



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* enables the Board to authorise 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* specifies equine dentistry to be an act of veterinary surgery for the purpose of section 26(4)(b).

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. The directing veterinary surgeon is responsible for the direction of the authorised person in relation to the activities and record keeping of an authorised person in their performance of each act of veterinary surgery they perform and are authorised to perform.
2. For the purpose of authorisation, the Board considers the meaning of “direction” to be that given in the *Poisons Regulations 1965* being that “direction” means regular and frequent supervision but does not necessarily imply continuous personal supervision.
3. For the purpose of authorisation, the Board interprets equine dentistry to mean acts of equine dentistry which fall within Category Two of the categories of equine dentistry defined by the Board. These categories are consistent with those specified by the British Equine Veterinary Association and are detailed in part two of this document.
4. Authorisation to perform equine dentistry does not include authorisation to perform any act of equine dentistry that falls within Category Three.
5. The Board will not authorise a person to perform equine dentistry unless:
 - (i) the applicant satisfies the Board that they have undertaken and passed a training course in equine dentistry approved by the Board. The course must provide training addressing the competencies listed in part three of this document
or
 - (ii) the applicant provides proof of competency and experience in each of the training requirements in item (i) by means of a disinterested party, approved by the Board in advance of the application, providing evidence that the applicant possesses the relevant knowledge and competence.
6. The Board will authorise a person only if the Board also approves the veterinary surgeon/s nominated by the person to direct that person.
7. Authorisation will be for a period no greater than one (1) year.

8. Maintenance of authorisation will rely upon the satisfactory performance of the authorised person and the directing veterinary surgeon and compliance with the conditions and restrictions set out in these guidelines.

Directing Veterinary Surgeon

1. The directing veterinary surgeon must be resident in Western Australia, complete the required form of application, and provide evidence of suitability.
2. The directing veterinary surgeon is accountable to the Board for the conduct of equine dentistry by the authorised person.
3. The directing veterinary surgeon must maintain access to the records of the authorised person in relation to:
 - (i) the date of each equine dentistry examination
 - (ii) the name and address of the owner of the horse
 - (iii) the address of the property on which the equine dentistry was performed
 - (iv) the number of horses on which equine dentistry was performed
 - (vi) any advertising by the authorised person for the provision of equine dentistry.
4. The directing veterinary surgeon is to ensure that a registered veterinary surgeon is available to attend in the event that veterinary expertise is required.
5. The directing veterinary surgeon will have their permission to direct an authorised person withdrawn if they:
 - (i) cease to be a registered veterinary surgeon
 - (ii) have conditions placed on their registration such that they are no longer eligible to be a directing veterinary surgeon
 - (iii) do not accept to continue to comply with all of the requirements of the Board's guidelines for directing veterinary surgeons.

Authorised Persons

1. Renewal of authorisation will require the authorised person to provide evidence of ongoing suitability and maintenance of competency.
2. It is the Board's expectation that an authorised person performing equine dentistry will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with that 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.
3. The Board may withdraw the authorisation of an authorised person if the Board, after due enquiry, considers the person to have acted in an inappropriate manner.
4. The Board may withdraw the authorisation of a person to carry out an act of veterinary surgery for which they are authorised if the person performs an act of veterinary surgery for which they are not authorised.
5. The authorisation of an authorised person will automatically cease if their directing veterinary surgeon:
 - (i) ceases to be a registered veterinary surgeon
 - (ii) has conditions placed on their registration such that they are no longer eligible to be a directing veterinary surgeon

