



Veterinary Surgeons Board of Queensland

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Our Reference: 448/5

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21 February 2017

TO:

Notice of Findings Complaint lodged with Veterinary Surgeons Board of Queensland

This is a Veterinary Surgeons Board of Queensland (the Board) report on its assessment of a complaint lodged with the Board on 12 July 2016 by Ms [REDACTED], against Dr [REDACTED] BVSc FACVSc, a registered veterinary surgeon in Queensland.

Process undertaken in enquiry

The process undertaken accords with the 'Guidelines to Veterinary Professional Standards and Complaints' adopted by the Board for the conduct of assessments of consumer complaints determined to fall within the jurisdiction afforded the Board by Part 4, Division 2 of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936* (the Act). The guidelines are published on the Board's website at www.vsb.qld.gov.au/complaints.html.

The Board is appointed under Part 2, Division 2 of the Act. The membership of the Board and their qualifications are published on its website.

Result of the Board's clinical review of the case management after having assessed the information and material made available to it in the documents listed below

Information and material considered by the Board:

- Complaint submission from Ms [REDACTED] dated 11 July 2016
- Patient history records for Princess from [REDACTED] Specialist Services
- Patient history records for Princess from [REDACTED] Veterinary Surgery
- Patient history records for Princess from [REDACTED] Clinic
- Patient history records for Princess from [REDACTED] Pet Hospital
- Submission from Dr [REDACTED] received 10 October 2016
- Submission from Ms [REDACTED] dated 22 November 2016

The Board believes that it has given the complainant and the veterinarian reasonable opportunity to make written submissions on the matter which is the subject of the complaint.

In June 2014, Ms [redacted] presented Princess, a 14-year-old, female, domestic short haired cat, to [redacted] Specialist Services for treatment in relation to her diabetes.

In her complaint, Ms [redacted] identified the following issues in relation to her dissatisfaction with the veterinary treatment provided to Princess by Dr [redacted]

- failure to provide correct advice in relation to nutrition for cats
- prescribing incorrect diet to cat with diabetes
- failure to offer alternative option of feeding raw diet rather than vet prescribed and sold commercial food diet

When assessing complaints, the Board considers whether the veterinary management of the case is consistent with the standard of veterinary practice accepted by the veterinary industry as a whole. The standard of evidence against which a veterinarian's actions are judged is peer-reviewed literature.

The Board found that Dr [redacted]'s veterinary management of this case was in accordance with accepted veterinary practice.

In the Board's opinion, there is ample evidence-based, peer-reviewed literature regarding nutrition in diabetic cats to support Dr [redacted]'s treatment and recommendations.

Dr [redacted] showed a willingness to adjust the dietary advice she provided to Ms [redacted] in response to Ms [redacted]'s concerns and Princess' reluctance to eat the prescription diet.

There is no peer-reviewed, evidence-based literature that would oblige a veterinarian to offer the option of feeding a raw food diet to an animal.

In her submission in response to the complaint, received 10 October 2016, Dr [redacted] provided a copy of an opinion from Dr [redacted] Scott Campbell' entitled 'Opinion on records associated with the Complaint by Ms [redacted]'. Dr [redacted] Campbell is a specialist in veterinary nutrition and is registered with the Board. In its assessment of this complaint, the Board considered, and accepted, Dr [redacted]'s opinion.

In an attachment to the complaint, issues in relation to the education and training provided to veterinary students, by the University of [redacted] and James Cook University, and the relationship between universities and veterinarians and commercial pet food corporations were also raised. These matters are not within the Board's jurisdiction and were not considered by the Board in its assessment of this complaint. The Board advises that such matters should be raised directly with the universities and the pet food industry.

Decision

The Board found no grounds to support a contention that there have been acts or omissions of the kind that would warrant censure or discipline of the veterinarian.

Conclusion

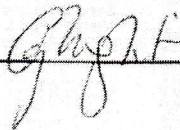
The Board's assessment and deliberations were conducted in an impartial and confidential manner.

The Board advises that, in line with section 12C(3) of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936*, Board members, Associate Professor Phillip Moses BVSc CertSAO FANZCVS and Professor Glen Coleman BVSc PhD, were not involved in the Board's assessment and decision-making processes for this case.

It is the Board's view that there is no justification for a continuation of enquiries into the complaint lodged. However, a period of 28 days from the date of the notice of findings is allocated to allow for the receipt of previously undisclosed information that would give cause for the Board to review its clinical findings.

The Board expresses its sympathy to Mr. [REDACTED] for the sad loss of Princess.

Signed _____



C Wright
Deputy Registrar
Compliance
Veterinary Surgeons Board