

REGULATORY/LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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Multidisciplinary Advisory Committee (MDC) – The MDC met on October 17 at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo. All committee members were present.

As part of the discussion of “Extended Duties” for RVTs, CaRVTA had previously presented the MDC with an enhanced definition of induction of anesthesia to include “all routes”. After discussion, the MDC determined that no change was necessary since Sec. 2034 defines induction.

CaRVTA had also recommended that only RVTs be able to perform procedures considered “invasive”, such as epidurals and centeses. The MDC agreed that they should continue to look into further defining and refining Sec. 2035 that defines the duties of the supervising veterinarian as well as looking at what other states were allowing in regard to these types of procedures.

The MDC members voted to approve moving splinting and casting for RVTs from Sec 2036(b) Direct Supervision, to 2036(c) Indirect Supervision. They also voted to add veterinary assistants to Sec. 4840(b), which would have the affect of allowing assistants to administer treatments to animals in a shelter.

The committee brought up the issue of administering controlled drugs to animals prior to euthanasia and questioned whether in addition to being trained in euthanasia, shelter personnel needed to hold a Veterinary Assistant Controlled Substance Permit (VACSP) if they handled those drugs. Legal Counsel stated that a VACSP is required for all controlled drugs except for sodium pentobarbital specifically used for euthanasia in a shelter setting.

The MDC reviewed CVMA’s proposal on Minimum Standards for Alternate Practices. They assigned a subcommittee to compare & contrast the proposal to the current minimum standards and report back at the next meeting.

Future agenda items include a continued discussion of Extended Duties for RVTs, specifically considering high-risk, invasive procedures. Shelter medicine and just who needs a premise permit will also be on the agenda. The next meeting will be on February 20, 2018 in Sacramento.

Veterinary Medical Board (VMB) – The VMB met on October 18-19 at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo. All members were present except for Public Members Judie Mancuso and Alana Yanez.

The VMB reviewed their Administrative Procedures Manual. They decided to change the recruitment period for vacancies on the MDC from at least 6 months prior to the vacancy to 12 months prior to the vacancy. The new policy will not be followed for the current RVT vacancy since it is occurring too soon. They decided to close the application date for that position 45 days prior to the February 21, 2018 meeting. They also decided to create a 2-person Elections Committee consisting of the VMB President and Vice-President. The Elections Committee will interview all prospective candidates by phone and select 2-3 to be interviewed by the full VMB at the February meeting.

The VMB voted to approve the proposed language for Sec. 2090, which defines Compounding in a Veterinary Premises. Once the regulation goes through final approval, only veterinarians or RVTs will be able to compound drugs. RVTs will be able to compound under Direct or Indirect Supervision. The requirements for compounding are quite complex. The proposal can be found starting on page 121 here: http://vmb.ca.gov/about_us/agenda_items/vmbagenda_20171018_full.pdf.

The VMB also approved adding two new sections to Sec. 2032.1 to clarify that a Veterinarian-Client-Patient-Relationship (VCPR) can only be established in person. Additionally, “telehealth” must be conducted

within an already existing VCPR except in an emergency until the patient can be seen by in-person by a veterinarian.

The VMB gave final approval to a proposed regulation on Animal Physical Rehabilitation (APR). The new Sec. 2038 defines APR and requires the establishment of a VCPR prior to recommending or performing APR. It also allows RVTs to perform APR under Direct or Indirect Supervision at the discretion of the prescribing veterinarian. Veterinary Assistants (including Physical Therapists) would be allowed to perform APR only under Direct Supervision. Language was added to clarify that in a “range setting”, Direct Supervision means that the veterinarian is in the general vicinity of the treatment area.

The VMB also approved language for a new regulation that will require veterinarians to offer drug counseling to clients when their animal is prescribed a new drug in an outpatient setting, similar to what occurs in a pharmacy. Clients are free to decline the counseling, which may be provided by the veterinarian, an RVT or a veterinary assistant.

The VMB amended Sec. 2069 which describes just which procedures an RVT may provide in an emergency. Under the new regulation, RVTs will be able to administer drugs to manage pain or to sedate an animal for examination or to prevent further injury. The new language also clarifies that an RVT may perform emergency procedures at a rodeo or other sanctioned sporting event. The VMB also announced that the Governor has signed a bill that amends Sec. 4840.5, the law that allows RVTs to administer emergency treatment. The law was amended to remove the words “to sustain life” to allow an RVT to administer medications to relieve pain and suffering.

The VMB presented information about veterinarians and cannabis. Human doctors have been given special dispensation to discuss the use of cannabis for medical reasons with their patients in California, but veterinarians have not. There have also been very few, if any studies showing the benefits of cannabis for animals. The VMB decided to recommend to the legislature that they commission UC Davis to perform studies on the safety and efficacy of cannabis use in animals. They plan to review the issue again in February, but in the meantime caution veterinarians that their DEA licenses may be in jeopardy if they recommend cannabis for animals.

The VMB voted to accept the MDC report, but did not take any action on their recommendations at this meeting.

The VMB voted to recommend legislation for the following issues:

1. Create a probationary VACSP as they have for other license types. They are finding more problems with VACSP applications than with RVT or DVM applications and feel that having the ability to issue a probationary VACSP would expedite matters.
2. Limit graduates of veterinary school to practicing as an RVT for only 1-year post graduation. Current law allows an accredited veterinary school graduate to practice as an RVT indefinitely without being licensed.
3. Require 20% of all veterinary hospitals to be inspected yearly. 20% inspection is the current goal, but the VMB feels that legislation *requiring* it would also bring the necessary funding.

Jennifer Loredo, RVT, the VMB RVT Member, gave the RVT Report. She announced that the AAVSB expects to have a new form of the VTNE available by next summer based on their recently completed Occupational Analysis. The VMB is also working on comparing its own Occupational Analysis to the VTNE’s to see if there are any missing areas on the VTNE that should be added to the California exam. Ms. Loredo also reported that the AAVSB is working on creating a pathway for foreign graduate RVTs to be eligible to sit for US licensing exams. Currently only RVTs licensed in Canada have a pathway in California.

Ethan Mathes presented the Administrative/Licensing Reports. He reported that for the Jan – June 2017 period the pass rate on the California RVT Exam was 88%. The pass rate for July – Dec (on-going) was reported as 77.9%. However, he also presented a report showing an overall pass rate of 91.4% when broken down by school. Mr. Mathes agreed that since the 2 reports did not agree that he would look into just which one was correct. He also said there was a problem getting the statistics on the VTNE by school. The overall California VTNE pass rate was reported as follows: Nov/Dec 2016 63%, Mar/Apr 2017 52%, July/Aug 2017 57%.

The next meeting of the VMB will be on February 21-22, 2018 in Sacramento.