

October 28, 2021

Reg/Leg Report

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The Multidisciplinary Advisory Committee (MDC) met on October 20 via the web. All members were present except for Dr. Richard Sullivan. They approved the previous meeting's minutes with a few minor changes.

The committee on Veterinary Premises Inspection recommended that there be no changes to the Inspection Checklist at this time. The committee had been exploring whether shortening the list would allow inspectors to inspect more premises. The MDC voted to leave the checklist intact, as they felt that shortening it would compromise the inspections. The committee was directed by the MDC to monitor how things are going for the next 12 months.

The Complaint Process Audit Committee reported that they are working through old cases. There has been an increase in complaints recently, which is compounding the problem of case back-up. They are trying to triage the cases to deal with the most important, but are having difficulty due to staff shortages. The Committee is working with CVMA to educate practitioners how to avoid complaints.

Dr. Richard Sullivan was elected as Chair and Leah Schufelt, RVT was elected Vice Chair for 2022. Kristi Pawlowski, RVT is retiring as of this meeting.

The Veterinary Medical Board met on October 21-22 via the web. All members were present except for Judy Ki, Public Member. They approved the previous meeting's minutes with a few amendments.

During Public Comment, Anita Levy-Hudson, RVT, representing CaRVTA, requested that the VMB consider allowing RVTs to assist owners with administering prescribed treatments without veterinary supervision. Anyone is allowed to assist an owner if they do so for free. CaRVTA's position is that if anyone can do it for free, an RVT should be able to do it and be paid.

Kristi Pawlowski, RVT gave her final MDC Report. She said the MDC will have a report on the Inspection issue for the next VMB meeting. The VMB voted to keep the Inspection Checklist the same for now. They also voted to monitor the effectiveness of merging the Inspection and Enforcement Divisions for 12 months to see if that helped to speed up complaint review and inspections.

Marie Ussery, RVT was elected to the MDC to replace Kristi Pawlowski, RVT, whose term expired. Mary having spent her entire career working in a rural underserved community where access to care is limited by financial resources, availability of fully staffed veterinary hospitals, and hospitals willing to see various species, she said she had come to understand that it has never been more important to consumers, pets, livestock, and the veterinary medical profession to provide quality medicine to all. Her experience in underserved communities was a major factor in her election.

The VMB voted to direct the MDC to research and evaluate the issue of RVT School Approval. The VMB believes that it is probably unnecessary for the VMB to be involved with the approval of AVMA approved schools since there are so many other agencies with more expertise already inspecting.

Dr. Jamie Noland gave the Access to Veterinary Care Report. It has been determined that the greatest factor in access to care is money. It was suggested that allowing RVTs to do more could help with the access issue.

Brianna Miller from the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) reported that board meetings will be remote until January 2022. The DCA is encouraging boards to continue having on-line access even after going to in-person meetings.

Thanks to Anita Levy-Hudson, RVT bringing up the issue to Jessica Sieferman, the VMB Executive Officer, the VMB is now working with the Board of Pharmacy and the Pharmaceutical Associations to

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have pharmacies access DVM license numbers instead of asking for numbers that DVMs don't have when sending prescriptions to outside pharmacies. Apparently, this has been a long-standing problem that is only getting attention thanks to Anita.

Next on the agenda was a discussion of legislation. AB 1282, the Blood Bank bill was signed by the governor. This bill will phase out canine blood banks in favor of utilizing pets as blood donors. The governor also signed AB 1535, the VMB's Sunset Bill, although the definitions of Telemedicine were left out. SB 344, which would have provided financial assistance for homeless shelters to provide food and basic veterinary services failed. The VMB voted to ask the MDC to begin exploring best practices for animals used blood donation. They also directed staff to work to support legislation next year re the definitions of telemedicine.

Next was a discussion of regulations. The VMB voted to approve the modified text to the Disciplinary Guidelines. They also voted to approve the proposed changes to the Animal Physical Rehabilitation regulation. The VMB voted to approve their replies to comments of the drug compounding regulation and to proceed with the rule making package.

Jennifer Loreda, RVT presented the RVT Report. She reminded everyone that Veterinary Technician Week is a celebration for credentialed technicians. She also suggested that the VMB needs to discuss expanding the role of RVTs and to consider adding a second RVT to the VMB. She pointed out that as the only RVT on the VMB, there is a big void if she is unable to attend a meeting.

Kathy Bowler, Public Member reported that the AAVSB suggests switching to "action" minutes from full transcript minutes. The VMB decided to try that out at the next meeting.

The VMB now has 2 veterinary student liaisons - one from the north and one from the south. They would also like to have RVT student representatives to participate in VMB meetings.

The VMB adjourned for the day, then reconvened on October 22 with Ms. Li and Dr. Prado absent.

The Administrative Report showed that the VMB now has a reserve of 8-8.5 months in reserve, thanks to the fee increases, which the VMB considers to be a good fiscal condition. They also reported that they are working on videos to help with using the BreEZe system. The Exam Report shows that California RVT candidates are passing the VTNE at a 53% rate. They also provided a report on the pass rates by school, including Alternate Route programs. The statistics can be found here: https://vmb.ca.gov/meetings/materials/20211021_22_item_18b.pdf

Ms. Sieferman gave the Outreach Report and said that she meets regularly with CVMA and CaRVTA (we meet with her monthly). She also reported on increased social media presence.

Kathy Bowler, Public Member was elected President for 2022 and Dr. Christine Bradbury was elected Vice-President.

Future Agenda Items include the use of cannabis in veterinary medicine, RVTs working outside of the hospital, additional RVT on the VMB.

Meeting adjourned

I met with Jessica Sieferman and Tim Rodda from the VMB on 10/26 for our monthly meeting. I asked about the elimination of the 5-year limit on education for the Alternate Route and for the VTNE. Jessica said that they are working on it, but have not initiated the process to eliminate it yet. She agreed that they would put a statement on the web site about the 5-year limit so that candidates would know about it before applying. She also said that she would review the current RVT School regulation that is going through the process and will need to make changes if it requires Alternate Route Schools to be inspected by the VMB. She believes that the other agencies involved in school approval are sufficient. She also said that expanded RVT job tasks will definitely be on the next agenda.