

Summary of Discipline Committee Hearing



DR. HARJINDER SINGH

Hearing Date: September 3, 2013

ALLEGATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

- failed to discontinue the surgery when noticed the extent of the bleeding in the dog's mouth, and bruising during the surgery
- failed to maintain the standard of practice of the profession
- an act or omission relevant to the practice of veterinary medicine that, having regard to the circumstances, would be regarded by members as unprofessional

BRIEF SUMMARY

The panel and Dr. Harjinder Singh (the member) revised the allegations and accepted the following Agreed Statement of Facts.

A dog was examined at the clinic by Dr. Shammi Dhawan as the dog was bleeding from his mouth. Dr. Dhawan confirmed the dog's gums were swollen.

Dr. Dhawan performed a pre-operative examination and ordered a pre-anesthetic blood analysis. While the blood was being analyzed, Dr. Dhawan arranged for an intravenous catheter to be placed and the dog was started on intravenous fluids for the dental procedures. Dr. Dhawan also ordered hydromorphone.

Bruises developed on the dog's legs where intravenous accesses were obtained for the blood that was drawn and the insertion of the catheter.

Dr. Dhawan reviewed the results of the blood analysis which revealed, among other things, that the dog's platelets were dangerously low. Dr. Dhawan nonetheless proceeded to anesthetise the dog.

Shortly after the member arrived at the clinic and assumed responsibility for the dental surgery. The member was not told about the bruises on

the dog's legs and he was also not told that the dog's platelets were dangerously low. Among other things the member performed an oral examination and began scaling the dog's teeth.

In the member's view, the dog had significant periodontal disease and required multiple tooth extractions. Dr. Dhawan obtained the owners' consent to these additional procedures.

The member asked Dr. Dhawan about the blood test results before any extractions. Dr. Dhawan told him, more than once, that the blood work was fine but the dog had "mild anemia". Without personally looking at the results of the blood work, the member proceeded to extract all of the dog's teeth except the lower canines, incisors and the last molar tooth in each quadrant.

The dog was bleeding from his mouth more heavily than the member was used to seeing during the surgery and as the dog came out of the anesthetic, the member noted bruising around the dog's eye when he turned him over partway through the surgery.

The member gave the dog a shot of prednisone and the clinic recommended to the clients that the dog be taken to an emergency hospital because of the bleeding.

Post-operatively, the dog required treatment at an emergency hospital overnight, where he received a whole blood transfusion which stopped the bleeding and then at the clinic where he was treated for thrombocytopenia.

DECISION

The member pleaded and was found guilty with respect to the allegations. The College and the member had negotiated an Agreed Statement of Facts, including an admission of professional misconduct.

PENALTY

- Reprimand
- Suspension of the member's licence to practise veterinary medicine for two months, all of which will be remitted if the member completes a research paper addressing the issues raised in the case
- The member will pay costs to the College of \$2,500
- Pursuant to legislation, this matter is published including the member's name

PANEL'S REASONING

The panel noted the allegations contained five allegations against Dr. Dhawan, as well as those against Dr. Singh. The panel did not consider the allegations against Dr. Dhawan at this hearing. The allegations against Dr. Dhawan will be considered at a separate hearing.

The panel found the member should not have continued with the surgery when he saw the extent of bleeding in the dog's mouth, and the bruising during the surgery. The member thereby engaged in professional misconduct in failing to maintain the standard of practice of the profession and an act or omission relevant to the practice of veterinary medicine that, having regard to the circumstances, would be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.

REASONS FOR PENALTY AND COSTS DECISION

The member agreed to waive his right to appeal in order that he could receive the verbal reprimand at the end of the hearing.