



January 2018

Happy new year!

Happy new year and welcome to 2018. We hope you all got a break and had a peaceful holiday season. It's been a busy start to the year and there's important information in this update.

APC renewal time starts in February. We'll be in touch by email with information about how to renew your APC soon. Meantime, please make sure you [tell us](#) if you need to update your email address.

Minimum practising standards

If you're in clinical practice, when you renew your APC you'll need to confirm you're meeting the Council's minimum practising standards.

This year, you'll be asked to review the standards around animal welfare and veterinary medicines, and complete checklists to confirm you're meeting the requirements. The checklists are [online now](#).

Look at the checklists now, so you've got time to address any issues.

You should be able to say yes to every question. If you can't, you should raise this with your employer. If you still can't say yes, contact us. We'll work with you and your employer to help you meet the expected standard.

Save the checklists with your CPD records. You don't need to send them to us, but you do need to be able to confirm that you've reviewed them and are meeting requirements.

If you're selected for a CPD audit we'll want to see your completed checklists then.



Judicial committee hearing

A retired veterinarian has been found guilty of professional misconduct after he continued to act as a veterinarian when he didn't hold a practising certificate.

He was censured, fined, and ordered to pay costs. You can read the details and the Judicial Committee's decision [here](#).

You can only call yourself a veterinarian, and act as a veterinarian, if you're registered and hold a practising certificate.

Registration timeframes

If you have a new veterinarian starting at your clinic, they need to be registered and hold an APC **before** they can start work. If they leave this until the last minute, they may not be able to start work on time.

Please encourage all new registrants to apply for registration and their practising certificate with plenty of time. It can take up to 2 weeks to process a straightforward application. If there's information missing, or we need to wait for information from overseas veterinary boards, things can take longer.

We can't guarantee new veterinarians will be registered and ready to work if they leave their application until the last minute.



AMR

We've been sent a copy of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners' AMR stewardship [guidelines](#). This is interesting reading for anyone who's keen to know what other organisations are doing in this area.

Privacy issues

Given the microchip recall, it's a good time to review your understanding of privacy requirements.

Remember that an animal's records are the personal information of the owner. You can only share them with the owner's permission, except in some specific circumstances (such as a police investigation).

See our [May](#) and [August](#) updates for more on privacy issues. The [Office of the Privacy Commissioner](#) can help if you have questions.



Fair trading

[A veterinary business has been warned by the Commerce Commission about price fixing.](#)

The Commerce Commission has asked us to remind all veterinarians that you need to:

- reach independent decisions on your commercial arrangements, including pricing
- be mindful of the Commerce Act when attending meetings and conferences, or interacting with manufacturers, wholesale suppliers, and other veterinary practices.

If in doubt, seek legal advice from someone experienced in working with the Commerce Act.

Make sure you're aware of the [Commerce Commission's guidelines](#) and check the [Commerce Commission website](#) to make sure you understand your obligations.

Advertising

This is a timely reminder to all veterinarians that you need to work to the Code, as well as all other relevant laws about running your business.

The issue most commonly brought to our attention is advertising. Make sure you're meeting requirements with the following reminders.

When promoting services and products:

- you must act fairly and represent your capability and competence accurately
- you must not exaggerate any claim or comparison of your service or product over another, or overstate your skills and knowledge with misleading descriptors.

This means:

- you can't claim or imply you are better than another colleague, or demean other products or services
- don't say or do anything which brings the profession into disrepute
- you can't say or imply that you are a specialist if you aren't
- don't say you're the best at something, or have the best facilities, if you can't substantiate your claim.

You need to be able to substantiate what you say, or you could be in breach of the Code or advertising standards.

Also see:

- the [Professional Integrity](#) section of the Code of Professional Conduct see paragraph 9
- the [Advertising Codes of Practice](#) provide information on advertising standards – these apply to anyone, not just veterinarians
- [ACVM for information about advertising RVMs](#)