



**VETERINARY MEDICAL BOARD  
MULTIDISCIPLINARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 18, 2022**

In accordance with [Government Code section 11133](#), the Multidisciplinary Advisory Committee (Committee) of the Veterinary Medical Board (Board) met via teleconference/WebEx Events with no physical public locations on **Tuesday, January 18, 2022.**

**1:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 18, 2022**

**Webcast Link:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TcVrJhK278k>

**1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Establishment of a Quorum**

*Webcast:* [00:00:15](#)

Committee Chair, Richard Sullivan, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Board Executive Officer, Jessica Siefertman, called roll; eight members of the Committee were present, and a quorum was established.

**Members Present**

Richard Sullivan, DVM, Chair  
Leah Shufelt, Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT), Vice-Chair  
Christina Bradbury, DVM, Board Liaison  
Kevin Lazarcheff, DVM  
Jennifer Loreda, RVT, Board Liaison  
Jamie Peyton, DVM  
Maria Salazar Sperber, Juris Doctor (JD) (arrived at 1:04 p.m.)  
Dianne Sequoia, DVM  
Marie Ussery, RVT

**Staff Present**

Jessica Siefertman, Executive Officer  
Timothy Rodda, Administration/Licensing Manager  
Patty Rodriguez, Hospital Inspection Program Manager  
Rob Stephanopoulos, Enforcement Manager  
Amber Kruse, Enforcement Analyst  
Jeffrey Olguin, Lead Administrative & Policy Analyst  
Tara Welch, Board Counsel, Attorney III,  
Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), Legal Affairs Division

## Guests Present

Jason Alley, Enforcement Chief (A), Compliance, Discipline, and Closed School Units, California Bureau for Private Postsecondary (BPPE)  
Dan Baxter, California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA)  
Karen Borja, Manager, Complaint Investigations Unit, BPPE  
Kathy Bowler, Board Vice President  
Michelle Cave, Public Information Officer, DCA, Office of Public Affairs (OPA)  
Nancy Ehrlich, RVT,  
California Registered Veterinary Technicians Association (CaRVTA)  
Anita Levy Hudson, RVT, CaRVTA  
Aubrey Jacobsen, Legislative Analyst, DCA, Division of Legislative Affairs  
Brandy Kuentzel, General Counsel,  
San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals  
Laura Lien, CVT, VTS (LAIM), MS, American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Assistant Director  
Bonnie Lutz, Esq., Klinedinst  
Brianna Miller, Manager, DCA, Board and Bureau Relations  
Grant Miller, DVM, CVMA  
Joanna Murray, Senior Education Specialist, Quality Education Unit, BPPE  
John Pascoe, University of California (UC), Davis  
Trisha Saint Claire, Moderator, DCA, SOLID  
Mike Sanchez, Television Specialist, DCA, OPA  
Rachel Valentine, RVT, BS; AVMA Assistant Director, Committee on Veterinary Education & Activities  
Kristy Veltri, RVT

## **2. Committee Chair's Remarks and Committee Member Comments**

*Webcast:* [00:02:09](#)

Dr. Sullivan welcomed everyone to the first MDC meeting of 2022 and thanked Kristi Pawlowski, RVT, for her many years of service to the MDC both as a public member and a member of the Board. He also welcomed new Committee member Marie Ussery. He also congratulated Ms. Shufelt for her appointment as vice-chair.

## **3. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda**

*Webcast:* [00:03:44](#)

There were no public comments made on this item.

## **4. Review and Approval of October 20, 2021 Committee Meeting Minutes**

*Webcast:* [00:04:52](#)

Dr. Sullivan asked the Committee if there were any corrections, additions, or comments on the minutes and to make a motion. Dr. Sequoia commented at how helpful it was to have the time next to each item of the webcast.

- [Motion](#): Dr. Bradbury moved and Ms. Shufelt seconded the motion to approve the October 20, 2021 meeting minutes.
- [Vote](#): The motion carried 9-0.

There were no public comments made on this motion.

## 5. Discussion Regarding Board Approval of RVT Colleges and Postsecondary Institutions

Webcast: [00:08:03](#)

Ms. Sieferman provided background information and updates regarding the RVT colleges and postsecondary institutions, including staff recommendations when she first arrived at the Board to duplicate the process of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) process for the alternate route program, but charge the institutions a lower price than the AVMA. She advised the Committee that the Board does not currently have the staff or resources to fully develop the program, and she advised that the Board consider other entities—Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE) and AVMA—that provide the oversight to the program.

Ms. Sieferman informed the Committee that the Board has requested for the Committee to look at this issue to see if it necessary for the Board to be involved in this process or to allow to consider the BPPE or AVMA as alternative options.

There were no public comments made on this item.

