

Minutes of the Standards Committee held on Wednesday, 30 January 2019 at 10 am at Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:	Prof D Argyle	
	Mr M Castle	
	Mrs L Cox	
	Dr M A Donald	
	Mr D Leicester	
	Ms C-L McLaughlan	
	Mr M Peaty	
	Mr M Rendle	
	Dr K A Richards	Chair
In attendance:	Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
	Mr N Oldham	Standards and Advisory Manager
	Mrs V Price	Senior Standards and Advisory Officer
	Ms B Jinks	Senior Standards and Advisory Officer
	Ms B Lovell	Standards and Advisory Officer
	Mrs P Soomal	Standards and Advisory Officer
	Ms A K Boag	President (observer from RCVS Operational Board)

AI 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

1. The Chair welcomed Ms Boag to the meeting as an observer.
2. There were no absences and no interests declared.

AI 1 Minutes of last meeting held on 26 September 2018

3. The minutes were noted and it was agreed that they are accurate.
4. In relation to the action points:
 - a. In response to paragraph 13, a meeting of relevant parties will convene on 28th March to consider and discuss other institutions' approaches to Recognised Veterinary Practice (RVP), and to discuss how the RCVS could help the profession to understand RVP, to achieve a better degree of consistency in veterinary research and practice.
 - b. In response to paragraph 21, it was confirmed that Council had been notified of the amendments to Chapter 2 of the supporting guidance, which were approved by Standards Committee at its meeting on 26 September 2018.
 - c. In response to paragraph 23, it was reported that the Communications Department have produced one format for the case studies and are in the process of producing a second more interactive format. It was agreed that these would be presented to the Standards Committee at their meeting on 10 April.

AI 2 Standards and Advice End of Year Report

5. The Chair thanked the Standards and Advice Team for their on-going work.
 6. The Committee noted the report and the Standards and Advisory Manager highlighted the following aspects:
 - a. Written advice queries increased significantly in 2018 compared to the previous year, which it believed to be as a result of the increase in enquiries relating to Complementary and Alternative Medicines (CAMs), the General Data Protection Act (GDPR), and more recently an increase in queries relating to telemedicine services.
 - b. There have been fewer enquiries relating to GDPR than was initially predicted. A more detailed year-on update will be provided at April's Standards Committee meeting, but since the last meeting in September only 22 calls and emails relating to GDPR have been received.
 - c. The team continue to receive compliments from members of the public and members of the profession in response to the advice provided.
 - d. The informed consent case studies have been developed and published in RCVS News (October 2018 Edition). It was confirmed that the team have not seen any significant increase in queries relating to this topic. It was suggested that further work/case studies could be prepared focussing on the conversations required prior to consent forms being signed, and which aspects of the process can be delegated to veterinary nurses and/or lay staff. It was further suggested that the VDS could be contacted to see whether they could include informed consent in their communications. A query was raised as to whether written consent required a signed consent form or whether this could be a note on a client's record. A query was then raised with reference to written consent required for cascade prescriptions. It was agreed that this would be confirmed following the meeting.
- Action: Registrar/Standards and Advice Team**
- e. There was some discussion on the format of the RCVS Newsletter to members, which has changed to being digital only.

7. It was noted that the Ethics Reviews Panel has now been made permanent, with an increase in the number of applications received.
8. The team are working on horizon scanning to ensure we are picking up any upcoming legislative changes which may impact the Code or supporting guidance. The Policy team will attend team meetings following each Committee meeting towards that aim.

Matters for decision

AI 3(a) Matters raised by PIC/DC liaison committee

9. The Committee confirmed there were no objections to the proposed amendment to paragraph 13.2 of the supporting guidance in relation to the legibility of clinical records, and the amendment was unanimously accepted.

Action: Standards and Advice Team

10. The Committee confirmed there were no objections to amending the paragraph 7.9 and 7.10 of the supporting guidance to include the general principle of informing clients of any conflict of interest. However, the Committee considered the word 'close' to be too ambiguous and instead agreed on the following amendments:

*'7.9 Ideally, veterinary surgeons should not carry out PPEs where the vendor is an existing client **and/or has a personal relationship with the veterinary surgeon**, because of the conflict of interest. However, if, for practical or other reasons, veterinary surgeons do, they should follow additional safeguards to ensure the examination is not only fair, but perceived to be fair, by the client requesting the PPE.*

