MINI CONGRESS

21 JUNE 2016
INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE
THE ROLE OF COUNCIL

The SAVC

Is a regulatory body mandated by the Minister of Agriculture under the VETERINARY AND PARA-VETERINARY PROFESSIONS ACT, 1982 (ACT NO. 19 OF 1982)

Regulates the profession to the benefit of the profession, the animals and the public at large

Are entrusted with ensuring compliance by members of other statutory requirements and facilitating interdepartmental harmony

Monitors educational standards, registrations and authorisation as well as facility standards
THE ROLE OF COUNCIL

The SAVC

- Is regulated by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF)
- Co regulated by the Department of Health (Medicines) to the extent that our access to medicines and the dispensing thereof is prescribed in Act 101/1965
- Self-regulation - the privilege could be taken away

Being a regulatory body the SAVC has to take its function seriously; its decisions affect the whole country, dealing with the safety and security of the food of the nation as well as the health of the national herd which has a large impact on the economy as a whole.
THE ROLE OF COUNCIL

Council
Consists of members elected by fellow colleagues
As well as those nominated by the Minister

Council strives to maintain a high standard of education, compassion, professionalism and service delivery

The recently reviewed Rules and Regulations evolved from extensive discussion and input from all spheres of the profession enabling us to better attend to the interests of the profession, the animals we treat and the public we serve.
INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE: STATISTICS

The Investigation Committee consists of:

Member of Council as Chairperson

Four (4) members of the profession from different spheres of veterinary practice, including where possible, a State veterinarian

And is assisted by:

Two legal ‘in house’ advisors (Director and deputy director of legal affairs)

1 Councillor always invited as an observer

Registrar
INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE: STATISTICS

Investigation Committee evaluates matters holistically, thoroughly, and as fairly as possible

- Every aspect of the matter is taken into account and this is where **good record keeping** is crucial

- Out of 41 new complaints received in the 2015/2016 financial year only 11 were referred to the Inquiry Body for Inquiries

- 20 of the 41 matters were dismissed outright and 3 were referred for mediation

- The remaining 7 complaints were referred to courts of law
COURTS OF LAW

These are matters that involve inspections from other bodies:

- Medicines Regulatory Authority for failure to keep a register for schedule 5 and 6 medicines
- The NSPCA, allegations of cruelty to animals
- South African Pharmacy Council-correct storage of Act 101 medicines, dispensing and compounding

In terms of the new rules it is unprofessional conduct not to comply with other statutory regulations that affect the veterinary profession
COMPLAINTS DISMISSED

- Frivolous complaints - no jurisdiction such as fees charged, labour issues, advertising, malicious clients
- Due to misunderstandings and/or miscommunication between the veterinarians and their clients
- No evidence of unprofessional conduct

Council has a legal duty, as a self-regulatory body to deal with all complaints by the public, at no cost to the public
COMPLAINTS DISMISSED

- Versions of both parties are heard and considered
- If the IC cannot find any grounds to substantiate the complaint, it is dismissed

A complaint cannot be dismissed out of hand by the administration, but the administration will firstly strongly advocate the complainant talking to the veterinarian, where after they will try to explain the rules and often prevent a complaint being filed against the veterinarian

THE GOLDEN RULE: WHAT WOULD THE REASONABLE VET HAVE DONE IN THE SAME CIRCUMSTANCES?
WHAT DOES THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS ENTAIL?

Mediation:

• Sometimes complaints involving two professionals are received.

• In the interest of the profession, mediation is strongly advocated when there is evidence at face value of **unprofessional conduct**, but there is hope that mediation might resolve the matter amicably.
SHOULD A MATTER BE REFERRED FOR AN INQUIRY?

When a complaint cannot be mediated, Council has to abide by its mandate and protect the interests of the patient, the public, and our clients against the harmful acts of colleagues, i.e:

- **Fraud**: Veterinarians signing scripts for clients where there is no doctor-patient relationship; charging for tests/procedures not done

- **Failure to personally administer schedule 5 or 6 medicines**, we are at risk losing the privilege of regulating the use of our medicines. Allegations, supported by evidence on abuse of medicines, will be referred to an inquiry
SHOULD A MATTER BE REFERRED FOR AN INQUIRY?

• **Keeping of records**, both clinical and the register of schedule 5 and 6 medicines

• **Unregistered facilities and facilities that do not meet the minimum standards** for the kind of facility registered for
SHOULD A MATTER BE REFERRED FOR AN INQUIRY?

- Failure to provide post-operative care to the patient, negligence and non-communication with the client
WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK!

The administrative staff and councillors are always available to assist and attempt to answer any of the questions you might have, as well as to help with the transition from the old rules to the new
THANK YOU

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