Board certification, antimicrobial use among new policies approved by Board of Directors

The AVMA Board of Directors (BOD) approved seven new policies and revisions to seven existing policies, reaffirmed two professional policies, and rescinded three policies during its spring meeting April 9-11, 2015.

The board also referred four proposed new policies or policy revisions back to committee or to the AVMA House of Delegates (HOD) for consideration at its July annual meeting. In addition, important actions were taken by the Council on Education (COE) and the AVMA Board of Directors; those actions are described in this AVMA@Work blog post.

The policy actions taken by the board included the following.

New policies approved:

- Distinction between the Process of Board-Certification and Earning a Certificate: this policy emphasizes that only veterinarians who have attained certification by a board or college recognized by the American Board of Veterinary Specialties (ABVS) can be considered specialists.
- Antiparasitic Resistance: The policy underscores veterinarians' attention to contemporary guidelines and emerging scientific studies that inform their preparation of treatment protocols that they tailor for their patients.
- Two new policies addressing animal-assisted interactions.
- Two new policies supporting the use of recent antimicrobial guidelines for companion animal diseases.

Revised policies approved:

- Model Euthanasia Authorization Form: Revisions include changing several of the field names to improve clarity of the form; modifying a statement on individual cremation preferences; and including a statement that remains may or may not be able to be returned after conducting a necropsy of the patient.
- Use of Biotechnology in Development of Drugs and Vaccines: With the proposed revisions, the policy continues to underscore AVMA’s support for novel, scientifically validated animal health products that are the result of “innovative technologies,” a broader term because a universal definition of “biotechnology” remains elusive.

Proposed/revised policies referred to the House of Delegates, with recommendations for approval:

- Use of Random-Source Dogs and Cats for Research, Testing and Education: Proposed revisions emphasize the importance of ensuring the good welfare of random-source dogs and cats used for research, testing and education; clearly acknowledge that scientific justification is required to support their use; and encourage options for acquisition beyond Class B dealers.
- Veterinary Pharmacology Education for Pharmacists: This proposed new policy addresses concerns that the AVMA has received from members, and advocates for three main concepts:
  1. Veterinary pharmacology education, through professional pharmacy curricula and continuing education, is encouraged.
  2. Pharmacists are reminded to verify the order with the prescribing veterinarian should any questions arise, and to refer the client back to the veterinarian if there are questions about patient care and/or use of over-the-counter drugs in the patient.
3. Veterinarians are reminded to deliver clear prescriptions in line with state rules, to help avoid medication errors.

- AVMA Principles of Veterinary Medical Ethics: Proposed revisions clarify the section on veterinary testimonials and revise the section addressing role of receiving veterinarian.

The new and revised policies will be posted and updated on the policies page of the AVMA website within the next few weeks. Any recommendations referred by the Board of Directors to the HOD will be posted in the AVMA governance section in advance of the July HOD meeting.

See our AVMA@Work blog post for more information about the Board of Directors meeting and outcomes.

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