7.10 These additional safeguards are:

- a) *the veterinary surgeon makes the purchaser aware that the vendor is also a client **and/or has a personal relationship with the veterinary surgeon**, and the potential purchaser has no objection. If there is an objection, the vendor's veterinary surgeon must not act;*
- b) *the vendor agrees to permit disclosure of relevant clinical/case records. If permission cannot be obtained then the vendor's veterinary surgeon should not act. If the records reveal a factor which is likely to be prejudicial to the purchaser's intended use, the purchaser should be informed with the vendor's permission in advance of the examination; and,*
- c) *it is made clear to both parties that in this instance the veterinary surgeon is acting on behalf of the purchaser.'*

Action: Standards and Advice Team

AI 3(b) Surgical AI of dogs

11. The Committee noted the report and accepted the recommended amendment to paragraph 27.30 of the supporting guidance to correct the discrepancies between this guidance and the Mutilations (Permitted Procedures) (England) Regulations 2007.

Action: Standards and Advice team

12. It was confirmed that the discrepancy in the supporting guidance was identified by a veterinary surgeon when reading the supporting guidance, and not in relation to a concern raised against any veterinary surgeon's practice. It was agreed that this change should be highlighted in an RCVS Newsletter and via the Kennel Club.

AI 3(c) Unlicensed dog breeders: reporting obligation

14. The report was noted and the Committee unanimously agreed to the proposed amendments to paragraph 14.6 of the supporting guidance.

Action: Standards and Advice team

AI 3(d) Amendments to chapter 8 re: euthanasia

15. The report was noted and the Committee accepted the proposed inclusion of a new paragraph in Chapter 8 of the supporting guidance.

Action: Standards and Advice team

16. It was raised that an absence of sedation prior to euthanasia was included in a list of charges against a veterinary surgeon in a recent Disciplinary Committee Hearing. There was some discussion about whether the guidance should advise that sedation is essential prior to euthanasia. It was agreed this was a matter of clinical judgement and that this is not something that would be dealt with by way of supplementary guidance. However, the Standards and Advice team will monitor the number of queries that relate to this matter.

Action: Standards and Advice team

Matters for report

AI 4(a) DC report

17. The Committee noted the report and discussed the following aspects:

- a. Since the Committee last met the Disciplinary Committee have held five inquiry hearings.
- b. The Committee noted that the issue of informed consent arose in one of the hearings and suggested that further work could be considered on this topic.

AI 4(b) Riding Establishments Sub-committee Report

18. The Committee noted the report.

19. Mr Oldham provided an additional oral report that the Riding Establishments Sub-Committee were looking to expand their membership and would report back to the Committee in due course.

Action: Standards and Advice team

20. It was suggested, following a roundtable on Scottish breeding establishments' legislation, that a similar Sub-Committee could be established for veterinary surgeons undertaking inspections of breeding establishments.

AI 4(c) Practice Standards Scheme Report

21. The Committee noted the report and the following points:

- a. 65% of all eligible practice premises are now part of the Practice Standards Scheme (PSS), of which the majority are Small Animal practices.
- b. The British College of Veterinary Specialists (BCVSp) have proposed a specialist strand for PSS under a Veterinary Specialist Hospital multidisciplinary, which the PSS group agreed was a positive suggestion. The BCVSp have offered to present their proposal to the Committee. It was agreed instead that a paper should be provided to the Committee for comment. It is anticipated this paper will be presented to the Standards Committee at their meeting in April 2018.
- c. It was confirmed that the upcoming PSS 2020 review happens every five years. It was explained that any proposed changes to the guidance are sent to Standards Committee for approval, and any proposed changes to the actual Standards and rules require approval at Council level.

Confidential matters for report

AI 5(a) Certification Sub-committee Report

22. There were no comments and the report was noted.

AI 5(b) Recognised Veterinary Practice Sub-committee Report

23. The report was noted and the following discussed:

AI 5(c) Ethics Review Panel Report

AI 6 Risk and equality

25. No items were identified to be added to the risk register.

AI 7(a) Election of Vice-Chair of Standards Committee

26. No nominations have been received for the election of a Vice-Chair of Standards Committee. It was confirmed that the current system will continue to apply whereby should the Chair be unavailable for a Committee meeting, another member will act as Chair for the meeting on an ad hoc basis. Members still considering the role should inform the Chair or Standards and Advisory Manager before the April 2019 Standards Committee meeting.

AI 7(b) Council/Committee Collaboration System

27. Mr Oldham provided an oral report to the Committee on a new collaboration system, Boardpacks, which the College is planning to use across Council and Committees, which will enable everyone to have a single repository of current and previous minutes and papers.

28. The Committee agreed to have training on the new system at the meeting on 10 April.

Any other business and date of next meeting

29. There were no further items for discussion.

30. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday, 10 April 2019 at 10 am.