



Bangladesh Veterinary Council

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Code of Veterinary Ethics

Veterinarians' Oath

Being admitted to the Profession of Veterinary Medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health and welfare, the prevention and relief of animal suffering, the conservation of Livestock Resources, the promotion of public health and the advancement of medical knowledge.

I will practice my profession conscientiously, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics. I accept as a lifelong obligation the continual improvement of my professional knowledge and competence.

1. Introduction

Bangladesh Veterinary Council sets and upholds standards for professional responsibilities in the field of veterinary medicine in Bangladesh. These standards encompass the ethical and practical guidelines that veterinarians are expected to follow, ensuring the well-being of animals, public health, and professional integrity. These responsibilities include proper animal care, disease management, veterinary ethics, continuing education, and compliance with relevant laws and regulations. The council plays a crucial role in maintaining high standards of professionalism among veterinarians and safeguarding the interests of both animals and the public.

According to the parliamentary Act named “Bangladesh Veterinary Council Act-2019” it is mandated for the BVC to set up the standard of Veterinary practice and to monitor it properly. This standard represents the commitment of animal health sectors to achieving its mission, namely to enhance the abilities of veterinarians to provide quality health care and medicine to animals; to enable their strength to successfully conduct their practices and maintain their activities with high standards of excellence; and to meet the public's needs as they relate to the delivery of veterinary service including veterinarians responsibilities with their working team, BVC & liability in judicial proceedings.

2. The legal basis of BVC supervision for maintaining the code of veterinary ethics in Bangladesh

It is a legal requirement that veterinarians practicing in Bangladesh should follow the rules and regulations regarding regular service. To ensure high quality of veterinary education and profession of service, the government has passed a parliamentary Act named “Bangladesh Veterinary Council Act-2019”. According to the Act mentioned in clauses like 22 & 28 professionals must practice their duties and responsibilities with ethically and avoiding professional misconduct. So, professionals should be guided by a code of veterinary ethics.

Professionals has been legally empowered by some clauses like 17, 23 etc. So, they should utilize their power properly. If they violet the guideline, they should be punished according to clause 29. Clauses are mentioned below;

Clause No.22. Duties and Responsibilities of Registered Veterinary Practitioners, etc.— The registered Veterinary Practitioners shall execute their duties and responsibilities as prescribed by regulations with ethically.

Clause No.28. Inquiry into allegations, etc.— (1) If an allegation of professional misconduct is found against any registered Veterinarian or Paravet, the Council shall issue a show cause notice to the concerned Veterinary Practitioner or Paravet regarding the allegation brought against him/her, mentioning a period of time.

(2) If the reply of the notice is not satisfactory as per Sub-section (1) or the allegation is primarily proven, the Council shall form an Inquiry Committee consisting of 3 (three) members for inquiry into the allegation.

(3) The Inquiry Committee is formed as per Sub-section (2), can make an inquire to prove the allegation and, for the sake of the inquiry, interrogate anyone including the person alleging or can issue a notice to anyone involving the allegation to be present as a witness or to provide any document or information.

(4) If the allegation is lodged by the inquiry of the Committee formed as per Sub-section (2), the Inquiry Committee shall, considering the merit of the allegation against the alleged Veterinary Practitioner or Paravet, submit recommendations to the council for cancellation of her/his registration and certificate, to suspend, to give warning or to impose a fine administratively.

(5) If the allegation is not proved by the Inquiry, the Committee, shall submit a report to the Council with a recommendation of acquitting the alleged Veterinary Practitioner or Paravet against the allegation.

(6) As per Sub-section (3), the person concerned given notice, shall remain oblige to assist the Committee.

Clause No.17. Ban the Veterinary Practice without the Registration and Certificates. — Whatever is laid in any other Acts in force, no persons are allowed to do Veterinary Practice or introduce himself as a veterinarian or a Veterinary Practitioner unless she or he is registered and obtains certificates according to this Act.

Clause No.23. Special Right for the Registered Veterinary Practitioners. — (1) Only the registered Veterinary Practitioners shall be eligible for appointment in any Veterinary related position in the Government, Semi Government, autonomous, private or any other Veterinary Organizations administered by the local authorities, hospitals, pharmaceutical and food organizations or in slaughtering houses.

(2) The registered Veterinary Practitioners can use the title “doctor” or “Dr.” with their names and can take fees fixed by the Council for their services as specified by them.

