

ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS

v

MR KFIR SEGEV

DECISION ON SANCTION

1. At the end of this lengthy case, the Committee has taken into consideration all the evidence, the submissions of both counsel, the evidence of the witnesses who gave oral evidence to the Committee in support of Mr. Segev, and the bundle of testimonials submitted on his behalf. In particular, the Committee considered with care the detailed mitigation advanced by counsel for Mr. Segev.
2. The Committee reminded itself that the primary purpose of the sanction is not to punish, but to protect the welfare of animals, maintain public confidence in the profession, and to uphold proper standards of conduct. The Committee paid particular attention to the direction of the Legal Assessor with regard to the proportionality of the sanction, having regard to the nature and extent of the conduct involved, and the need to balance the public interest against the interests of the respondent.
3. Having regard to the Findings of Fact, and the Decision on Professional Misconduct, counsel for Mr. Segev accepted that the only realistic sanctions that the Committee could consider in this case were suspension or removal from the Register. It was submitted to the Committee that suspension would be a proportionate, fair and reasonable sanction, having regard to the mitigating circumstances in this case. The Committee considered at length whether a suspension would be a proportionate and suitable sanction in this case, or whether removal from the Register was required on the facts of this case.
4. The Committee accepted that, until now, Mr. Segev has had an unblemished record, and that the testimonial and character evidence indicated widespread satisfaction amongst clients and fellow professionals with his skills as a veterinary surgeon, and as a person. Many spoke of him as an excellent veterinary surgeon, and none had any reason to question his integrity. In short, it was submitted that the disgraceful conduct found in this case was out of character. The Committee took into consideration the serious consequences that would result for Mr. Segev, both personally and professionally, in the event that his name were to be removed from the Register.
5. However, the Committee is of the clear view that there are serious aggravating factors in this case. Most of these factors have been described in paragraphs 2, 4 and 5 of the Decision on Disgraceful Conduct in a Professional Respect. Additionally, the Committee find that Mr Segev, failed also to comply with the

advice of the RCVS Guide to Professional Conduct in respect of the necessity to keep full, accurate case records.

6. The Committee considers that Mr Segev has not demonstrated proper insight into the unacceptable actions which have brought him before this Committee. It does not consider that this case was simply a question of poor communication skills, as Mr. Segev appears to believe.
7. Counsel for the College submitted, and the Committee entirely accepts, that unequal power exists between the veterinary surgeon and the client, and it behoves the veterinary surgeon to exercise that power in a true, wise and proportionate manner. Honesty and trust go to the heart of professionalism. Honesty and trust go to the heart of this case. Proven dishonesty has been held to come at the "top end" of gravity of disgraceful conduct in a professional respect.
8. The Committee has found Mr Segev to have been deliberately dishonest, not only in his dealings with his clients, but also with the College and this Committee. In so acting, he has betrayed the trust of Mr Barton and Ms. Koslowska, brought the profession into disrepute, and his recommended course of treatment would potentially have jeopardised the welfare of an animal entrusted to his care.
9. In these circumstances the Committee was not persuaded that the sanction of suspension is sufficient to uphold the good name of the profession and to protect the public interest. Accordingly, the Committee has decided to instruct the Registrar to remove the name of Mr Kfir Segev from the Register of Veterinary Surgeons.