SCVet News

LLR A newsletter published by South Carolina Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners. April 2010

Our Mission

The Board was created by the S.C. General Assembly to establish and maintain minimum standards for the practice of veterinary medicine to:

- protect the health, safety and well being of the citizens of South Carolina,
- license veterinarians and veterinary technologists to practice veterinary medicine in this state,
- investigate complaints against licensees and allegations of unlicensed practice, and
- take disciplinary action when necessary.

These points explain why veterinarians and veterinary technologists licensed under this Board are a regulated and licensure is required. It is for the public's protection, to assure minimal competence, and to maintain standards of practice.

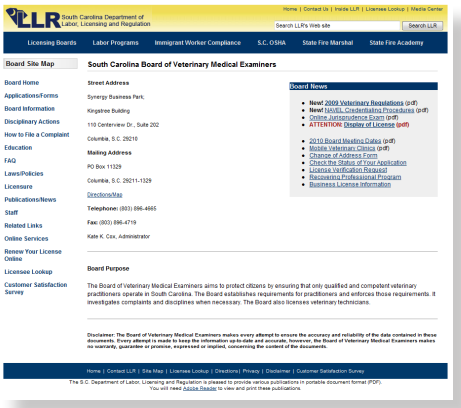
S.C. Veterinary Medical Examiners Board Members

Visit the Vet Board's Web Site

The S.C. Veterinary Medical Examiners' Web site is a useful tool that keeps you up to date on what is happening in your profession. The site contains a wealth of information regarding the practice veterinary medicine in South Carolina, and the "Site Map" makes it very user friendly.

Some of the site's links contain information regarding disciplinary actions taken by the Board, continuing education, online services, Board information, licensure, related links and frequently asked questions. You can also notify the Board of an address change, find out when Board meetings are scheduled and find out information about initial licensure. At renewal time, you will find helpful information on how to renew, what fees are due, and what continuing education is required.

The site also has a "Board News" feature for the newest information. We hope you visit the site frequently at: **www.llronline.com/POL/Veterinary/.**



Recovering Professional Program Available for Licensees

The Recovering Professional Program is a confidential referral and monitoring program designed for health care professionals in South Carolina who are experiencing problems related to alcohol and/or other drug abuse or dependence, or from a dual diagnosis of addiction and mental illness. The program ensures that impaired professionals receive the help they need at the earliest point possible.

The program, contracted through the Lexington Richland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council (LRADAC) to address

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Ensuring that Medical Records Provide Proper Information

One of the most important facets of care provided to veterinary patients is an accurate medical record. Many licensees are using their office computer software to enter and maintain not just financial and reminder information, but the medical record itself.

"Going paperless" is a step that offers many benefits to practices, clients and pets; however, it also creates opportunities for errors and misunderstandings, which can lead to compromised patient care and possible complaints to the Board. Because the many different software systems have widely differing formats and can be used in many different ways, the Board would like to remind licensees to use computerized records properly in creating, maintaining, and transferring medical information.

The Board has previously provided information about required medical records in response to Board requests pertaining to an investigation. Please remember to include ALL records requested, and that ALL entries should be contemporary. Alterations to the records should not be made; any non-contemporary additions to the records must be clearly marked and dated as such. Records created or provided long after the fact cause confusion and are inappropriate.

Another source of potential confusion and conflict arises when records are transferred from one practice to another. When copies of records are requested to be sent to another office, it is not uncommon to find that those records are incomplete. Often what is sent is produced by the software system as a list of "invoices" or "products." Although an accurate chronological record of the services provided, these summaries do not constitute a complete medical record and do not provide the information needed to allow for the proper continuity of care for the patient. A report that a patient was examined on a particular date and that certain diagnostic tests were performed does not adequately describe the examination findings, the results of any tests, or the diagnosis. It may seem obvious, but this type of inappropriate record is all too often supplied. This causes more opportunity for misunderstanding, which can eventually lead to Board involvement and a possible consequence. Please refer to the regulations prepared by LLR in Chapter 120-8, (B) (2) for a complete list of the items required in the medical record.

