

**ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS
BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS

-and-

MR STAVROS PASCHALIDIS MRCVS

DECISION ON DISGRACEFUL CONDUCT IN A PROFESSIONAL RESPECT

1. The Committee went on to decide whether the Charges it found proved amounted to disgraceful conduct. It noted that disgraceful conduct in a professional respect is conduct which falls far short of what is expected in the profession and that it is a question for the Committee's judgement and is not subject to any standard of proof.

2. The Committee reminded itself the following facts were found proved: that Mr Paschalidis
 - i) Failed to examine Beluga Adequately (1a)
 - ii) Failed to vaccinate Beluga (1b)
 - iii) Failed to examine Simba adequately (2a)
 - iv) Failed to vaccinate Simba (2b)
 - v) Confirmed to KD he had vaccinated Simba when he had not done so (2c)
 - vi) was dishonest and misleading when he made entries in the clinical records that he had examined Beluga (1ci, 3a, 3b) and vaccinated Beluga (1cii, 3a, 3b) when he had not done so
 - vii) was dishonest and misleading when he said to KD that he had vaccinated Simba (2c, 3a, 3b)

viii) was misleading when he made entries in the clinical record that he had examined Simba when he had not done so (2di, 3b)

3. The Committee therefore had found that Mr Paschalidis had failed to examine or vaccinate two animals as was expected by their owners and he then went on to conceal those matters in a dishonest and/or misleading way. The Committee took into account that in relation to the clinical record of Simba it had only found proved that Mr Paschalidis had made entries in relation to Simba's examination which were misleading and not in relation to Simba's vaccination.
4. The Committee accepted the advice of the legal assessor and considered the charges separately in relation to Beluga and Simba but it decided to consider the particulars of each charge relating to each animal cumulatively in respect of Mr Paschalidis' conduct. Mr Weston and Mr Jamieson agreed that this approach was acceptable and correct in law in relation to the Committee's judgement and the cumulation of findings.
5. Both Mr Weston and Mr Jamieson submitted that the facts found proved for each animal and for the charges amounted to disgraceful conduct in a professional respect.
6. The Committee firstly considered the aggravating and mitigating factors from the Disciplinary Committee Sanctions Guidance for Veterinary Surgeons cases (updated August 2020). It found the following aggravating factors:
 - Risk of injury to two animals by not vaccinating Beluga or Simba
 - Risk of injury to two animals by not having examined Beluga or Simba adequately when their records recorded otherwise
 - Breach of client trust – both owners would have expected their animals to be vaccinated and examined when they were not present because of COVID protocols.
7. It further noted the following mitigating factors:
 - there was no evidence of actual harm to either animal
 - no evidence of any gain to Mr Paschalidis
 - this episode on 7 October 2021, in respect of two animals, lasted in total, no longer than one hour.

8. The Committee considered the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Surgeons (the Code) relevant at the time. The Committee found the following breaches of the Code:

1.1 Veterinary surgeons must make animal health and welfare their first consideration when attending to animals.

1.3 Veterinary surgeons must provide veterinary care that is appropriate and adequate.

2.1 Veterinary surgeons must be open and honest with clients and respect their needs and requirements.

2.5 Veterinary surgeons must keep clear, accurate and detailed clinical and client records.

9. Having found that Mr Paschalidis was dishonest in his recording of his examination/vaccination of Beluga and that Mr Paschalidis was dishonest in relation to his communication of vaccination of Simba to KD, the Committee was satisfied each of the charges: for Simba (1 and 3) and for Beluga (2 and 3), and the particulars of each charge, cumulatively amounted to conduct that falls far below that to be expected of a reasonably competent veterinary surgeon and therefore was disgraceful conduct in a professional respect. It follows therefore that the Committee also found that all three charges cumulatively amounted to disgraceful conduct in a professional respect.

DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

11 July 2023