

The ABC's of Controlled Substances and Veterinary Medicine in Illinois

Part 2 of 3 - How Opioids affect Our World

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Clarification of Position Statement

- This presentation is based on my personal interpretation of the available regulatory information.
- It does not represent legal advice
- It does not represent any stated or assumed position of the Ohio Veterinary Medical Licensing Board

"Knowledge is an antidote to fear"

Ralph Waldo Emerson

What is the Veterinarian's role in the opioid crisis?

Perspectives Beyond Vet Med

Outside Perspectives

- American Journal of Public Health
 - Prescription Opioid Epidemic: Do Veterinarians Have a Dog in the Fight?
- Journal of the American Medical Assoc.
 - Are Some People Using Their Dogs to Get Opioids?

American Journal of Public Health

- Editorial – September 2018
- “Veterinarians have been largely overlooked, despite the fact that many hold DEA licenses and can prescribe, administer, carry, stock, and dispense narcotics in clinics. Our research suggests that this is a serious omission and must be addressed.”

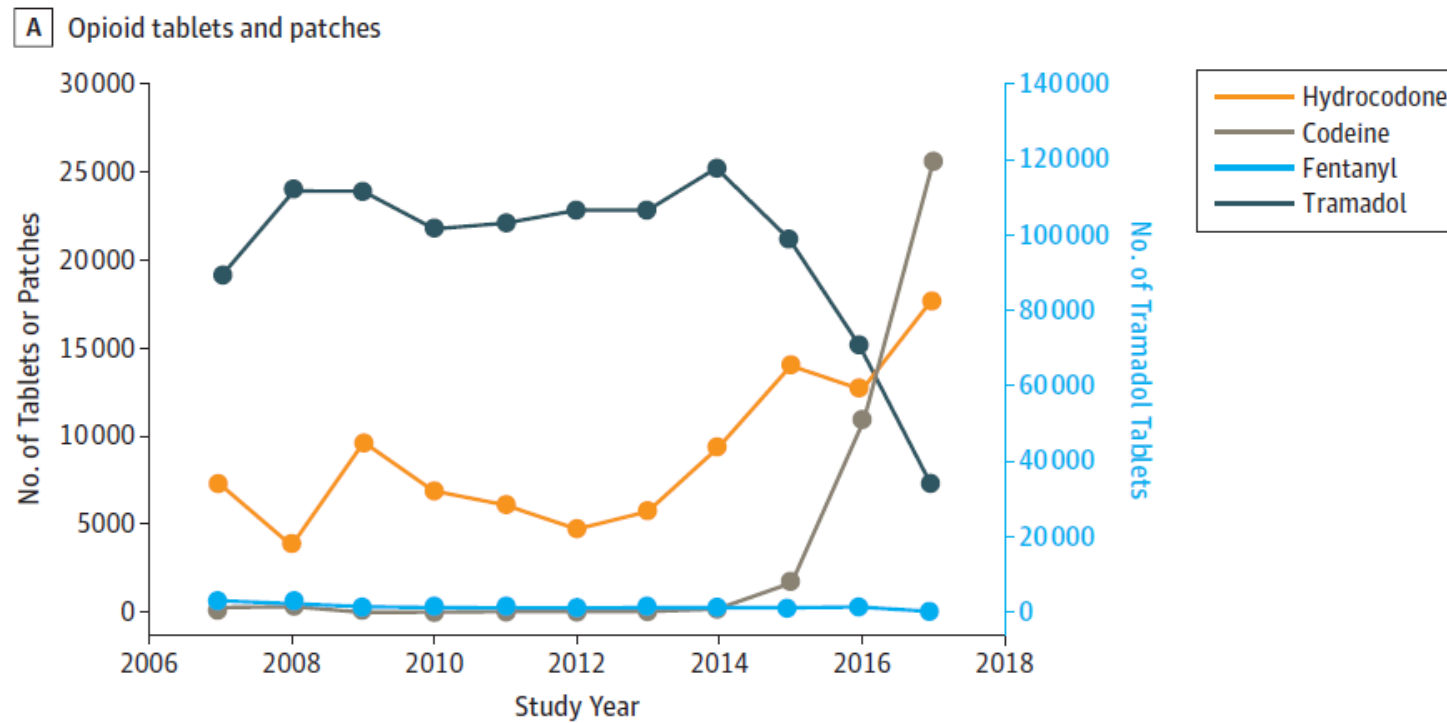
American Journal of Public Health

- “We call for the veterinary, public health, pharmaceutical, and regulatory communities to devote time and resources to assess and intervene on the issue of prescription opioid diversion in veterinary medicine.”
- Recommendations fall into three main categories:
 - TRACKING AND SURVEILLANCE
 - AWARENESS AND EDUCATION
 - RESEARCH GAPS

JAMA

- Trends in Opioid Prescribing and Dispensing by Veterinarians in Pennsylvania
 - Published January 2019
 - 36,347 annual visits in fiscal year 2018
 - hydrocodone bitartrate, tramadol hydrochloride, and codeine sulfate

Figure. Changes in Opioid Dispensing and Prescribing in Tablet and Patch Forms and Morphine Milligram Equivalents (MMEs) During the Study Period



What is the Veterinarian's role in the opioid crisis?

Perspectives Inside Vet Med

National Guidance

- American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)
 - The veterinary profession's role in addressing the opioid epidemic
- American College of Veterinary Anesthesia and Analgesia.
 - Opioid-Sparing Pain Therapy in Animals: Working Task Force
- American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB)
 - Model Regulations for Appropriate Use of Opioids
- Food and Drug Administration
 - The Opioid Epidemic: What Veterinarians Need to Know