(3) If any Veterinary health certificates or any other certificates under any Act temporarily in force require signatures or attestation, only registered Veterinary Practitioners can sign or attest such certificates.

Clause No.29. Suspending and Cancelling Registration and Certificates, etc.— (1) Recommendations received under the Sub-section (4) of Section 28, the Council shall issue a warning letter to the concerned Veterinary Practitioner or Paravet or suspend him/her from practicing for a certain period or temporarily cancel his/her registration and certificate or, if necessary, impose a fine administratively.

(2) The Council shall, in the process, with fees paid off as specified by the regulations, reinstate the registrations and certificates cancelled under Sub-section (1).

3. Responsibilities of Veterinarians

3. A. Responsibilities of Veterinarians to animals:

i) Veterinarians should first account for the needs of the patient: to relieve disease, suffering, or disability while minimizing pain or fear. Also, consider animal health and welfare when attending.

ii) Veterinarians should keep within their own area of competence and **refer cases (Appendix 1)** responsibly.

iii) Veterinarians must provide veterinary care that is appropriate and adequate.

iv) Veterinarians should have the choice of treatments or animal care and should consider the needs of the patient, the welfare of the client, and the safety of the public. Veterinarian must prescribe full course medicine and suggestions for diseased animals.

v) Veterinarians must follow acceptable professional procedures using current professional and scientific knowledge. All aspects of veterinary medicine should be held to the same standards, including complementary, alternative, and integrative veterinary medicine, non-traditional, or other novel approaches.

vi) Regardless of practice ownership, the interests of the patient, client, and public require that all decisions that affect diagnosis, prognosis, and recommendations for treatment of patients are made by veterinarians.

vii) Veterinarians should not allow their medical judgment to be influenced by agreements by which they stand to profit by referring clients to other providers of services or products, nor should their judgment be influenced by contracts or agreements made by their practice, associations, patient owners, or societies.

viii) In emergencies, veterinarians have an ethical responsibility to provide essential services for animals when necessary to save lives or relieve suffering, after client agreement (or until such agreement can be obtained when no client is present). Such emergency care may be limited to euthanasia to relieve suffering or to stabilization of the patient for transport to another source of

animal care. Humane euthanasia of animals is an ethical veterinary procedure. It must be done with the concern of ethical committee of BVC.

ix) Veterinarians must communicate with each other to ensure the health and welfare of the animal or group of animals. If need to refer any emergency patient, a registered veterinary doctor should refer to another registered and experienced veterinary doctor.

x) Telemedicine treatment cannot be provided to any patient without at least one face-to-face visit in a specific case. Except deworming or any kind of vitamin suggestions, telemedicine service must be avoided.

xi) The Veterinarian shall maintain the confidentiality of any information collected about the patient under his/her treatment and shall be disclosed only to the owner.

xii) If necessary, it can share all that information with the permission of the owner. Provided that the matter may be disclosed in accordance with the Veterinary Ordinance or other rules or regulations or in the public interest or to protect other animals from extinction or disease.

3. B . Responsibilities of Veterinarians to Clients:

i) Veterinarians must be open and honest, fair, courteous, considerate, and compassionate with clients and respect their needs and requirements.

ii) Veterinarians must provide independent and impartial advice and inform a client of any conflict of interest. Communications with clients will contain no false, deceptive, or misleading statements or claims.

iii) Veterinarians may choose whom they will serve. Both the veterinarian and the client have the right to establish or decline a **Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR)**. **(Appendix 2)**

iv) Veterinarians must communicate effectively with clients and ensure informed owner consent is obtained before treatments or procedures are carried out. The decision to accept or decline treatment and related costs should be based on an adequate discussion of clinical findings, diagnostic techniques, treatment, likely outcomes, and estimated costs.

v) A decision to consult or refer is made jointly by the attending veterinarian and the client. Attending veterinarians must honor a client's request for a referral.

vi) Veterinarians are entitled to charge fees for their professional services what are guided or fixed by BVC. Fees must be fair and based on professional services rendered. Regardless of the fees that are charged or received, the quality of service must be maintained at or above the professional standard.

vii) Veterinarians must keep clear, accurate, and detailed clinical and client records.

viii) Veterinarians and their associates should protect the personal privacy of patients and clients. Veterinarians should not reveal confidences unless required by law or unless it becomes necessary to protect other individuals' or animals' health and welfare.

ix) Veterinarians should address client complaints in an appropriate and timely manner.

x) Veterinarians should take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to patients. If there have any probability harm occur, this information should be immediately disclosed to the client.