Medical records that accurately describe the patient's past and current history also help prevent confusion in the care that is provided within a practice. In solo and multi-doctor practices, records that provide the appropriate history in a form that is easily reviewed help prevent oversights and mistakes, which can lead to poor care, client dissatisfaction, and complaints.

One final reminder related to medical records also seems obvious but bears repeating. When records for an examination are completed and lab reports are still pending, it is very important that they are reviewed by the doctor when they are available and that they are accurately included in the computerized medical record. Unfortunately, the Board has reviewed records that were scanned into a software system without further notation in the record.

Without question, poor communication is the cause of more public complaints to the Board than any other. Accurate, contemporary, and complete medical records are the best way to improve communication and minimize misunderstandings. Computerized records can help improve those records, but they must be created, maintained, and transferred properly.

Board Meeting Dates for 2010

- January 14, 2010
- April 15, 2010
- July 15, 2010
- October 28, 2010

Frequently Asked Questions

The S.C. Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners answers many questions for licensees, clients, and general inquirers. These questions and answers are posted on the **Board's Web site** for your convenience.

All Employers Must Comply with S.C. Immigration Act by July 1, 2010

The "South Carolina Illegal Immigration Reform Act" that was signed into law by Governor Mark Sanford on June 4, 2008 will soon be applicable to all businesses in South Carolina regardless of the number of employees.

Compliance with this law began July 1, 2009, for private employers who employ 100 or more employees. For private employers who employ less than 100 employees, the compliance date is July 1, 2010.

The law requires all employers to verify the legal status of new employees and prohibits employment of any worker who is not legally in this country and authorized to work. The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's Office of Immigrant Worker Compliance is charged with investigating complaints and conducting random audits of private employers to assure compliance. Failure to comply can result in severe monetary penalties and revocation of an employer's right to operate their business.

During the first year, LLR investigators found that most large employers (more than 100 workers) were in compliance with the law. When violations were found they generally were because:

- employers who were using E-Verify to verify their employees, did not do so within the five-day timeframe required by the law.
- employers who were using driver's licenses to verify employees, did so using a driver's license from a state not on the approved list.

For more information on the law, visit **www.llronline.com/immigration/**.

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the problem of impaired healthcare professionals, was originally developed by LLR for the Boards of Dentistry, Medical Examiners, Nursing, and Pharmacy to provide a consistent, accountable mechanism for early identification, referral and monitoring of licensees with substance abuse problems. It now is available to other licensed healthcare professionals licensed by LLR who want to participate. The South Carolina Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners requested to make the services of the RPP available to its licensees.

RPP is designed to be an alternative and a supplement to the Board's disciplinary process. The program accepts Board referrals and voluntary participants for a five-year monitoring program in which licensees have an opportunity to return to safe effective practice. Voluntary participants remain anonymous to the Board as long as they are compliant with RPP requirements. The program management is funded through LLR with participants paying all costs associated with their individual participation, such as evaluation, treatment, and drug screens.

The participating boards, professional associations, and agencies are represented on the RPP Advisory Committee, which provides advice and guidance to RPP and agencies on policy matters. The Advisory Committee also provides oversight for the participating boards of RPP compliance with procedures approved for their licensees. For more information regarding RPP, visit **www.scrpp.org.**

No More Homeless Pets Program

WHAT IS THE 'NO MORE HOMELESS PETS' PROGRAM?

The **'No More Homeless Pets'** program is designed to provide financial assistance for low-income pet owners in South Carolina. It is part of the state's program to reduce pet overpopulation and threats to public health and safety due to large numbers of stray, feral, and unwanted pets.

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

The program offers reduced pet neutering fees to people who meet the eligibility requirements. Eligible residents can have their dog or cat spay/neutered by a participating veterinarian or low cost spay/neuter clinic for a small co-payment. The fee includes spay/neuter, suture removal (if necessary), and a rabies vaccination. Participating veterinarians and low cost spay/neuter clinics will be reimbursed each year for these surgeries with funds collected through the '**No More Homeless Pets**' license tag.

