

Fall Bulletin

State of Nevada Board of Veterinary Medicine



Fractious Encounters

Maintain Patient Care While Protecting and Empowering the Veterinary Team

As dedicated veterinary professionals, we know that you are committed to providing exceptional care to animals and their owners. However, it's important to recognize that the demanding nature of veterinary care can sometimes be exacerbated by threats of violence, physical intimidation, among others. When confronted with any form of violence either from clients or co-workers, it is crucial that the whole team is able to tackle the topic of workplace violence head-on, as it affects individual well-being and quality of care of patients.

The Impact of Daily Stress on Staff Morale

Daily stressors can weigh heavily on the morale of your entire staff, from front desk personnel to client service representatives and technicians. The intersection of customer service and healthcare creates a unique environment where emotions can run high. A recent Clinicians' Brief survey revealed alarming statistics: 71% of veterinary professionals reported receiving threats of violence at work, and 15% reported experiencing violent encounters.

Protecting Staff and Practices

Often the first, last, and most frequent point of contact, front office staff may be particularly vulnerable to the full spectrum of violent behaviors. Health care workers, including veterinary professionals, are disproportionately affected by workplace violence, with over 30% of nurses reporting an increase in such incidents.

To protect the veterinary team, it is imperative that management fosters a culture of support. Preparing policies for staff on how to fire a client or refuse service when a client is threatening or being violent is a concrete step management can take in advance to protect staff. Management should also provide avenues for staff to voice their concerns without fear of retaliation. Staff members should feel supported and know that there is no place for violence in veterinary hospitals.

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Understand the 'Spectrum of Violence'

In a study featured in the FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, researchers identified four types of violent offenders

1. A client or a relative of a client receiving services from the workplace.
2. A current or former employee directing aggression towards coworkers or supervisors.
3. An individual outside the workplace with a personal relationship with an employee.
4. A person with no connection to the victim or workplace, usually motivated by robbery or other criminal intent.



Brush Up on Informed Consent

John Crumley, DVM Investigator

The importance of reaffirming client consent during dental procedures and beyond



Good communication is the bedrock of any good relationship. Ensuring proper *ongoing* communication with clients is fundamental to providing good veterinary care. One example of ensuring good communication that we can look at today (and just so happens to be a common source of complaints to the Board) is informed consent during dental procedures.

Why are dental procedures such a common source of complaints to the Board?

In cases where a patient is under anesthesia and a client has consented to a 'dental' it is very common to discover much more than what was found during the initial physical exam. Whenever a component of a procedure changes or requires additional procedures or work, it is essential to promptly communicate with the client. From extractions to the discovery of an oral mass, explain the situation, the potential risks, and the revised treatment plan to the client to ensure that they are properly informed and able to consent to additional treatment. This step is not only a required component of responsible veterinary practice, but also builds trust and ensures a client isn't shocked by additional treatments, costs, and learning that they weren't consulted about their pet's care.

Addressing Client Dissatisfaction

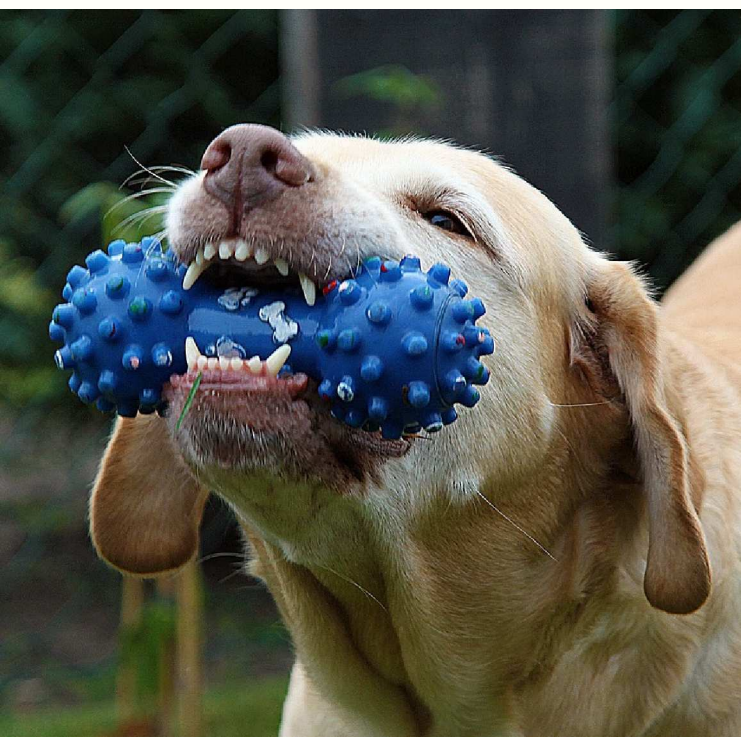
Complaints from clients often arise when we fail to re-establish informed consent during dental procedures. By proactively addressing this issue and obtaining reaffirmed consent, we can avoid misunderstandings and maintain positive relationships with our clients.

