



Veterinary Surgeons' Board



Authorisation to carry out certain acts of EQUINE DENTISTRY in Western Australia under the direction of a registered veterinary surgeon

1 GUIDELINES

Background

Section 26(4)(b) of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act* 1960 (the Act) allows for the authorisation of a person who is not a registered veterinary surgeon to carry out, under the direction of a registered veterinary surgeon, an act of veterinary surgery that is specified by regulation.

Regulation 47 of the *Veterinary Surgeons Regulations* 1979 (the Regulations) specifies equine dentistry to be an act of veterinary surgery which may be performed by an authorised person, for the purpose of section 26(4)(b) of the Act.

The Veterinary Surgeons' Board (the Board) is responsible for administering the Act and is therefore responsible for the process of authorising a person who is not a registered veterinary surgeon, to perform acts of equine dentistry.

The following guidelines provide details of the process and criteria applied by the Board when considering an application for authorisation.

Authorisation by the Board

The Board will apply the following criteria in relation to the authorisation of a person to carry out equine dentistry under the provisions of section 26(4)(b) of the Act.

1. Authorisation to perform equine dentistry:
 - a) is not required for any act of equine dentistry that falls within Category 1 of the categories of equine dentistry procedures, as defined in Part 2 of these guidelines;
 - b) includes authorisation to perform any act of equine dentistry that falls within Category 2 of the categories of equine dentistry procedures, as defined in Part 2 of these guidelines;
 - c) does not include authorisation to perform any act of equine dentistry that falls within Category 3 of the categories of equine dentistry procedures, as defined in Part 2 of these guidelines.
2. Authorisation will not be granted unless the applicant:
 - a) satisfies the Board that they have undertaken training in equine dentistry; and
 - b) provides proof of competency and experience in each of the competencies listed in Part 3 of these guidelines.
3. Authorisation will not be granted unless the registered veterinary surgeon nominated to direct is approved by the Board to so direct.
4. Authorisation will be for a period no greater than one (1) year.

5. Authorisation will be maintained subject to compliance with these guidelines during the period of authorisation. Authorisation may be withdrawn immediately where the Board finds that these guidelines have not been complied with or will not be complied with during the period of authorisation.
6. Authorisation may be renewed where the requirements for authorisation as set out in these guidelines continue to be met and where the Board is satisfied, by evidence provided by the authorised person, that with reference to the preceding period of authorisation:
 - a) the authorised person has satisfactorily performed equine dental procedures;
 - b) the authorised person has complied with these guidelines;
 - c) the authorised person has carried out authorised acts of equine dentistry on at least fifty animals as evidenced by written records; and
 - d) the accuracy of the authorised person's written records have been certified by the directing veterinary surgeon.

Directing Veterinary Surgeon

1. The directing veterinary surgeon must be resident and registered in Western Australia and must complete the required form. Forms may be obtained from the Board office or the Board's website at www.vsbwa.org.au.
2. The directing veterinary surgeon is responsible for the authorised person in relation to the performance of each authorised act of veterinary surgery.
3. "Direction" means regular and frequent supervision but does not necessarily imply continuous personal supervision.
4. The directing veterinary surgeon must keep a record of each supervision of the authorised person.
5. The directing veterinary surgeon is accountable to the Board for the performance of equine dentistry by the authorised person.
6. The directing veterinary surgeon must maintain access to the records of the authorised person in relation to:
 - a) the date and details of each equine dentistry examination and treatment;
 - b) the name and address of the owner of the horse;
 - c) the address of the property on which the equine dentistry was performed;
 - d) the name or identification of each horse on which equine dentistry was performed; and
 - e) any advertising by the authorised person for the provision of equine dentistry.
7. The directing veterinary surgeon must ensure that a registered veterinary surgeon is available to attend in the event that veterinary expertise is required.
8. The directing veterinary surgeon will have their approval to direct an authorised person withdrawn if they:
 - a) cease to be a registered veterinary surgeon;
 - b) have conditions placed on their registration such that they are no longer eligible to be a directing veterinary surgeon; or
 - c) do not wish to continue to comply with all of the requirements for directing veterinary surgeons, as contained in these guidelines.

