

**STATE OF MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BEFORE THE STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS**

IN THE MATTER OF:

SCOTT GOUNARIS, DVM
LICENSE NO. 2561

DOCKET NO. 23-124

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CONSENT AGREEMENT AND ORDER

This Consent Agreement and Order ("Consent Agreement"), dated this 25th day of June 2024, is between the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners ("SBVME" or "Board") and Scott Gounaris, DVM ("Dr. Gounaris"), License No. 2561. This Consent Agreement resolves a case arising from a complaint filed with the SBVME on June 19, 2023, which was assigned Docket No. 23-124, alleging that Dr. Gounaris did not satisfy the Veterinary Practice Act, Md. Code Ann., Agric. §§ 2-301 – 2-316 ("the Veterinary Practice Act") and related Code of Maryland Regulations ("COMAR") 15.14.01 – 15.14.17, as set forth herein.

On May 29, 2024, Dr. Gounaris, having been advised in writing regarding his due process rights, including his right to retain legal counsel, agreed to resolve this case under the terms and conditions reflected in this Consent Agreement. By signing this Consent Agreement, Dr. Gounaris agrees to waive his right to formal proceedings in this case, including the issuance of charges and a hearing. He further agrees to the terms and conditions of this Consent Agreement.

Under Maryland law, the SBVME is the licensing authority responsible for regulating the practice of veterinary medicine in this State, which includes filing disciplinary actions against veterinarians charged with violating the provisions of the Veterinary Practice Act and related COMAR regulations adopted under this law. As part of its authority, the SBVME "may refuse, suspend, or revoke any application or license, and censure or place on probation any licensee ... if the veterinarian ... [f]ails to comply with Board rules and regulations after receiving a license." Md. Code Ann., Agric. § 2-310(8).

looked more inflamed. He recommended observing Norman throughout the day, and Ms. Schady-Brozene agreed.

19. According to Dr. Gounaris, Norman ate well during the day, and his bladder filled normally. Later that day, Norman was sent home, and Ms. Schady-Brozene reported that Norman urinated when he got home.

20. On or about June 16, 2023, Dr. Gounaris saw Norman for diarrhea and vomiting. Dr. Gounaris noted that Norman's surgical incision looked more inflamed during this visit, especially near the caudal end of the scrotal area. Dr. Gounaris suspected that Norman had been licking at his incision because his e-collar had fallen off in the exam room. He administered a Cerenia injection and prescribed Sulfazine to treat colitis diarrhea. Norman's carprofen and hydrocodone prescriptions were refilled. Dr. Gounaris also prescribed cephalexin (an antibiotic) to address a possible infection.

21. On June 17, 2023, Ms. Schady-Brozene elected to seek other veterinary care for Norman due to the inflammation around the level of the neuter incision and severe inflammation in the perineal area. Another veterinarian determined that Norman appeared to have a ruptured necrotic/abscessed scrotum that was draining hemorrhagic to purulent necrotic material and recommended surgical debridement and management.

22. Subsequently, Norman was hospitalized and underwent bilateral scrotal ablation surgery. The surgery went well, and Norman was discharged on June 21, 2023.

23. On June 19, 2023, Ms. Schady-Brozene filed a complaint with the SBVME alleging that Dr. Gounaris provided substandard care in his treatment of Norman.

24. The Board opened a case and investigated.

25. After its review, the Board identified deficiencies in the medical records Dr. Gounaris prepared.

26. COMAR 15.14.01.10A(9) (Record Keeping) requires, for a companion pet animal, that a veterinarian prepare a legibly written record that accurately and thoroughly reflects the treatment provided, including the progress and disposition of the case. COMAR 15.14.01.10A(7) requires that the record include documentation of the animal's condition, as evidenced through a physical examination not

more than twelve hours before administering anesthesia, injectable sedative, or injectable tranquilizing agent.

27. Dr. Gounaris's records reflecting Norman's treatment lack detail, making it difficult to understand the progress and disposition of the case. For example, the records describing the surgical procedures performed by Dr. Gounaris to correct the malformed tissue and revise the surgical wounds lack detail about precisely what he did during each procedure, including a description and the location of the tissue removed and what sutures were used to close the incisions. The lack of detail makes it difficult for a reviewer to understand the progress and disposition of the case.

28. In addition, on several occasions, including the surgeries performed on February 17, 2023, and March 9, 2023, Dr. Gounaris did not document that he completed physical examinations within twelve hours prior to surgery, as required by the Board's record-keeping regulations. As noted above, Dr. Gounaris did review a medical assessment sheet reflecting the patient's vital signs, including temperature, pulse, and respiration, immediately prior to each surgery.

Taking the facts and circumstances into consideration, including the nature of the violation(s); the veterinarian's disciplinary history, which includes a record-keeping violation; and his acceptance of responsibility and good faith cooperation in resolving this matter, the Board concluded that the most reasonable and appropriate resolution includes the sanctions set forth below.

ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is ORDERED by the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners that:

- (a) For not satisfying COMAR 15.14.01.10A (Record Keeping) in his treatment of Norman, a young Goldendoodle owned by Jennifer Schady-Brozene, by failing to document physical examinations before surgery and for preparing surgical records lacking in detail, making it difficult to understand the progress and disposition of the case, Dr. Gounaris is assessed a civil penalty of \$600 (second offense);

- (b) Dr. Gounaris shall pay the civil penalty (\$600) within sixty (60) days from the date of this Consent Agreement by check payable to the Maryland Department of Agriculture ("MDA") with the notation "SBVME – 23-124" sent to the MDA at 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Room 102, Annapolis, MD 21401 – Attn: Nathaniel Boan; and
- (c) This Consent Agreement is a public order.

WITNESS the hand of the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, State of Maryland, this 25th day of June, 2024.

STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY
MEDICAL EXAMINERS



Patty Crankshaw-Quimby
Vice-President
State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
Maryland Department of Agriculture

CONSENT

I, Scott Gounaris, DVM, acknowledge that I have had an opportunity to consult with counsel before entering into this Consent Agreement. By this Consent, I hereby acknowledge the legal authority and jurisdiction of the Board to issue and enforce this Consent Agreement. To resolve this matter, I agree to accept and submit to the foregoing Consent Agreement, consisting of eight (8) pages, including this Consent. I sign this Consent Agreement without reservation as my voluntary act and deed after having had an opportunity to consult with counsel. I fully understand and comprehend this Consent Agreement's language, meaning, and terms.

Date:

June 18, 2024



Scott Gounaris, DVM