Reaffirming Consent: The Key to Transparency

It is vital to remember that informed consent is an ongoing process, and it must be reaffirmed if conditions change during the course of treatment. This includes instances where we discover a previously unknown condition that could complicate the procedure, encounter complications during anesthesia, or find that more teeth need to be extracted than initially expected. If any unexpected dental issues arise during the procedure, promptly communicate with the client, explain the situation, and obtain reaffirmed consent before proceeding.

The Short Version

1. Thoroughly inform clients about the dental procedure, potential risks, and estimated costs.
2. Document all conversations and consent obtained during the initial consultation.
3. Reaffirm consent promptly if additional extractions are needed.
4. Document any modifications to the treatment plan and the client's consent for these changes.
5. Not just for dentistry. Any time a procedure increases in risk, increases in cost, or if a new procedure may be required- communicate with the client and get their consent.



'Encounters' on page 1 continued

An Ounce of Prevention...

- Proactive safeguards ensure better mental well-being and protections against possible instances of violence.
- Consider implementing practical measures to enhance safety in your practice.
- Limiting access to the reception area with a locked door and/or glass partition can provide an extra layer of security.
- Identifying easy exits for all team members and clearing paths for emergency exits ensures a swift response in critical situations.
- Installing panic buttons in waiting and examination rooms empowers team members to call for help instantly.
- Locking rooms where veterinarians are practicing adds an extra layer of security during patient interactions.
- Providing team members with cell phones equipped with 911 on speed dial ensures they have a direct line to emergency services.
- Lighting plays a crucial role in maintaining a secure environment.
- Ensuring good waiting room lighting to create a welcoming atmosphere while enhancing visibility.
- Installing security cameras that connect to a laptop, allowing you to monitor clients in waiting and examination rooms.
- Establishing a code word that team members can use to alert colleagues to call the police in case of an emergency which can streamline communication and response during critical situations.

Empowerment through Education and Resources

The following resources help prepare and manage violent situations:

- The American Veterinary Medical Association offers guidance on handling workplace violence (<https://www.avma.org/javma-news/2018-09-15/when-domestic-violence-arrives-clinic-door>).
- ASIS International provides disaster preparedness and crisis management plans. The Department of Homeland Security's advice on responding to active shooters can prove invaluable in emergency situations.
- Consulting services like Eugene A. Rugala and Associates, LLC offer specialized training in workplace violence prevention, arming us with the knowledge to prevent and manage violent incidents effectively.
- FBI (<https://www.fbi.gov/>), provides crime prevention information and services.
- National Crime Prevention Council (<https://www.ncpc.org/>) offers training in securing practices against violence using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- Support for violence victims and other members of the practice team is often needed after a traumatic incident. There are many resources in Nevada that aid victims of violence and other practice team members who may require counseling or therapy (<https://medboard.nv.gov/Licensees/Assistance-Programs/>).
- Vets4Vets was founded by a Tahoe Veterinarian and provides supportive service nationwide (<https://vinfoundation.org/resources/vets4vets/>)

United Against Violence

We share a responsibility to foster an environment where compassion, safety, and professionalism thrive. By taking proactive measures and leveraging available resources, we can collectively mitigate the risks associated with workplace violence and ensure that practices remain spaces of healing- not harm.

