



'Vet Register' Newsletter

The newsletter of the Veterinary Surgeons Board of Queensland has been out of production for some time now due in most part to lack of resources to produce it. Processes are now being initiated to address these resource issues.

The Veterinary Surgeons Board members are cognisant of the importance placed on effective communication to registered veterinarians of their legislative and regulatory obligations and are especially aware of the continuing educative benefits derived from the publication of case studies which have been adjudicated by the Board as a result of consumer complaints.

The Board is committed to re-establishing a regular schedule for publication of its newsletter.

The most effective approach is to distribute the newsletter via email with associated publication on the Board website. The body of information published could be decreased and the regularity of publication increased. Email subscribers would not routinely receive a hard copy via the post.

This initiative provides further incentive for all registrants to record email details on the Register of Veterinary Surgeons database. Please refer to the covering page 'Notice of Election' for the necessary form for recording the details.

Following in this publication is information of relevance to veterinary practice that has been provided to the Board by other agencies and entities for distribution to registrants.

An edition of the Vet Register newsletter for distribution later in the year will be devoted to guidelines, policies, standards, case studies and general information relevant to the regulation of the profession by the Board as obligated under the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936*.

Progress towards National Registration of Veterinarians

It has been widely reported that the ministerial representatives of the states and territories are signatories to an agreement that veterinary registration in one state or territory be recognised as entitling the registrant to equivalent registration in all other Australian jurisdictions.

The initiative has been afforded the title of National Recognition of Veterinary Registration (NRVR). Veterinary registrants Australia wide will hear more about NRVR before the year's end.

A brief explanation is that each of the eight state/territory governments is obliged to introduce amending legislation so that a veterinary surgeon/specialist registered unconditionally in their home jurisdiction is deemed to be registered in all other Australian jurisdictions.

There is no intention by the Commonwealth to introduce national legislation to deliver the desired outcome, which is why the introduction of NRVR will be a gradual process as each jurisdiction progresses amending legislation in accordance with their government and parliamentary priorities and agendas. This is converse to the simultaneous introduction of national registration in the medical profession of all states/territories in the near future which will be enabled through the introduction of Commonwealth legislation.

To date, Victoria is the sole jurisdiction to have passed amending legislation to give effect to NRVR. The amendments will be enacted on 31 December 2010.

In pioneering deemed registration of veterinarians outside Victoria, the onus falls on the Veterinary Practitioners Registration Board of Victoria to establish, document and communicate operating guidelines for NRVR to its registrants. The combined Boards of Australia and the Board Registrars have over a lengthy period workshopped the many intricacies of introducing a national registration scheme under the regimen of eight individual statutes. While there is confidence that national uniformity in administering NRVR is achievable, there are bound to be individual situations and events that have not been foreseen.

The combined veterinary boards recognise that in the transition period of what is likely to be a number of years before NRVR is fully implemented throughout Australia, there may be some confusion by veterinarians as to where they need to register and where they do not.

The Victoria Board will be communicating its registration procedure post 31 December 2010 to all its primary and secondary registrants in the coming months. All other Boards will in turn communicate that information to their own registration base.

A NRVR website is in the final stages of development and will be a valuable source of information to veterinarians wishing to practise interstate during this transition period.



Microchippers and Vets

(Go to www.dip.qld.gov.au/local-government/microchippers0anbd-vet.html for links and forms.)

From Wednesday 1 July 2009, every person implanting cats and dogs in Queensland with a microchip must be an authorised microchip implanter. This is a requirement under the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008*.

Legislation applying to microchippers

As an authorised implanter, you must have a sound understanding of your responsibilities under the Act.

The Act includes provisions that regulate a number of aspects associated with the sale, implementation and tracking of Prescribed Permanent Implantation Devices (microchips) in Queensland.

Under the Act, suppliers of microchips are required to abide by the following provisions:

- A person must not supply a microchip that is not a Prescribed Permanent Implantation Device.
- A seller must not supply a microchip to a person other than an authorised implanter.
- A seller who supplies a microchip to an authorised implanter must, within seven days after supplying it, give the implanter a notice stating the number for the microchip.
- A seller who supplies a microchip to an authorised implanter must, within seven days after supplying it, give to all licence holders a notice stating the:
 - name and address of the implanter
 - microchip number.

Microchips

A microchip is a permanent identification device (PID) that is implanted into an animal to record information in a way that can be electronically retrieved. Under the Act, authorised implanters must use Prescribed PIDs (PPID) that are described in the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Regulation 2009*.

Under the Act (section 24) an authorised implanter cannot implant a PPID in a cat or dog less than eight weeks old unless at least one of the following is met:

- the implanter has a reasonable excuse;
- the implanter is a veterinary surgeon who considers implanting the PPID is not likely to be a serious risk to the health of the cat or dog;
- there is a signed veterinary surgeon's certificate for the cat or dog stating that implanting the PPID when it is less than eight weeks old is not likely to be a serious risk to the health of the cat or dog.

Becoming an authorised microchip implanter

There are three steps to becoming an authorised microchip implanter.

1. You must have pre-requisite qualifications
 - Veterinary surgeons – Bachelor of Veterinarian Science (or equivalent)
 - Others - qualifications relating to the care and handling of cats and/or dogs (including vet nurses, cat and dog breeders, council pound operators etc)
2. You must have completed an approved microchipping course
 - Veterinary surgeons – Approved course for Queensland registered veterinary surgeons in microchip implantation of cats and dogs.
 - Others – Approved course in microchip implantation of cats and dogs.

