IDAHO STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE
2270 OLD PENITENTIARY ROAD
BOISE, IDAHO 83712

AGENCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR FISCAL YEARS ENDING JUNE 30, 2010 - JUNE 30, 2014
SUBMITTED THIS FIRST DAY OF JULY, 2009

THE IDAHO BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE CREATED THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE PEOPLE OF IDAHO AND THE IDAHO VETERINARY COMMUNITY. BY THE SIGNATURE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE IDAHO BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE, THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD COMMIT THEMSELVES TO THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THIS PLAN.

SIGNED:

Jennifer M. Card DVM

JENNIFER M. CARD, V.M.D.
PRESIDENT
IDAHO BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

IDAHO BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

MISSION

To promote the public health, safety and welfare by safeguarding the people and animals of Idaho by establishing and enforcing professional standards in the licensure and regulation of veterinary health professionals.

VISION

Over the next five years, the Board projects an increasing number of veterinarians living and working in Idaho and, as in all phases of the medical profession, the field of veterinary medicine will become more complex, specialized, and demanding. There will be an increasing number of lay individuals involved in specialty fields and the practice of alternative therapies, which in human medicine require licensure or certification to be performed and may only be performed on animals by an allied health professional. There will be an increased demand for exemptions to the Veterinary Practice Act that will allow these lay individuals to practice without benefit of a veterinary education or license. There will be a greater demand by veterinarians for properly educated, trained and certified veterinary technicians to assist with the care and treatment of animals and to relieve some of the veterinarians' workload. In addition, there will be an even greater public awareness and demand for quality veterinary care and humane animal treatment. The Board is committed to sustaining for the people of Idaho and the practitioners of veterinary medicine, their technicians and assistants, a conscientious program designed to protect the public's rights with regard to the care and treatment of their animals and to maintain the dignity and esteem of the veterinary profession.

OPERATING PHILOSOPHY

The Board's operating philosophy is to recruit and maintain an active, educated, informed, conscientious, responsive, and flexible Board membership and qualified office staff. The Board members are to be dedicated to researching, interpreting, enacting and enforcing guidelines designed to promote the honest and principled practice of veterinary medicine. The Board and its staff are to be readily available to the people of Idaho and the members of the veterinary profession, and are to be willing and able to conform to the constantly changing facets involved with the practice of veterinary medicine.

ISSUES/CHALLENGES

- New license applications, processed twice a year, produce an expanding amount of licensed veterinarians, certified veterinary technicians, certified euthanasia agencies and certified euthanasia technicians. Records of continuing education, license and certification renewals and expirations, license and certification verifications and discipline, inspections for veterinarians and veterinary technicians must be updated, maintained, processed, and reported for each individual. At the present time the Board licenses or certifies:

  1165 Veterinarians
  229 Veterinary Technicians
  66 Euthanasia Technicians
  19 Euthanasia Agencies

In addition, certified euthanasia technician training and recertification workshops, as well as chemical capture training workshops must be provided, and certified euthanasia agency inspections conducted. These situations create an ever-increasing workload for the Board members and office staff. In addition, criminal background checks will be required on all new applicants effective July 1, 2009. This will also create an additional workload for office staff as the appropriate processes and procedures are implemented.

- The veterinary technician testing, certification, and renewal program is now in its eighth year. As veterinarians realize the importance of well-trained support staff and give more responsibility to these individuals, the demand for qualified veterinary technicians will continue to grow and the certified veterinary technician database will increase, as well as the needed monitoring and disciplinary oversight.

- Approximately 60 Veterinary Application Packets and 69 Veterinary Technician Application Packets have been distributed during the last year. More applicants are printing application forms from the Board's website, which saves time for office staff. New Jurisprudence examinations are being written for both veterinarians and certified veterinary technicians that reflect new rules effective May 8, 2009 and new statutes effective July 1, 2009.