## 6. Presentation Regarding the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE) Oversight of RVT Colleges and Postsecondary Institutions—*BPPE Representatives*

Webcast: [00:13:06](#)

Ms. Sieferman provided information to the Committee that even if the Board approved institutions, the institutions would be required to be approved by the BPPE. Joanna Murray, Senior Education Specialist in the Quality Education Unit of the BPPE provided an overview of the process for institutions to become recognized by the BPPE. Ms. Murray informed the Committee of the process differences between program reviews, including institutions and accrediting entities, such as the AVMA, recognized by the US Department of Education verses the alternative route. The alternative route includes standard minimums, which includes three (3) years of work experience and appropriate credentials.

[Jason Alley](#), acting Enforcement Chief over the Compliance, Discipline, and Closed School Units of the BPPE, provided information about the inspection process, the school's compliance with the minimum standards of their approval with the BPPE.

[Karen Borja](#), one of the managers in the Complaint Investigations Unit of the BPPE, provided information about the complaint process from its initialization from the

public, to the investigative and relay of information to applicable external entities, and the inspection of an institution.

[Dr. Bradbury](#) inquired to how many complaints does BPPE receive on average and the average cycle time to completing an investigation. Ms. Borja responded that the time varies based on when the BPPE receives a response from the school or students. Ms. Borja indicated that BPPE receives, on average, 15–20 cases per week from all schools under the BPPE.

[Dr. Bradbury](#) asked if the BPPE staff evaluated the pass rates when evaluating programs. Ms. Murray responded that the BPPE requires institutions to provide: completion rates, 150% completion rates, examination pass rates, placement rates, and, if available, range of salary [post-graduation] or if the former student is working fulltime. Ms. Murray also indicated that the BPPE does not have a specific pass rate percentage and that some schools may have a low pass rate but still be in compliance. However, Ms. Murray indicated that the school will be under observation from the BPPE.

[Dr. Lazarcheff](#) asked about the average approval time and the approval costs. Ms. Murray responded that the initial application is \$5,000, renewal application is \$3,500, and adding a new program is \$500. The average time to add a new program is approximately 6 months. Ms. Murray indicated that opening a new school typically takes between 6 to 18 months but may take longer depending on how fast the institution is at submitting documentation.

[Dr. Sullivan](#) asked if the Committee is able to find a list of RVT schools on the BPPE website. Ms. Murray responded the BPPE offers a list on its website. Ms. Siefertman added that the BPPE team has been a valuable resource and the willingness to assist the Board for the best outcome.

There were no public comments made on this item.

## **7. Presentation Regarding the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Oversight of RVT Colleges and Postsecondary Institutions—AVMA Representatives**

*Webcast:* [00:34:21](#)

Ms. Siefertman advised that the members that the institutions, even if AVMA accredited, must be approved by the Board, submit an application to the Board, and are subject to inspection.

[Rachel Valentine](#) and Laura Lien, AVMA Assistant Directors on the Committee on Veterinary Education & Activities (CVTEA) provided information about the semi-autonomy of the CVTEA with the AVMA and a basic overview the accreditation processes and 5–6 year cycle times. Ms. Valentine provided a review of the programmatic accreditation where the CVTEA performs a comprehensive review of the veterinary programs to ensure students and graduates have been provided the proper education to meet the standards of entering the profession.

[Laura Lien](#) provided information about the CVTEA standards, an overview of the accreditation cycle, and the types of accreditation (initial, full, or probationary), and the reports generated for accreditation reviews.

[Doctors Sullivan](#) and Bradbury thanked the CVTEA and the BPPE for the overview material of the aspects of the accreditation process is for each entity. Dr. Bradbury inquired to how the CVTEA handles schools that have consistently low pass rates or graduation rates and how that affects accreditation. Ms. Valentine responded that CVTEA implemented a new standard that requires programs to have meet a 50% pass rate within a three-year period of time. Programs that do not meet this standard are placed on a probationary accreditation and have two years to address the concern, and with good cause, the CVTEA can grant an additional year of accreditation.

[Ms. Sieferman](#) asked if the CVTEA to provide costs associated with the accreditation and also the overview of the complaint, inspection, and enforcement processes. Ms. Valentine stated the application fee is \$3,000, which includes the costs of a site visit. The annual fee is around \$1,800. She also informed the Committee of the complaint process and the process for a program to respond to a letter of investigation, and the program has 30 days to respond and provide documentation. Based on the response, the CVTEA may request additional information, change the programs accreditation status, or a focus site visit between cycles. She also indicated it could take up to 6 months for the CVTEA to take action on an accreditation status. Ms. Sieferman informed the Committee of the costs between the BPPE, CVTEA, and the authority of the Board to charge \$300 for accreditation.

There were no public comments made on this item.