3. C. Responsibilities of Veterinarians to the profession:

i) Veterinarians have a responsibility to maintain the integrity and dignity of the profession and be worthy of the trust and respect of colleagues, clients, other health professionals, and the general public.

ii) Veterinarians should be honest, fair, courteous, considerate, and compassionate. Veterinarians should present a professional appearance and follow acceptable professional procedures using current professional and scientific knowledge.

iii) Veterinarians should not slander, or injure the professional standing or reputation of other veterinarians falsely or misleadingly. However, veterinarians should report to the appropriate authority(BVC) if any unprofessional conduct by colleagues.

iv) Veterinarians should view, evaluate, and treat all persons in any professional activity or circumstance in which they may be involved, solely as individuals based on their own personal abilities, qualifications, and other relevant characteristics.

v) As health professionals seeking to advance animal and public health, veterinarians should strive to confront and reject all forms of prejudice and discrimination that may lead to impediments to access to quality animal and public health care for clients/patients or lack of educational, training, and employment opportunities for veterinary colleagues/students and another member of the animal health care team. These forms of prejudice and discrimination include, but are not limited to, race; ethnicity; physical and mental abilities; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity; parental status; religious beliefs; political beliefs; geographic, socioeconomic, and educational background; and any other characteristic protected under applicable law.

vi) Veterinarians who are impaired or whose performance is adversely affected by physical or mental health conditions must not act in the capacity of a veterinarian and should seek assistance from qualified organizations or individuals. Colleagues of impaired veterinarians should encourage those individuals to seek assistance and overcome their impairment.

vii) If there is evidence that the actions of a former attending veterinarian have clearly and significantly endangered the health or safety of a patient, the current attending veterinarian has a responsibility to take action.

viii) Veterinarians should strive to improve their veterinary knowledge and skills, and they are encouraged to collaborate with other professionals in the quest for knowledge and professional development.

ix) When outside entities sponsor conferences, meetings, or lectures, the organization that presents the program, not the funding sponsor, should have control of the contents and speakers. It must be controlled by veterinarians if s/he is involved with that program.

x) Veterinarians should use only the title of the professional degree that was awarded by the BVC accredited institution of veterinary medicine where the degree was obtained. It is unethical for veterinarians to identify themselves as members of a recognized specialty organization if such certification has not been awarded and maintained.

xi) It is unethical to place professional knowledge, credentials, or services at the disposal of any non-professional organization, group, or individual to promote or lend credibility to the illegal practice of veterinary medicine.

xii) It is unethical for veterinarians to use or permit the use of their names, signatures, or professional status in connection with the resale of ethical products in a manner that violates those directions or conditions specified by the manufacturer to ensure the safe and efficacious use of the product.

xiii) Veterinarians should recognize a responsibility to give generally held opinions of the profession when interpreting scientific knowledge to the public. When presenting an opinion that is contrary to the generally held opinion of the profession, this should be indicated.

xiv) When an associate physician invites a physician or senior physician with specialized knowledge or a professional in a laboratory or office to practice for consultation, the practitioner shall carefully collect and discuss disease information and data in a non-critical manner. If another professional performs duties or gives advice in the workplace of a professional, it will be an unethical act.

xv) Professionals who are working in the laboratory or any kind of diagnostic or research center, should not give advice or prescription to the service recipient or behave in such a way that does not create a good impression about the personal behavior of the practicing veterinarians, treatment procedure, or any other services. Under no circumstances shall a consultant assume responsibility for a problem or patient without the permission of all concerned. In particular, it is not appropriate to do so before deciding the beneficiary's financial affairs with the treating physician.

xvi) No one shall voluntarily give or encourage his professional knowledge or services to any other organization, group, or person. By whatever name these individuals or organizations are known or how they are organized, the policy is to encourage them to diagnose or treat animal diseases.

xvii) It is specially punishable to engage in unethical conduct and commercial interest on patient or for the purpose of making money which undermines professional ethics and dignity. This is detrimental to both the pet owner and the veterinary profession.

xviii) It is unethical to make drastic changes in the treatment previously given to attract unnecessary attention, to the urgent invitation to a patient under treatment.

