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Robert R. Corbin

December 19, 1983

Ms. Suzanne deBerge  
Chairperson  
Arizona State Veterinary Medical  
Examining Board  
1645 West Jefferson  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Re: I83- 138 (R83-134)

Dear Ms. deBerge:

You submitted two letters dated September 13, 1983, concerning treatment of animals by persons other than licensed veterinarians. For convenience, your letters will be considered as a single request.

You asked whether chiropractic adjustment or treatment of an animal for a defect or infirmity by a licensed chiropractor at the request of the animal's owner, whether or not a fee is charged, when the chiropractor is not acting pursuant to a referral from or in conjunction with a consultation of a veterinarian, constitutes the unauthorized practice of veterinary medicine. You further asked whether laser acupuncture treatment of an animal, usually an equine, by someone other than a licensed veterinarian, at the request of the animal's owner, whether or not a fee is charged, when the treatment is neither pursuant to a referral from nor in conjunction with a veterinarian's consultation, constitutes the unauthorized practice of veterinary medicine.

The answer to the first question is yes if the chiropractor receives compensation, directly or indirectly, for the service and if the chiropractor is not within the statutory exceptions provided in A.R.S. §§32-2211 and 32-2231.B. A.R.S.

Ms. Suzanne deBerge  
December 19, 1983  
Page 2

§ 32-2211 exempts from licensure persons treating their own or their employer's animals and persons who are formally trained or otherwise licensed as veterinarians; A.R.S. § 32-2231.B exempts authorized U. S. Department of Agriculture representatives engaged in activities of the federal animal disease eradication division and certified veterinary technicians practicing within the scope of their certificates. The Veterinary Practice Act, A.R.S. § 32-2201 et seq., extends no exemption from its licensing requirements to persons holding licenses to practice other health care professions; thus, a chiropractor, solely by holding a license to practice chiropractic, is not authorized to perform acts which constitute the practice of veterinary medicine, as defined in A.R.S. § 32-2231.A.

The answer to the second question is yes if the person applying the laser acupuncture treatment receives compensation for the treatment, directly or indirectly, and if such person is not within the statutory exceptions cited immediately above. Acupuncture has been determined, by the Arizona Board of Medical Examiners, to be "a therapeutic modality in the practice of medicine as defined by the Arizona Revised Statutes", A.C.R.R. R4-16-11.A. To the extent that acupuncture is administered to any animal, including an equine, for any of the purposes enumerated in A.R.S. § 32-2231.A<sub>x</sub>, the person administering the treatment is practicing veterinary medicine within the meaning of the Veterinary Practice Act, and must either be licensed to do so or come within the previously discussed statutory exceptions.

Sincerely,



BOB CORBIN  
Attorney General

BC:NEO:kb