**8. Update from Complaint Process Audit Subcommittee—*Christina Bradbury, DVM and Kevin Lazarcheff, DVM***

Webcast: [01:02:23](#)

Dr. Sullivan informed the Committee that at the request of Dr. Lazarcheff and his work constraints, he will be the replacement for Dr. Lazarcheff as a member of the Complaint Process Audit Subcommittee.

Dr. Bradbury thanked Dr. Lazarcheff for his contributions to the Subcommittee. She informed the Committee about updates to expert witnesses training, including creating common reference material, how to research and reference data for cases, and informed that the complaint review process is on hold until the cases are caught up with the changes that have been implemented. She recommended a collaboration between the textbooks used by the two California veterinary schools and licensed Board members in order to create a comprehensive list of reference materials.

[Dr. Sullivan](#) noted that he utilizes the Veterinary Information Network (VIN) for reference material as it is easy to access with multiple views, referenced by

specialists, and are up-to-date. He also indicated that on occasion, he will also reference a textbook as not all information is available on VIN.

[Dr. Bradbury](#) noted that the information on VIN may be variable and she recommended going with material that is irrefutable, published, or peer-reviewed.

[Dr. Peyton](#) commented that VIN and Google Scholar are helpful as search engines for finding journals. She also commented that textbooks take two years to be published and that access to journals might be best.

[Dr. Sullivan](#) noted that he would reference to VIN that he would look at the author in order to determine if they were boarded in order to consider their commentary. He also indicated that VIN had recent information that is not in the textbooks. He also indicated that some of emphasis on the licensee who is subject to disciplinary action to provide information as to why they followed a particular process.

[Dr. Bradbury](#) agreed with Dr. Sullivan's recommendation. However, she indicated that there may be conflicts when experts do not have reference material to back their opinion on the standard of care. She advised that without reference material that a court case may rely on how well a side can convince a judge of their viewpoint on a process.

[Dr. Lazarcheff](#) noted that the reference materials should provide the most basic and universally accepted minimum standard of care at the time. He also referenced that the information does not necessarily just this year's journal articles on a subject.

[Ms. Sieferman](#) reiterated that the burden of proof is on the Board to provide clear and convincing evidence that the individual did not follow the standard of care.

The Committee received public comment on this item.

[Dr. Grant Miller](#), CVMA, thanked the Committee on the report, and he agreed with Dr. Lazarcheff's comments. Dr. Miller expressed the need of the Board to follow the minimum standard of care versus the gold standard of care; he referenced [California Code of Regulations \(CCR\) section 2032](#). He stated that what is written in literature is rarely consistent with current medical practice in this state and that literature may contain conflicting items or advanced ideas that are not necessarily the standard of practice. Dr. Miller supported the use of VIN, and he stated that it is a reflection of conversations of the individuals on the front lines performing the work and what prevails in the real world. He disagreed that the Committee should compile a library of defensible documents but that the Committee should be looking for a minimum standard and auditing the VMB cases to determine whether or not there were issues in determining that minimum standard. Dr. Miller claimed the Board is pushing towards a gold standard, which is resulting in an unattainable standard for individuals in this state, causing individuals to leave the profession, be in despair, and contributing to the suicide rate in the profession.

[Dr. Miller](#) referenced [Business and Professions Code \(BPC\) section 4875.3](#) in relation to Dr. Bradbury's comment on what she would like to see in an expert. He



referenced a section of BPC section 4875.3(b), which indicates that a veterinarian who reviews and investigates an alleged violation shall be licensed in or employed by the state either full time or part time and shall not have been out of practice for more than four years. He stated that he believes that the current experts do not meet this requirement.

[Dr. Bradbury](#) thanked Dr. Miller for his comments and reference to BPC section 4875.3. She stated that the Committee is still reviewing the criteria and that her idea of a reference book is to protect veterinarians, that expert opinions are fair, and where those expert opinions are coming from.

[Bonnie Lutz, Esq.](#) thanked Ms. Sieferman on her comments that it is on the burden of proof is on the Board. She commented on that the standard of practice changes over time and that textbooks do not keep up with the changes. She recommended hiring experts that are in the same field as the case they are overseeing—generalists overseeing generalist standards of care, boarded individual overseeing boarded standards of care. She also supports the use of VIN.

## 9. Future Agenda Items and Meeting Dates

- **April 19, 2022**
- **July 19, 2022**
- **October 18, 2022**

*Webcast:* [01:36:34](#)

Dr. Sullivan asked for the Board to consider a request to charge the MDC with developing educational material for licensees on how to comply with drug compounding ([CCR sections 2090–2095](#)).

[Ms. Sieferman](#) highlighted the new memo for all future agenda items, which includes all topics that are anticipated for the tasks for the MDC, items that are assigned to individuals, and options for members to choose topics to work on.

There were no public comments made on this item.

## 10. Adjournment

Dr. Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m.