

VETERINARY SURGEONS REGISTRATION ORDINANCE (Chapter 529)

ORDER MADE BY AN INQUIRY COMMITTEE OF
THE VETERINARY SURGEONS BOARD OF HONG KONG

It is hereby notified that on 10 June 2016 an inquiry committee of the Veterinary Surgeons Board of Hong Kong (the 'Board'), after due inquiry in accordance with section 18 of the Veterinary Surgeons Registration Ordinance, Chapter 529 of the Laws of Hong Kong (the 'Ordinance'), found Dr. GORDON Robert William ('Dr. GORDON') (Registration No.: R000499) guilty of misconduct or neglect in a professional respect in that (a) during the period from about 11 August 2010 to 13 August 2010, when the complainant's dog was under Dr. GORDON's treatment and care, he failed to adopt a sufficient and/or adequate diagnostic approach, in that he failed to take sufficient or adequate notice of the then hypercalcaemic state of the dog; and (b) during the same period, Dr. GORDON provided to the said dog inadequate and/or inappropriate treatment.

Pursuant to section 19 of the Ordinance, the inquiry committee ordered on 10 June 2016 that: (1) Dr. GORDON shall complete 10 hours of continuing professional development ('CPD') within 1 year of the date of this order in the field of internal medicine in courses approved by the Board in advance with such CPD not to count towards any CPD recognition or requirement scheme administered by the Board; and (2) in the event that Dr. GORDON fails to complete the CPD as ordered, the Secretary shall remove his name from the register and not restore it until such time as he has done so and successfully applied for restoration of his name to the register under section 21(3) of the Veterinary Surgeons Registration Ordinance (Chapter 529).

Particulars of the Matter to Which the Order Relates

The inquiry committee agreed with the opinion of the expert witness that Dr. GORDON should have validated the hypercalcaemia result by repeating the lab work. In his defence, Dr. GORDON said that due to the signalment of the dog concerned, general prevalence in his clinic of foreign body cases and the history taken on 8 August 2010 he was misled to believe that the dog was likely to be suffering from an abdominal obstruction. While the inquiry committee understood Dr. GORDON's thought process, given the severe consequences of hypercalcaemia as shown on the results, the appropriate diagnostic approach was to validate the abnormality. The inquiry committee considered that Dr. GORDON's failure to do so was a falling short of the standard expected of a general practitioner in Hong Kong at the material time. The inquiry committee also considered Dr. GORDON should not have performed the surgery before validating the hypercalcaemia result given the morbidity and mortality risk posed by the administration of the general anaesthesia and the lack of positive evidence of an obstruction in the x-rays he took. In addition, Dr. GORDON should have considered other non-invasive diagnostic modalities. The inquiry committee considered Dr. GORDON's performance of the laparotomy in the circumstances of this case was also a falling short of the standard expected of a general practitioner in Hong Kong at the material time.

CHING Pak-chung *Chairman, the Veterinary Surgeons Board of Hong Kong*