- (iii) does not accept to continue to comply with all of the requirements of the Board's guidelines for directing veterinary surgeons.
6. The authorised person will maintain a record of:
- (i) the date of last supervision by the approved directing registered veterinary surgeon in the carrying out of equine dentistry
 - (ii) the date of the equine dentistry
 - (iii) the name and address of the owner of each equine
 - (iv) the address of the property on which the equine dentistry was performed
 - (v) the number of equines and where possible the names of the animals or a brief description if the animals are unnamed, on which the authorised person carried out equine dentistry
 - (vi) records of all procedures performed and any medications used.
7. A number of the procedures that may be undertaken by an authorised person will require the use of sedatives or tranquillisers which can be administered only by a veterinary surgeon or person authorised by the Board to do so under the direction of a veterinary surgeon. An applicant for authorisation for equine dentistry who wishes also to administer sedatives or tranquillisers will need to apply separately for authorisation to administer sedatives or tranquillisers.
8. In many cases, horses will require tetanus prophylaxis, analgesics, anti-inflammatory and antibiotic treatment following dental procedures. Apart from tetanus prophylaxis, these drugs can only be administered or dispensed by a veterinary surgeon or administered by the owner of the horse as directed by a veterinary surgeon.
9. Authorisation to perform equine dentistry does not exempt the authorised person from the provisions of the *Animal Welfare Act 2002*.
10. Maintenance of competency and evidence of competency by the authorised person requires the following:
- (i) satisfactory performance by the authorised person and compliance with the conditions and restrictions set out in these guidelines
 - (ii) evidence, by means of written records, of having carried out authorised acts of equine dentistry on at least fifty animals per annum
 - (iii) the accuracy of the records being certified by the directing veterinary surgeon.

In the event that an authorised person does not maintain evidence of frequent competent activity in equine dentistry, the Board may require the person to undergo further training, and may terminate the person's authorisation until the person has completed the necessary training and provided evidence of competence.

Record keeping by the Veterinary Surgeons' Board

The Board will provide a certificate of authorisation.

The Board will maintain a register of authorised persons and the relevant directing registered veterinary surgeons.

2 EQUINE DENTISTRY PROCEDURES

For the purpose of interpretation of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1960*, and for the purpose of authorisation of a person to carry out equine dentistry under the direction of a registered veterinary surgeon, the Board uses the following three categories of equine dental procedures.

Category 1

Procedures the Board interprets as not being acts of veterinary surgery and may be performed by a person without authorisation from the Board. They include:

- i) the examination of equine teeth
- ii) rasping using non motorised dental instruments
- iii) 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
- iv) removal of digitally (finger) loose deciduous teeth ("caps")
- v) removal of calculus which lies above the gum line.

Category 2

Procedures the Board interprets as being acts of veterinary surgery that may be performed by a person authorised by the Board under Section 26(4)(b) of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1960*. They include:

- i) extraction of digitally loose teeth, including deciduous teeth and teeth suffering from advanced periodontal disease, and excluding teeth which have been loosened by trauma and require investigation by a veterinary surgeon before being extracted
- ii) extraction of normal, fully erupted and non-displaced wolf teeth
- iii) 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
- iv) techniques requiring the use of motorised dental instruments.

Category 3

Procedures the Board interprets to be acts of veterinary surgery to be performed only by a registered veterinary surgeon. They include:

- i) any procedure that involves an incision other than elevation of the gum for the purpose of intra-oral extraction of teeth under veterinary supervision;
- ii) extraction of teeth by repulsion, or lateral buccotomy
- iii) endodontics including root canal treatment
- iv) orthodontics including bracing parrot mouth
- v) repair of mandibular 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

Has knowledge of:

1. and competency in Category 2 procedures
2. basic anatomy of equines
3. basic physiology of equines
4. when referral to a veterinary surgeon is required
5. relevant zoonoses
6. recording and reporting systems used in keeping clinical records.

Occupational Health and Safety

1. Has knowledge of and applies Occupational Health and Safety principles and procedures such that all working routines for animals are carried out in line with the provisions of the relevant Occupational Health and Safety legislation.
2. Eliminates or minimises Occupational Health and Safety risk by means of:
 - (a) relevant occupational health and safety hazards identification, risk assessment and risk control measures
 - (b) safe operating procedures
 - (c) safe manual handling systems and procedures
 - (d) safe systems and procedures for outdoor work, including protection from solar radiation
 - (e) selection, use and maintenance of relevant personal protective equipment.

Animal Health and Welfare

1. Provides empathic care for animals during husbandry operations.
2. Reports clearly, accurately and in a timely fashion on the health and welfare of the animals.
3. Accepts advice and instruction.
4. Works effectively and safely to accurately carry out equine dentistry procedures with nil damage to animals or personnel.
5. Complies with all relevant animal welfare legislation, codes and standards.

Record keeping

Keeps clear, accurate records of all work carried out.