- The computerized national veterinary examination, the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination, is also in its eighth year. Since the beginning of the program, 82 senior-year veterinary students have applied to Idaho to be qualified by the Board to sit for their national examination. This number will likely increase, as Idaho's population increases.

- The operating procedures of the Board office must continually be reevaluated and adjustments made in order to cut costs and still continue to provide quality service to the citizens of Idaho. The Board's ability to recoup investigation, legal, and oversight expenses involved with the settlement of complaints received by the Board has helped with the costs associated with the Board's regulatory functions.

- The Certified Euthanasia Task Force Board is working to develop new annual euthanasia workshops taught by task force members. New euthanasia manuals and bound drug logs are also in development.

- Two national educational equivalency assessment programs for graduates of non-accredited veterinary schools are now in place, the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG) Program, developed by the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Equivalence (PAVE) developed by the American Association of Veterinary State Boards. The Idaho Board accepts graduates from both foreign graduate programs.

- During the past year, the number of new formal complaints received by the Board office has decreased slightly. Out of the 20 new complaints received this year and the carry-overs from last year, 4 cases are presently with the Board's enforcement attorney, 6 cases are with the Board's investigator/consultant and liaison officer, 6 informal consent agreements were approved, and 13 additional complaints have been reviewed and closed based on lack of jurisdiction, insufficient grounds for discipline, or through warning letters and letters of caution.

- The representatives of the Board who handle the investigations and settlements of the complaints must be competent in their field and must receive the necessary training to be able to conduct systematic, impartial investigations that address all pertinent laws and rules and be able to make informed recommendations. The Board members and Board staff must also be educated with regard to the many changes in other laws, rules and regulations that affect the veterinary, veterinary technician and euthanasia professions in order to provide knowledgeable answers to questions they receive. The Board members must also be able to sit as an informed jury when an administrative hearing becomes necessary.

- It is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit qualified individuals who have the time and can afford the expenses associated with serving on the State Board of Veterinary Medicine. The Board positions demand individuals who possess a strong desire to serve the people of Idaho, are familiar with the practice of veterinary medicine, the problems faced by the veterinarians and the consumer, and the laws and rules regulating the practice of veterinary medicine. The amount of time that must be devoted to Board business, as well as the token reimbursement associated with the appointment, are obstacles to the recruitment of qualified individuals.

- Weaknesses in the Veterinary Statutes and Rules, enforcement powers, and insufficient funds and manpower hinder the Board's ability to promptly and effectively investigate, take action, and enforce violations of the Veterinary Practice Act, particularly those related to unlicensed practice by laypersons. The Board successfully passed both statute and rule changes through the 2009 legislative session and will continue to review its statutes and rules to address vague areas in the Veterinary Practice Act and address new issues for which no clear statute or rule exists.

- The Board must remain current with regard to the constantly changing federal and state requirements for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, euthanasia agencies and euthanasia technicians.

- Personnel appropriation reductions will create a tremendous challenge to the Board's 2-person office operation, and will hinder the Board's ability to retain a qualified assistant for its executive director.

FIVE-YEAR GOALS

1. Maintain an up-to-date, effective veterinary licensing program and veterinary technician certification program for new applicants.

2. Maintain an up-to-date, effective veterinary license and veterinary technician certification renewal program.

3. Maintain an up-to-date, effective euthanasia agency certification program and euthanasia technician certification program for new applicants.

4. Maintain an up-to-date, effective euthanasia agency certification and euthanasia technician certification renewal program.

5. Protect the public by sustaining and enforcing an effective complaint and disciplinary

program for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, euthanasia agencies and euthanasia technicians.

6. Encourage and support instructive, informative, and necessary continuing education programs; verify continuing education requirement compliance by licensees.

7. Provide license and certification verifications for veterinarians and veterinary technicians who are applying for licensure in other jurisdictions, and provide license verifications to the public as requested.

KEY OBJECTIVES

1. Solicit, compile, verify, review, and approve new applications for veterinary licensure and veterinary technician certification by January 31 and again by June 30 of each year.