This course is currently offered by:

Animal Industries Resource Centre
Phone 07 3289 1900
Email: enquiries@avnrc.com.au

Brisbane North Institute of TAFE
Phone 131 248
Email: enquiry.bnit@deta.qld.gov.au

Australian Veterinary Association
Phone 07 3423 1844
Email: mailto:avaqld@ava.com.au



3. Apply for an Authorised Implanter Number (AIN) with the Department of Infrastructure and Planning

If you have the necessary qualifications and/or microchip course, you need to apply through the department for an AIN.

- Online: Apply for an Authorised Implanter Number online.
- If you cannot apply online for an AIN, you can download the AIN application form.

Send completed forms by:

- **email** catsanddogs@dip.qld.gov.au
- **fax** (07) 3225 1350
- **post**
Manager Local Government and Regional Services
Local Government and Services Delivery Group
Department of Infrastructure and Planning
PO Box 15031
City East QLD 4002

Note: If you have completed other qualifications and/or microchip implantation courses, you may apply to have these recognised as equivalent qualifications/courses by completing:

- Application for recognition of an equivalent qualification and/or equivalent microchip implantation course.

Send completed forms by email or post to above addresses.

Continuing Education Opportunity

Massey University in New Zealand has opened its Master of Veterinary Medicine distance programme to international applicants for the first time.

Until now, the programme has only been available extramurally to New Zealand citizens working abroad. By 2012 the University hopes to offer 24 papers in four majors; companion animal, production animal, equine and business administration.

Course director, Dr Norman says few institutions offer this sort of programme or its equivalent. "Enquiries we receive indicate that many veterinarians have an innate drive to continually learn, but balancing education with their often busy lives is problematic. We've designed our flexible distance programmes to offer in depth study in a supported environment led by internationally renowned experts. Students can extend themselves, their reputation and their practice by studying in their own place, at their own pace and at times which suit them."

Candidates can choose to study single courses of interest or put together a series of courses to gain a post-graduate qualification. This gives them a post-nominal MVM or PGDip VCS that can carry endorsements in the subject area.

The programme also includes optional three day contact courses, which are workshops scheduled for each paper that allow for invaluable face-to-face contact between students and teachers. Interaction with experts is not limited to the contact courses. All students are able to converse with them either on-line or over the phone.

The first papers available to international students will commence in February 2010. For more information about the MVM visit www.mvm.massey.ac.nz or email Dr Liz Norman mvm@massey.ac.nz.

Pet Rabbits – the most common illegal pet (Class 2 Declared Animals)

Enquiry to Board from veterinarian –

I called the Veterinary Surgeons Board of Queensland regarding seeing rabbits and in particular vaccinating rabbits and was told that 'the Board does not enforce the laws regarding rabbits'. Before I look at vaccinating any rabbits I want to be 100% sure that it is okay and that there will be no repercussions.

The Board sourced the information from the Land Protection Unit, Biosecurity Queensland, Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI).



Response –

It is an offence to keep a Class 2 pest without a reasonable excuse. Our view is that the need for veterinary treatment constitutes a reasonable excuse for a veterinarian. This does not however extend to the owner of the animal.

We do not expect a veterinarian to report the owner of the rabbit for possessing the animal. However we do ask that the veterinarian advise the owner that the possession of a rabbit in Queensland is illegal and that the animal could be seized and the owner made subject to a fine up to \$40,000. The owner should consider either having the animal euthanased or relocated to a state where it is not prohibited to keep rabbits.

There is a flyer on prohibited pets in Queensland on the web: www.dpi.qld.gov.au/4790_8288.htm

Veterinarians and Veterinary Medicines

In Australia, all veterinary chemical products which are used in the prevention and treatment of animal diseases must be registered by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). This registration process ensures that products in the market have been rigorously assessed and meet high standards for safety, quality and efficacy.

In the majority of cases, veterinary chemical products serve us well; however, occasionally unforeseen problems arise from the use of these products that may affect people, animals, the environment or trade. The APVMA seeks to identify and act promptly on such 'adverse experiences' through the Adverse Experience Reporting Program (AERP).

Veterinarians must be aware of legislation dealing with veterinary chemicals:

- Importation – the importation of unregistered veterinary chemicals without prior consent is an offence
- Supply – it is an offence to supply an unregistered veterinary chemical without prior permission
- Therapeutic claims – it is an offence to make a therapeutic claim that is inconsistent with an instruction on an approved label for a veterinary chemical without prior permission

For an APVMA fact sheet for veterinarians visit:

www.apvma.gov.au/publications/fact_sheets/docs/veterinarians.pdf

www.apvma.gov.au/use_safely/adverse/veterinary/php

Information Links

Aquaculture

Controls over the use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals in the aquaculture industry

www.dpi.qld.gov.au/28_14407.htm

Australian Government Emergency Response

Links to pests and diseases of threat to Australia's animal health (including aquatic)

Links to Emergency Response Plans

www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/pests-diseases-weeds/animal

AVA Code of practice for Management of Hygiene and Infection control for Veterinarians

www.avacms.eseries.hengsystems.com.au or (easy way) take the link from the home page of

www.vsb.qld.gov.au