3. D. Responsibilities of Veterinarians to the public:

i) Veterinarians should concurrently seek to ensure the protection of public health and general animal health and welfare while carrying out their professional duties toward a specific patient. They must also consider the impact of their actions on the environment.

ii) The responsibilities of the veterinary profession extend beyond individual patients and clients to society in general. Veterinarians are encouraged to make their knowledge available to their communities and to provide their services for activities that protect public health and environmental health.

iii) Veterinarians should obey all laws of the jurisdictions in which they reside and practice veterinary medicine. Veterinarians should be honest and fair in their relations with others, and they should not engage in fraud, misrepresentation, or deceit. Veterinarians should report illegal practices and activities to the proper authorities.

iv) Veterinarians may promote or advertise products and services, but employing false, deceptive, or misleading statements or claims is unethical. Testimonials or endorsements are advertising, and they must comply with the appropriate jurisdictions' regulations or guidelines for **advertising and Publicity for Veterinarians (Appendix- 3)**.

v) All members shall abide by the rules governing their obligations to their service providers. He shall observe the laws and regulations of his office without deviation and shall respect the regulations governing his work. Create a better understanding of the veterinary profession with a clear focus on client issues.

3. E. Responsibilities of Veterinarians to the veterinary team:

i) Veterinarians must work together and with others in the veterinary team and business, to coordinate the care of animals and the delivery of services.

ii) Veterinarians must ensure that tasks are delegated only to those who have the appropriate competence and registration.

iii) Veterinarians must maintain minimum practice standards.

iv) Veterinarians must treat their colleagues with dignity and as persons worthy of respect.

v) No member shall insult or injure the professional dignity of another member engaged in the profession or unreasonably slander his professional character or treat him in any manner unbecoming a member of the profession.

vi) Veterinarians should attempt to improve their veterinary knowledge and skills and collaborate with other professionals in the quest for knowledge and professional development.

3. F. Veterinarians & The BVC

i) Veterinarians must be appropriately registered with the BVC (Bangladesh Veterinary Council).

ii) Veterinary practitioner, and those applying to be registered as veterinary practitioner, must disclose to the BVC any caution or conviction, including absolute and conditional discharges and spent convictions, or adverse finding which may affect practitioner certification.

iii) Veterinary practitioner, and those applying to be registered as practitioner, must comply with reasonable requests from the BVC as part of the regulation of the profession, and comply with any undertakings they give to the BVC.

iv) All veterinary practitioner must abide by all BVC mandates and play an active role in the interests of the profession.

v) In the interest of the country and the public, the practitioner should inform the BVC of all educational qualification and Continuing Professional Development(CPD) record updated from time to time.

vi) All veterinary practitioner must be active and alert against any kind of malpractice or violation of BVC Act happening by any person, association, organization or any other institution. It must be informed to BVC as early as possible to take immediate action against them.

3. G. Liability of Veterinarians in Judicial Proceedings

All veterinarians must be known about BVC Act-2019 and must abide by the command of government. There have also some liabilities in case of judicial proceedings. Some of them are;

i) Testifying in court- When a professional is called to give evidence by a court for professional reasons, the doctor must be aims at justice. S/he must present the evidence and testify impartially. Even if a party testifies to the physician ,when invited to pay, the doctor will impartially assist the court.

ii) Basis of Punishment- Any registered veterinary practitioner will be considered as a criminal if in the opinion of the Council against them, such as;

(a) Be guilty of misconduct.

(b) become incompetent or lose competence.

(c) engages in corruption or is reasonably considered to be corrupt.

(d) Violates any provision of law, rule or policy.

iii) Penalties- The following penalties shall be leviable under this regulation.

(a) Minor penalty-

(1) Warning (2) Reprimand (3) Suspension from veterinary practice for specified period.

(b) Major penalty-

(1) Temporary cancellation of registration and certificate (2) Administrative penalty

(3) Permanent registration and certificate cancelled.

iv) Investigation procedure- The investigation procedure mentioned in the Bangladesh Veterinary Council Act and Rules shall be followed (majorly Clause No.28).

Appendix 1: Refer to cases

A. Change of Professionals: If the owner of an animal newly treated or consulted by a professional turns to another practitioner, he should not agree to treatment by the second professional invited without fulfilling the following conditions. For example:

(a) The second doctor has been called only as a consultant; The owner of the animal comes to the second doctor for treatment with the first doctor's prescription.