Authorised Persons

1. The Board requires that an authorised person performing equine dentistry will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with that expected of a registered veterinary surgeon. This includes any advertising being factually correct and related only to acts of veterinary surgery the person is authorised to perform.
2. The authorised person must maintain an accurate and complete record of:
 - a) the date and details of the equine dentistry, examinations and treatments;
 - b) the name and address of the owner of each horse;
 - c) the address of the property on which the equine dentistry was performed;
 - d) the name or identification of each horse on which equine dentistry was performed by the authorised person; and
 - e) all procedures performed.
3. The authorised person must provide the directing veterinary surgeon with access to all records required to be made under paragraph 2 above.
4. The authorised person must report clearly, accurately and in a timely fashion to a veterinary surgeon any adverse reactions.
5. The authorised person must accept advice and instruction from the directing veterinary surgeon.
6. Authorisation to perform equine dentistry does not include authorisation to administer sedatives or tranquilisers. A separate application for authorisation to administer sedatives or tranquilisers must be made to the Board.
7. Analgesics, anti-inflammatory and antibiotic treatment following dental procedures may only be administered or dispensed by a veterinary surgeon or administered by the owner of the horse or their agent as directed by a veterinary surgeon.

Insurance

The veterinary surgeon and the authorised person are responsible for their insurance requirements and should seek professional advice on public liability insurance and professional indemnity insurance cover.

Record keeping by the Veterinary Surgeons' Board

1. The Board will provide a certificate of authorisation to the authorised person.
2. The Board will maintain a register of authorised persons and the relevant directing registered veterinary surgeons.

2 EQUINE DENTISTRY PROCEDURES

For the purpose of the administration of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1960*, the Board uses the following three categories of equine dental procedures.

Category 1

Procedures that may be performed by a person without authorisation from the Board include:

- the examination of equine teeth
- rasping using non motorised dental instruments
- removal of sharp enamel points and small dental overgrowths (less than 5mm high and involving less than half of the tooth's occlusal surface) with manual rasps
- removal of digitally (finger) loose deciduous teeth ("caps")
- removal of calculus which lies above the gum line.

Category 2

Procedures that may be performed by a person authorised by the Board under Section 26(4)(b) of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1960* include:

- extraction of digitally loose teeth, such as geriatric teeth or teeth suffering from advanced periodontal disease
- extraction of normal, fully erupted and non-displaced wolf teeth
- removal of large dental overgrowths (over 5mm tall and involving over 50% of the occlusal surface of the tooth) and overgrowths over 5mm tall of the whole occlusal surface
- techniques requiring the use of motorised dental instruments.

Category 3

Procedures that may be performed only by a registered veterinary surgeon include:

- any procedure that involves an incision other than elevation of the gum
- administration of a local or regional nerve block
- the investigation of, and where appropriate extraction of teeth loosened by trauma
- extraction of teeth that are not digitally loose, by oral extraction, repulsion, or lateral buccotomy other than normal wolf teeth as described in category 2 above
- endodontics including root canal treatment
- orthodontics
- repair of mandibular or maxillary fractures.

3 COMPETENCIES

The Board will only authorise a person to perform equine dentistry procedures if the Board is satisfied that the following competencies have been met.

General knowledge

1. Has knowledge of and competency in Category 2 procedures.
2. Has knowledge of:
 - a) basic anatomy of equines;
 - b) basic physiology of equines;
 - c) when referral to a veterinary surgeon is required;
 - d) relevant zoonoses; and
 - e) animal welfare legislation, codes and standards.

Animal Health and Welfare

1. Provides empathic care for horses undergoing dental procedures.
2. Carries out equine dentistry procedures effectively and safely so as to minimise any possible adverse impact on animals or personnel.

Record keeping

Keeps clear, accurate records of all work carried out.