Introduction

Performing dentistry on animals falls within the scope of practice of veterinary medicine. The knowledge acquired during the course of veterinary training qualifies veterinarians to provide both preventive oral care and dental treatment to animals.

Dental care in veterinary medicine involves the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the teeth and associated structures. Competent and safe performance of dentistry requires extensive knowledge of anatomy, anesthesiology, pharmacology, physiology, pathology, radiology, neurology, medicine and surgery.

Definition

Veterinary dentistry involves every aspect of oral health care procedures including but not limited to the cleaning, adjustment, filing, extraction or repair of teeth and treatment of or surgery to related structures. (Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, June 2011).

Practice Expectations

A veterinarian who provides dental services to any animal(s) meets the Standard: Veterinary Dentistry when he/she:

1. Administers general anesthesia, analgesics and/or sedatives appropriate for the procedure and species.

Strengthening the veterinary profession through quality practice and public accountability.
2. Delegates a dental procedure under the following circumstances:
   • the veterinarian is confident that the auxiliary staff has the education and experience to perform the procedure;
   • the veterinarian is available on site to provide direct supervision to the competent auxiliary; and
   • the veterinarian confirms that the delegated procedure was correctly performed by re-examining the entire oral cavity on completion of the procedure.

3. Does not delegate the examination of the teeth and/or oral cavity needed to make an assessment, develop a diagnosis and/or formulate a treatment plan.

4. Does not delegate extraction procedures.

5. Uses appropriate dental charting.

6. Performs routine dental procedures, when carried out in a veterinary hospital or clinic, that are located in permanent facility in a room separate from surgical space.

Other Considerations

“Dentist” and “dental surgeon”, as defined in the Dentistry Act, are protected titles. Veterinarians should not use these or any similar titles in reference to themselves (e.g., veterinary dentist, equine dentist).

Legislative Authority

Veterinarians Act, RSO 1990, s 1(1), 11(1), 11(5)
RRO 1990, O Reg 1093, s 18, 19, 20, 21 (Veterinarians Act)
Other References

Professional Practice Standard: Medical Records
Professional Practice Standard: Informed Client Consent
Guide to the Standard: Medical Records (Companion Animal, Food Producing, Equine, Poultry)
Guide to the Standard: Informed Client Consent
Guide to the Standard: Informed Client Consent
General Principles of Delegation, Position Statement

Dentistry Act, SO 1991, c 24, s 9(1)
Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, Veterinary Dentistry – Position Statement, July 2011