(b) The owner of the animal approached the second doctor for treatment with the first doctor's prescription.

(c) The first doctor is not available or is away from the place of work or there must be evidence that the first doctor stopped treating him or the owner dismissed him from medical practice.

(d) The second doctor informs the first doctor of the medical load he has undertaken. If that is the case, either the doctor will agree to give treatment or advice, otherwise he will explain the matter to the owner of the animal and refrain from giving treatment or advice.

B. Will undertake treatment or consultation work without reviewing the prescription and consultation letter of the previous doctor.

C. It is dangerous to start treatment without being fully informed about the history of the disease and the treatment provided. Therefore, it is recommended to refrain from such activities.

D. No false or negative comments can be made to the patient owner by the current doctor about any previous or subsequent doctor. In order to make any changes during treatment under the supervision of a doctor, the current doctor must consult or give directions to the previous doctor.

Appendix 2: Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR)

The veterinarian-client-patient relationship is a crucial dynamic in animal healthcare. Veterinarians build trust with both owners and their pets, ensuring effective communication about the animal's well-being and treatment. This relationship involves collaboration, where pet owners provide valuable insights into their pets' behavior and health history. In turn, veterinarians offer expertise, addressing concerns and guiding owners in making informed decisions for their animal companions. This partnership is essential for delivering optimal care, emphasizing the importance of open communication, empathy, and a shared commitment to the welfare of the furry patients.

A. Communication: Clear and open communication is vital in the veterinarian-client-patient relationship. Effective dialogue ensures that pet owners understand the diagnosis, treatment options, and preventive care measures recommended by the veterinarian.

B. Trust: Building trust is a cornerstone of this relationship. Pet owners trust veterinarians to provide expert care, while veterinarians rely on accurate information from owners to make informed decisions about the health of their patients.

C. Collaboration: A collaborative approach involves active participation from both the veterinarian and the pet owner. Sharing insights into the pet's behavior, habits, and medical history helps create a comprehensive picture, aiding in accurate diagnoses and tailored treatment plans.

D. Empathy: Veterinarians need empathy to understand the emotional bond between pet owners and their animals. Recognizing and addressing the emotional aspects of pet care fosters a supportive and compassionate relationship.

E. Awareness: Veterinarians play a crucial role in educating pet owners about preventive care, nutrition, and general wellness. Informed owners are better equipped to make decisions that positively impact the health and happiness of their pets.

F. Consistency: Consistent and reliable care builds confidence in the veterinarian-client-patient relationship. This involves not only consistent medical care but also consistent communication and availability to address concerns or emergencies.

G. Respect: Mutual respect between veterinarians and pet owners is essential. This respect extends to the decisions made collaboratively for the well-being of the animal, recognizing the expertise of the veterinarian and the intimate knowledge of the pet by its owner.

H. Adaptability: The nature of pet healthcare often requires flexibility and adaptability. Veterinarians must adapt to the unique needs of each patient, and pet owners may need to adjust their routines to accommodate the recommended care plans.

I. Transparency: Openness and transparency about treatment options, costs, and potential outcomes contribute to a positive relationship. Clear communication regarding financial aspects helps avoid misunderstandings and reinforces trust.

J. Long-term Relationship: Building a long-term relationship ensures continuity of care and allows veterinarians to monitor the health and well-being of the pet over time. This extended connection strengthens the bond between the veterinarian, the client, and their furry companion.

Appendix 3: Advertising and Publicity for Veterinarians

A. It is unethical to make baseless propaganda about oneself or others. So, directly or indirectly, do not voluntarily seek permission from the owner or manager to continue treatment.

B. Newspapers, periodicals on veterinary matters and for the promotion of the name or prospect of the service by the professional. Do not make baseless announcements through radio-TV or any other media.

C. A professional is him/herself a consultant or specialist or surgeon unless the council includes additional qualifications can't pretend to be a that doctor.

D. No professional shall under any circumstances make the following statement:-

a) Individually more efficient than colleagues or

b) The patient uses individual methods or

c) Advertises a fixed sum of money for a given medical procedure or

d) Any other notice that misleads or entices the service recipient.

E. Only name, title, meeting time and telephone number shall be advertised or the status of veterinary profession and ads that help increase usability are acceptable.