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### Wayne Ricketts

We're delighted that Wayne Ricketts has accepted a permanent position in the office. Wayne will be Council's new Professional Advisor, and will be in the office 4 days a week from 1 July. You can contact Wayne at [wayne.ricketts@vetcouncil.org.nz](mailto:wayne.ricketts@vetcouncil.org.nz) or on 04 894 7109.

### Strategic plan 2016–2020

Council's new strategic plan 2016–2020 is now [online](#). Our aim is to be a fair and consistent regulator, trusted by the public and the profession to set and uphold veterinary standards. The plan outlines how we'll do this.

### Council decision making

One of our strategic plan goals is to achieve best practice in governance and management. To help ensure Council continues to make robust decisions, this [checklist](#) has been developed for members to refer to at meetings. This guides Council through the relevant considerations to ensure its regulatory decisions are well-reasoned, fair, and easily understood by all parties.

### 2016 CPD audit

CPD audits have been completed, and we're happy with the results. Many vets did far more CPD than the minimum amount required. You can read the full report on this year's CPD audit in the latest issue of VetScript, or on our [website](#).

### VCNZ elections

The election for Council's three elected veterinary positions will be held later in the year. This year, voting will be electronic and administered by Electionz.com. On 7 July, you'll get an email from them asking for nominations. If you want to make a difference to the regulation of the profession, or you know someone who does, please nominate.

### Radiation safety regulations

The new Radiation Safety Act 2016 comes into force next year. The Office of Radiation Safety has been seeking submissions on proposed regulations to accompany the Act.

The new Act requires that users of radiation sources obtain a licence. The Ministry of Health is proposing that vets are exempt from this requirement.

We support this proposal. We're satisfied that vets who are qualified to register in New Zealand (because they are Massey graduates, graduates of a recognised overseas university, or have passed the National Veterinary Exam) will be competent in radiography and have a sufficient understanding of radiation safety to be exempted from holding an individual user's licence.

### ***Learnings from recent complaint cases***

#### **Informed consent for post mortems**

A recent complaint raised issues with informed consent after the death of an animal. You need to gain informed consent if you want to carry out a post mortem. Council's [Competency Standards and Performance Indicators](#) (number 3) say that a vet must '*Fully inform the client of treatment options, likely outcomes, risks and costs and obtain their informed consent to proceed with treatment or undertake post mortems*'.

#### **Export certification**

Council recently considered a referral from MPI which raised issues about the integrity of export certification. Remember that:

- you must have an annual practising certificate to call yourself a veterinarian
- it is a conflict of interest to sign an export certificate for your own animals.

#### **Decanting products**

In a recent complaint, a client said he had been regularly dispensed 4.0ml single use vials of Advantage flea treatment for large dogs greater than 25kg with the instruction that he could use 0.8mls on his cat every month. The complainant said that another clinic told him that the two products are different so treatment would not be as effective.

The Complaints Assessment Committee accepted the vet's explanation that he dispensed the product this way to make it more cost effective for the client. The committee noted that the ingredients in the Advantage product for cats and dogs are the same, but the volume administered differs according to the size of the animal.

The committee noted that the vet needed ensure he is complying with point 7 of the Veterinary Medicines Section of the Code of Professional Conduct:

*When decanting or breaking down a trade name product, veterinarians must ensure that:*

- (a) The product is not altered in any material way, other than to change the original packaging and labelling;*
- (b) No additional hazards are introduced through careless or inappropriate procedures during decanting or breaking down;*
- (c) The choice of alternative packaging does not jeopardise the quality of the product; and*
- (d) All the crucial information about the product is provided to the client, including the veterinarian's contact information and additional instructions.*

The committee suggested that the vet:

- label the pack with the name of the product, the number of vials of product included, the volume of the individual vials and the name and strength of the active ingredient in the vials
- include appropriate directions for use for the animal. Make sure the vet and practice details are included.