

Summary of Discipline Committee Hearing



DR. KELLY VOLMERS

Hearing Date: January 5, 2016

ALLEGATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

- failed to offer to conduct the exploratory laparotomy as a separate procedure from the Comprehensive Oral Health Assessment and Treatment (COHAT)
- performed a colonic biopsy instead of an endoscopic, non-full thickness biopsy
- performed the COHAT too quickly and/or not comprehensively enough
- exceeded the feline recommendations for administering intra-operative I.V. LRS fluids
- failed to collect the cat's PCV and Total Protein readings after the surgery
- did not sufficiently monitor the cat's blood pressure and/or heart rate after the surgery
- did not administer local dental nerve blocks
- did not, or did not properly, record the I.V. fluid rates or total volume infused in the cat's medical record;
- allowed the clients to remain with the cat during his recovery without an auxiliary staff member
- waited approximately 4 hours and 45 minutes after the cat's surgery before referring him to another facility
- failed to maintain the standards of practice
- failed to make or retain records required by the Regulations
- unprofessional conduct

BRIEF SUMMARY

The cat was at the clinic for an exploratory laparotomy, consisting of multiple biopsies, a Comprehensive Oral Health Assessment and Treatment including, three tooth extractions. The member performed these procedures.

After these procedures, the cat was lethargic and developed, among other things, hemorrhagic diarrhea. His condition did not improve.

The cat remained under the member's care at the clinic for approximately 4 to 5 hours after the surgery before he was referred to another facility for care.

The cat continued to deteriorate to the point that, nine days after surgery, he was euthanized by another veterinarian.

PLEA AND 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.

PENALTY

- Reprimand
- Suspension of the member's licence to practise veterinary medicine for three months, two months of which shall be suspended if the member completes the College's record keeping webinar, watches the College's informed consent webinar, completes mentoring sessions on intestinal biopsy procedures and fluid therapy in cats, and writes an essay on Comprehensive Oral Health Assessment and Treatment procedures, intestinal biopsy procedures and fluid therapy procedures.
- Imposing a condition and limitation on the member's licence that a review is completed on up to 10 sets of member's medical records which were prepared after completion, at the member's cost, of the record keeping webinar, and that the reviewer provides a written report to the Registrar and to the member on the adequacy of the records. A second review may be necessary.
- The member will pay costs to the College of \$5,000.
- Pursuant to legislation, this matter is published including the member's name

PANEL'S REASONING

The Panel agreed with the College's expert that the member committed an act or omission inconsistent with the Act or Regulations, and failed to maintain the standard of practice of the profession by not offering to conduct the exploratory laparotomy as a separate procedure from the dental procedure (COHAT) which increased surgical and anesthetic risks. Performing a full thickness colonic biopsy

instead of a non-full thickness endoscopic biopsy may have led to excessive post-operative bleeding. The member also performed a non-comprehensive COHAT procedure and failed to administer appropriate dental nerve blocks which caused increased post-operative pain. The Panel agreed the member inappropriately administered intravenous fluids, inappropriately monitored the cat after surgery, and waited too long to refer the cat after the surgery.

In reviewing the medical records, the Panel concurred with the expert that the surgical description was too brief, and that there was insufficient information on the administration of intravenous fluids.

The Panel considered the three principles guiding the appropriateness of penalties which are: protection of the public; general and specific deterrence for the profession and the member; and rehabilitation of the member.

The Panel agreed the protection of the public was served by the suspension, the completion of record keeping and informed consent webinars, the mentoring sessions, and seminars on intestinal biopsies, COHAT procedures, and fluid therapy in cats. In the Panel's opinion, this will protect the public by improving the member's skills.

The Panel agreed the reprimand, the suspension, the costs awarded, and the publication of the member's name will provide general deterrence to the profession and specific deterrence to the member.

The Panel concluded that the seminars and the essay imposed on the member as well as the medical records review will provide rehabilitation to the member.

The Panel considered that the member had already completed part of the rehabilitation component of the order, and did not have any prior discipline record. Also the member had been cooperative throughout the process. Further, the member's decision to agree to the allegations as presented, negated the need of a hearing, providing cost savings to the College and the member.