

Reg/Leg Report

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The Veterinary Medical Board's (VMB) Multidisciplinary Advisory Committee (MDC) met on July 16, 2019 in Sacramento.

The committee spent considerable time discussing Guidelines for the Discussion of Cannabis Use for Veterinary Patients. AB 2215, which prohibited the VMB from disciplining veterinarians for discussing the use of cannabis for animals, also required the VMB to come up with guidelines for veterinarians to use during those discussions by January 2020. The proposed Guidelines include information the veterinarian should provide the client as well as documentation the veterinarian should keep.

Under the current law, veterinarians may discuss, but not recommend cannabis products. Veterinarians are also not allowed to sell cannabis products or have a business relationship with a cannabis provider. There is a bill, SB 627, that will allow veterinarians to recommend cannabis products, that is currently working its way through the legislature. That bill also requires the VMB to create new guidelines for recommending cannabis products by January 2021.

Liz Hughston, RVT, VTS (SAIM, ECC), Certified Veterinary Cannabis Counselor, and co-founder of the Veterinary Cannabis Academy, spoke about industrial hemp and reminded the MDC that hemp products are not controlled. She also mentioned that most veterinary CBD products are made from industrial hemp and, therefore, may be recommended and sold by veterinarians.

The MDC also reported that they are continuing to work on finding duplicative, overlapping or outdated regulations. The Complaint Audit Subcommittee reported that they are recommending additional training for expert witnesses.

The next meeting of the MDC will be on October 20, 2019.

The Veterinary Medical Board met on July 17-18, 2019 in Sacramento. New Public Member Diana Prado was introduced.

First on the agenda was a report from the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA). The DCA representative reported that they are still waiting for a new DCA Director to be appointed. He also said that the new DCA portal at dca.ca.gov makes more data available to the public. The DCA has been conducting an Executive Office Salary Survey, comparing EO salaries with other states. VMB members commented that California should be compared to comparable states like NY, since low salary is the main reason they are losing staff.

Dr. Jeff Pollard presented the MDC report, including the proposed Cannabis Guidelines. The VMB will vote on the Guidelines in October.

The VMB next discussed the Judicious Use of Antimicrobials in Livestock. As of January 2018, all important antimicrobials must be prescribed by a veterinarian for livestock. They cannot be used just for weight gain. The VMB voted to approve the CA Dept. of Food and Agriculture guidelines as presented.

Next on the agenda was a discussion about Minimum Standards for Animal Shelters. Some shelters want to be able to function without a veterinarian and refer all of their cases. The VMB voted to direct the MDC to come up with possible legislative solutions for shelters that have difficulty finding a veterinarian.

The issue of Pet Cremation was next on the agenda. Just who regulates pet cremation has become an issue as the VMB says they have no expertise in this area. The Cemetery and Funeral Board is working with the Dept. of Consumer Affairs and the legislature to resolve the issue.

The rest of the agenda was postponed until the following day when CaRVTA representative were unable to attend.

The next meeting of the VMB will be on October 16-17.