For more information on the program and who is eligible, visit **www.llronline.com/POL/Veterinary/.**

S.C. Reporting & Identification Prescription Tracking System (SCRIPTS) and Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP)

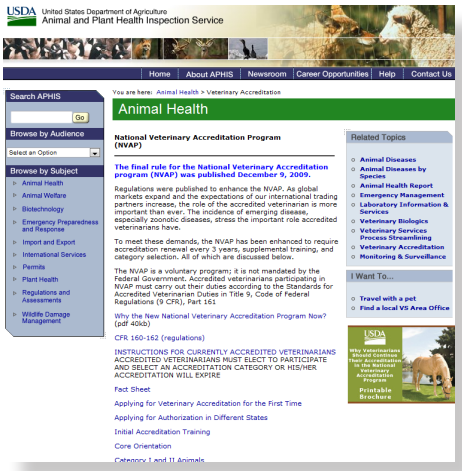
Please Note: All veterinarians that prescribe and dispense controlled substances to be used at the animal's home/location need to register with the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) for the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP). All veterinarians should visit the Web site for further information at **www.dhec.sc.gov/scripts**, and click on Practitioner/Pharmacist Database Access Request Procedures. Veterinarians will need to report prescriptions of controlled substances that are for a duration of greater than five (5) days. If you have any questions, call PMP at (803) 896-0688 or email SCRIPTS@dhec.sc.gov They, not the Vet Board office, will have answers for you.

The purpose of the S.C. Reporting & Identification Prescription Tracking System (SCRIPTS) is to collect data on all Schedule II, III, and IV controlled substances dispensed in and/or into the state of South Carolina. The program is intended to improve the state's ability to identify and stop diversion of prescription drugs in an efficient and cost effective manner that will not impede the appropriate medical use of legal controlled substances.

In 2006, the S.C. General Assembly authorized DHEC's Bureau of Drug Control (BDC) to establish and maintain SCRIPTS. Through the program the BDC monitors the prescribing and dispensing of all Schedule II, III, and IV controlled substances by professionals licensed to prescribe or dispense the substances in South Carolina.

All dispensers of Schedule II, III, and IV controlled substances are required to collect and report certain information to the data repository managed by Health Information Designs Inc. (HID) of Auburn, Alabama.

Updated Accreditation for NVAP Accredited Veterinarians



All NVAP currently accredited veterinarians need to apply for updated accreditation status or his/her accreditation will expire. Accredited veterinarians should visit the Web site for further information at www.aphis.usda.gov/nvap/. There is a grace period. Therefore, no continuing education for change in accreditation will be needed until 2013. If you have questions, you should call (301) 734-6827 or e-mail nvap@aphis.usda.gov They, not the Vet Board office, will have answers for you.

If you are not accredited, you may want to learn more about the National Veterinary Accreditation Program (NVAP) by reading the information below and going to **www.aphis.usda.gov/nvap/**.

The final rule for the National Veterinary Accreditation Program (NVAP) was published Dec. 9, 2009. Regulations were published to enhance the NVAP. As global markets expand and the expectations of our international trading partners increase, the role of the accredited veterinarian is more important than ever. The incidence of emerging disease, especially zoonotic diseases, stress the important role accredited veterinarians have. To meet these demands, the NVAP has been enhanced to require accreditation renewal every 3 years, supplemental training, and category selection. The NVAP is a voluntary program, and it is not mandated by the Federal Government. Accredited veterinarians participating in NVAP must carry out their duties according to the Standards for Accredited Veterinarian Duties in Title 9, Code of Federal Regulations (9 CFR), Part 161

"Protecting American agriculture" is the basic charge of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). APHIS provides leadership in ensuring the health and care of animals and plants. The agency improves agricultural productivity and competitiveness and contributes to the national economy and the public health.