2. Complete and distribute in the first week of May each year, renewal notifications to all active and inactive veterinarians licensed in Idaho, as well as certified veterinary technicians (CVTs), certified euthanasia agencies (CEAs) and certified euthanasia technicians (CETs) that are certified to practice in Idaho. Complete and distribute immediately after July 1 of each year, expiration notices to all veterinarians, CVTs, CEAs and CETs that outline the time period in which these licenses or certifications may be reinstated and the reinstatement requirements.

3. Conduct euthanasia and restraint drug training workshops for the purpose of certifying new euthanasia technicians by June 30 of each year. Conduct certification inspections for the purpose of certifying new euthanasia agencies.

4. Complete recertification inspections for certified euthanasia agencies in the fall of each year, and conduct recertification workshops and examinations for renewing certified euthanasia technicians by June 30 of each year.

5. Provide a written acknowledgement within five days to formal written complaints received from the public. Final complaint resolution can take several months depending on severity and complexity of each individual case.

6. Provide Board approval for continuing education courses within five days of request and apply reported continuing education to appropriate accounts.

7. Provide license verifications to other jurisdictions within five days of request; provide immediate license verifications to callers by telephone; provide lists of licensed practitioners to requesters within three days of written request. Provide list of currently licensed veterinarians on website.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. Review new applications from prospective veterinary licensees and veterinary technician certificants and respond to applicants.

2. Review renewal applications from veterinary licensees and veterinary technician certificants and respond to applicants.

3. Review new applications from prospective euthanasia technician and euthanasia agency certificants; provide new euthanasia technician training, restraint drug training, and new agency inspections.

4. Review renewal applications from certified euthanasia technicians and certified euthanasia agencies, provide recertifying euthanasia technician training, and provide annual recertifying euthanasia agency inspections.

5. Triage all formal written complaints to be sure that information is sent to the appropriate person in the appropriate time frame.

6. Review and respond to all requests for continuing education course approval and review submitted continuing education for compliance with continuing education requirements.

7. Review and respond to all requests for license verifications and public requests for current lists of licensees.

BENCHMARKS

1. 100 % of all applications received will be reviewed and a decision made on completion of veterinary licensing and veterinary technician certification requirements. Board members will vote on acceptance of reviewed applications in January and June of each year as provided in statute.

2. 100 % of all renewal applications are to be reviewed and processed daily as received.

3. 100 % of all new applicants for certification as euthanasia technicians will be provided approved euthanasia training and prospective euthanasia agencies will be provided with a certification inspection.

4. 100 % of renewal applications for certified euthanasia technicians and euthanasia agencies will be processed daily as received and recertification inspections and recertification workshops and examinations will be provided to recertifying technicians and agencies.

5. 100 % of written complaints received by the Board will be reviewed and resolved. Time frame for resolution is dependent on nature and complexity of complaint.

6. 100 % of all requests for continuing education approval will be responded to within five days.

7. 100 % of all requests for written license verifications will be responded to within five days. Public records requests for lists of licensees will be responded to within three days.

EXTERNAL FACTORS

The increasing involvement of attorneys on behalf of veterinarians extends the time and costs involved in negotiating informal disciplinary settlements. The American Veterinary Medical Association also provides $25,000 in License Defense Insurance to veterinarians for an annual fee of $69. This insurance enables veterinarians to hire an attorney to represent their interests in the event of a potential Board disciplinary action. If the Board were to be involved in any future prolonged administrative hearings, the litigation costs could affect the Board's ability to meet its financial obligations and a request for supplemental appropriations or a fee increase could result.

The number of license and certification applications and renewals received each year and the spending authority given to the Board by JFAC dictate the amount of available funding for such programs as the veterinary licensing program, humane animal euthanasia program, and veterinary technician certification program. In order to maintain these programs, realistic evaluations of the need for the programs, the costs associated with implementing new programs and revising and maintaining the existing programs, fees to be assessed, and appropriate spending authority, based on need and income, will need to be continually performed.