



MEMORANDUM

DATE	April 3, 2023
TO	Veterinary Medical Board (Board)
FROM	Jeffrey Olguin, Lead Administrative & Policy Analyst
SUBJECT	Agenda Item 16.D. Outreach

2023 International Council for Veterinary Assessment (ICVA) Assessment Development Committee (ADC) Nominations

In February 2023, the Board distributed information to its licensees and stakeholders regarding the [2023 ICVA ADC Nominations](#). The ICVA’s ADC are appointed by the ICVA Board of Directors to a three-year term and may serve up to three terms.

The ADC is responsible for the main content areas of the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE). The NAVLE is a requirement for licensure to practice veterinary medicine in all licensing jurisdictions in the US and Canada. It consists of 360 entry-level, clinically-relevant, multiple choice questions. Examination materials for the NAVLE are prepared by committees composed of subject matter experts with recognized prominence in their fields. Committee members are selected to provide broad representation from across the world, and from academic, practice, species groups, and licensing communities. Committee members typically participate in up to three, two-day meetings per year, with travel costs and related expenses covered by the ICVA.

The ICVA sought nominations for four positions. Each position had to have a background in one of the following categories: bovine (diary), exotic companion animal, poultry, and small ruminant. The ICVA will be contacting the nominees, and selected individuals will begin their terms in June 2023.

RVT Education Program Stakeholder Meeting

On March 14, 2023, the Board held an RVT Education Program Stakeholder Meeting, in which nearly 60 participants were invited to hear about the MDC subcommittee’s proposal to remove the Board from approving California schools.

Attendees were provided with background information about the Board’s approval process, which requires all California schools to be Board approved. They were also informed that according to the Board’s records, the only school to apply and be approved was San Diego Mesa College back in 1995.

As a result of the presentation, attendees were notified that there are three entities that oversee RVT programs in California. These entities include the Committee on Veterinary Technician Education & Activities (CVTEA), Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE), and the Accrediting Commission for Community & Junior Colleges.

Participants were advised that the subcommittee was considering recommending to the Board that it remove itself from the approval of California schools as the previously mentioned entities already have processes in place to monitor and audit schools for compliance. Overwhelmingly, the subcommittee received support of the recommendation from the audience.

Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System (CURES) Fee Decrease

In March 2023, the Board distributed information to its licensees and stakeholders regarding that the Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System (CURES) fee will decrease from \$11 to \$9 annually for licenses expiring on and after July 1, 2023. The fee is assessed at the time of license renewal on licensees that prescribe, order, administer, or furnish Schedule II, Schedule III, Schedule IV, or Schedule V controlled substances.

Most licensees will see an \$18 CURES fee due to the biennial renewal cycle. The fee covers the reasonable regulatory costs of the Department of Justice (DOJ) for operating and maintaining CURES, a critical element in the state's effort to address the growing danger of opioid addiction stemming from prescription drug abuse.

Veterinary Shortage Designations: Veterinary Medical Loan Repayment Program and Veterinary Services Grant Program

In March 2023, the Board distributed information to its licensees and stakeholders regarding the US Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) the Veterinary Medical Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP). The VMLRP aims to help alleviate veterinary service shortages throughout California and the US by offering student loan debt relief for mixed and large animal veterinarians.

The VMLRP helps qualified veterinarians offset a portion of the student debt incurred in pursuit of their veterinary medicine degrees (up to \$25,000/year) in return for three years of service in specified high-priority veterinary shortage situations. The deadline for submission of the complete application for the VMLRP was April 17, 2023.

In addition to the VMLRP, an additional funding program, the Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP), works hand-in-hand with the VMLRP in providing support funds for practices needing help, but without the limitation of solely funding educational loans.

The purpose of the VSGP is to relieve veterinarian shortage situations and support veterinary services. The two types of grants for VASGP include: Education, Extension, and Training (EET) and Rural Practice Enhancement (RPE). The EET grants help qualified entities to develop, implement, and sustain veterinary services through

education, training, recruitment, placement, and retention of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and students of veterinary medicine and veterinary technology. The Rural Practice Enhancement (RPE) grants help to establish or expand veterinary practices in rural areas. The deadline for the complete application for the VSGP was March 29, 2023.

Information About the Drug Xylazine

In March 2023, the Board distributed information to its licensees and stakeholders regarding the sedative xylazine. Xylazine is approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for veterinary use, but it is not safe for use in humans, and according to the [Drug Enforcement Administration](#), it has been increasingly found “amongst heroin, fentanyl, and cocaine abusers as xylazine is often used as an adulterant with illicit substances.” The FDA reports that the drug is dangerous to humans because it can depress breathing, blood pressure, heart rate, and body temperature to critical levels, and people who inject drugs containing xylazine can develop severe skin wounds and patches of dead and rotting tissue that easily become infected and, if left untreated, may lead to amputation.

Consequently, on February 28, 2023, the FDA issued an [import alert](#) authorizing its field agents to detain and refuse admission into the US of imported shipments of xylazine that did not present sufficient evidence of legitimate veterinary use.

In light of the increasing public health threat presented by the diversion of xylazine, licensees were reminded that it is unlawful to divert xylazine for non-veterinary purposes. Improper prescribing, dispensing, or furnishing of dangerous drugs such as xylazine is unprofessional conduct and may subject a licensee to discipline, including revocation of license. Also, licensees were informed they must maintain accurate drug records, which the Board will review for evidence of improper drug diversion in the normal course of an inspection.

Association Meetings

The Board’s Executive Officer (EO) and Licensing/Administration Manager continue to hold monthly meetings with representatives from the California Registered Veterinary Technicians Association (CaRVTA) to provide updates, answer questions, and address any of their concerns.

The Board’s President and EO attended the California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) Board of Governors (BOG) meeting on Saturday, March 25. During the meeting, the Board’s President and EO provided program updates and an overview of items the Board will discuss at its April meeting.

Recruitment and Instructional Videos

On April 26, 2023, Board staff is meeting with DCA’s Public Affairs team to discuss creating recruitment videos for subject matter experts and inspectors. These videos will include testimonials from experts and inspectors as to why they serve in these crucial roles.

In addition, a video will be created to walk through the inspection process, so licensees and office personnel know what to expect when being inspected.

Further, instructional videos will be created to walk applicants through each application and walk complainants through filing an online complaint and the complaint process itself.