCR WG) is responsible for developing a proposal for a harmonised system that will allow veterinarians to exercise professional judgement where appropriate to treat animals in their care. The implementation will result in allowing veterinarians to continue to:
  - compound and supply veterinary products subject to certain conditions.
  - prescribe off-label use of veterinary chemical products.
  - use or prescribe unregistered products for food producing species in limited circumstances.
- A discussion paper, which included a proposed framework for veterinary prescribing and compounding rights, was provided to stakeholders for consultation for a six week period from April to June 2018. As part of this consultation, stakeholders were requested to provide their feedback on the proposal model to the HACCUT secretariat for further consideration by the VPCR WG.
- After considering the submissions from the public consultation conducted earlier in 2018, the VPCR WG has now developed an amended [discussion paper and proposal](#) discussion for harmonised veterinary prescribing and compounding rights.

The consultation includes areas such as:

- Unregistered veterinary chemicals
- Registered veterinary chemicals used contrary to restraint labelling
- Veterinary advice that results in residues exceeding the Maximum Residue Limit (MRL)
- Labelling of veterinary chemical products in stock feed
- Treating trade species with unregistered products

The [DPIRD website](#) has information on the existing controls of veterinary chemical use in WA.

---

## OWNERSHIP OF CLINICAL RECORDS

The Board regularly receives queries from veterinary surgeons and the public about who owns clinical records for an animal and the obligation to provide the records to other veterinary surgeons and the public.

It is the view of the Board that it could be unprofessional for a veterinary surgeon not to pass on

clinical records to another veterinary surgeon if that failure to pass on the records could be shown to have compromised the welfare of the animal.

However, what about the situation where a client asks for their animal's clinical records directly from the veterinary surgeon? Are they obliged to give them to the client? Do clients have a right to them?

In Queensland in 2007 this issue became the basis of legal action when the Queensland Court of Appeal dismissed an application to overturn the decision of the Supreme Court that refused to order a veterinary surgeon to provide a client with her case records for the client's animals.

The Court of Appeal Judge said that there was no basis in law for making an order for the veterinary surgeon to hand over the records.

The Judge referred to a precedent case in the medical profession where the High Court found a client had no right to her medical records and that the doctor's notes were his property, compiled for his own information in treating a patient.

In particular, owners may expect to be provided with radiographs on request as it is routine for human health professionals to provide these to their patients. It is up to the veterinary surgeon as to whether they provide radiographs directly to clients but they should only provide copies as radiographs are part of the clinical record for an animal which must be kept for seven years.

**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 2356 **Email:** [admin@vsbwa.org.au](mailto:admin@vsbwa.org.au)

---

[www.vsbwa.org.au](http://www.vsbwa.org.au)