

Summary of Discipline Committee Hearing



DR. SASHA BLACK

Hearing Date: May 3, 2021

BRIEF SUMMARY

In 2018, the member examined a pregnant golden retriever. The client noted the dog had been lethargic and had pale gums. The member found the dog was in respiratory distress. Among other things, the member took x-rays and ran bloodwork. The blood results showed marked anemia and hypoglycemia and the x-rays showed nine puppies.

The member administered seven 1000 ml bags, seven 500 ml bags, or a combination of seven 500 and 1000 ml bags of intravenous fluid as well as calcium gluconate, lidocaine, diazepam and dextrose.

The dog's breathing became laboured and fluid and foam started coming out of her nose. The dog was euthanized and the puppies were lost. The member did not offer the client a necropsy.

ALLEGATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

- failed to take an adequate history
- failed to develop or record a list of differential diagnoses
- failed to keep proper records by failing to keep a record of critical information including blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate and PO2 as well as fluid amounts and drugs/ treatments throughout the dog's treatment
- failed to conduct an adequate examination
- failed to recommend a chest x-ray
- treated the dog with excessive fluid therapy, administered fluid therapy by way of a pressure bag, and administered undiluted dextrose by way of bolus injection
- failed to adequately assess or monitor the dog throughout her hospitalization
- failed to offer the client a necropsy
- failed to maintain the standards 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 disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional

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
- Prior to the end of the suspension the member must complete the following remediation:
 - a half-day assessment to evaluate the member's baseline knowledge on the issues that were raised in this case
 - a two-day mentorship on the issues that were raised in the case with one day addressing the assessment of emergent patients and effective communication with clients and one day addressing fluid therapy
- The member must complete a half-day assessment to review what the member learned in the mentorship and to assess whether the member will change her practice as a result of the mentorship
- The member must complete the College's three-part online learning modules on medical record keeping in companion animals
- A condition and limitation is placed on the member's licence requiring her to participate in a peer review of eight medical records
- The member will pay costs to the College of \$15,000

PANEL'S REASONING

The panel reviewed all materials provided. In considering the parties' joint submission on penalty and costs, the panel was guided by the case law which indicates it is not to

depart from a jointly proposed penalty unless the proposal, if accepted, would bring the discipline process into disrepute or otherwise be contrary to the public interest. The panel concluded that in this instance the proposed penalty was reasonable and in keeping with the best interest of the public.

The panel agrees the jointly submitted penalty serves to protect the public, deter the behaviour, and remediate the member. The two-month licence suspension and rehabilitative penalties, including mentorship, medical record learning module, and medical record review, are appropriate to the level of professional misconduct displayed and allow for suitable opportunity for remediation of the member's practice of veterinary medicine.

The assessed costs and expenses fit with expectations for an uncontested case such as this, which includes the hearing of two motions, and where the member has admitted to professional misconduct and willingly accepts the penalties.