What is the Board Doing to Help?

The Board is currently looking at updating regulations to clarify what are/are not the obligations of veterinary professionals when clients are exhibiting threatening or violent behavior-specifically, how staff can discharge a client when violence is occurring or being threatened.

Look for updates regarding new language in future bulletins.

Team Training Opportunities

Workplace Violence Safety for Veterinarians and Vet Techs

<https://certifiedsafetytraining.org/blogs/news/workplace-violence-safety-for-vets-and-vet-techs>

OSHA Training for Veterinarians and Animal Care Services (includes workplace violence prevention):

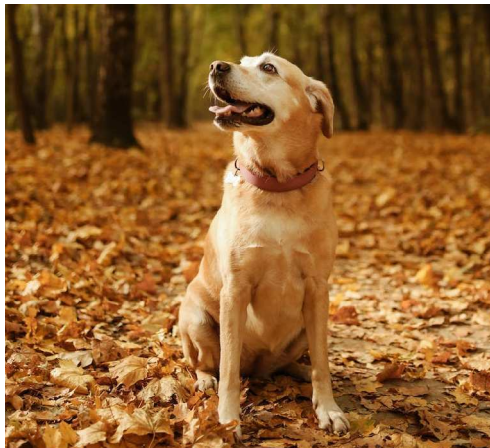
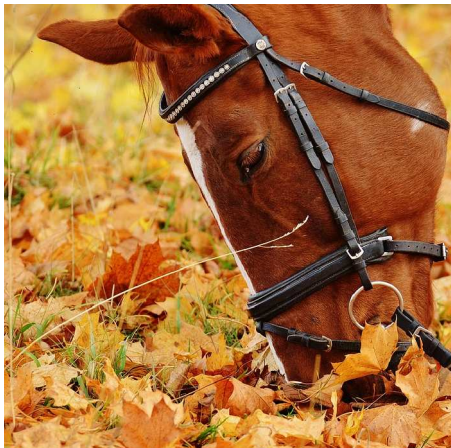
<https://www.oshamanual.com/online-cal-osh-training-for-veterinarians.html>

Beyond De-Escalation: <https://www.vetmedteam.com/class.aspx?ci=962>

Effective Use of De-Escalation Procedures:

<https://reliasacademy.com/rls/store/browse/productDetailSingleSku.jsp?productId=c965131>

News and Updates



Board Regulation Workshop

The Board will be holding a regulation workshop to solicit comment from the public and licensees on October 12 in Las Vegas at its quarterly Board meeting. A copy of the proposed regulations will be sent out no later than 9/28/2023, so make sure your email is up to date in your licensee portal [here](#)

What's New

Check out the most recent regulatory changes [here](#)

Changes Include:

- Added approved types of CE
- Updated abandoned animal protocols
- VTIT/LVT Education Requirements
- and more!

Anatomy of a Complaint is Back!

Anatomy of a Complaint is relaunching with new content and a new look.

Dr. John Crumley will be sharing his insights on the investigative process and answering your questions!

The event will be held in Reno at TMCC on September 21st at 6:30pm.

Sign up [here](#). Space is limited

Upcoming Board Meetings

- October 12, 2023 (Las Vegas)
- January 18th, 2024 (Reno)
- April 18, 2024 (Las Vegas)
- July 18, 2024 (Reno)
- October 17, 2024 (Las Vegas)

Renewals Are Done!

Your license is good for another 2 years. Now what?

Your next renewal will be between April 15 and June 30, 2025)

You can earn CE over the next 2 years. (7/1/2023-6/30/2025)

Your CE hours have doubled.

40 hours DVMs, 20 hours for LVTs, 30 hours for AC, 10 for APT.

At least half of your hours must be done in-person.

[Check here for a list of approved sources for CE](#)



Did You Know?

It is common for emails from the Board to go to your spam folder.

Be sure to check your spam folder for emails from the Board, especially when you are resetting your password in your portal!