ACVAA - Opioid-Sparing Pain Therapy in Animals

- Incorporate and utilize validated pain assessment instruments
 - Glasgow Composite Measure Pain Scale
 - Colorado State University Acute Pain Scale
 - UNESP-Botucatu Multidimensional Composite Pain Scale in cats
- Incorporate “Quality of Life” (QOL) evaluative protocols and processes
 - a. Environmental enrichment
 - b. Feline Friendly and Fear free environments
- Establish protocols that include “Quality of Care” (QOC)
 - “Enhanced Recovery” (ER)
 - “Perioperative Quality Initiative” (POQI) consensus statement procedures

ACVAA - Opioid-Sparing Pain Therapy in Animals

- Develop and utilize “multimodal” pain therapy protocols that incorporate
 - Drug additivity
 - Drug supra-additivity (synergism)
- Develop and incorporate opioid-free perioperative analgesic perianesthetic procedures
- Supplement general anesthesia with evidence based constant rate infusion (CRI) techniques
 - a. Local anesthetics (ex. lidocaine)
 - b. NMDA antagonists (ex. ketamine)
 - c. Alpha-2 agonists (ex. dexmedetomidine)
- Employ local anesthetic techniques including epidurals and ultrasound guided nerve blocks

ACVAA - Opioid-Sparing Pain Therapy in Animals

- Utilize complimentary and alternative pain therapies
 - physical therapy
 - acupuncture
 - Lasers
- Establish minimum standards and monitoring techniques for physical status, pain/pain therapy
 - Monitor cardiorespiratory parameters that guide clinical decision-making throughout the perioperative period
- Establish a relationship with a pain “Expert”



MODEL REGULATIONS – APPROPRIATE USE OF OPIOIDS

As recommended by the AAVSB Regulatory Policy Task Force in July 2020

<https://aavsb.org/Download?url=s/npgytxnowhz906b/AAVSB%20Model%20Regulations%20Appropriate%20Use%20of%20Opioids.pdf>

Prescribing of Opioids for Acute Pain

- Veterinarians must be legally able to provide controlled substances including the establishment of a Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR)
- Veterinarians shall complete a history and appropriate PE and evaluate the Patient's history as part of the initial complaint.
- Before initiating treatment, nonpharmacologic and non-opioid treatment shall be given consideration prior to treatment with an opioid.
- If an opioid is necessary for treatment of acute pain, prescribe it in the lowest effective dose appropriate for the condition
- For opioid management of acute pain, the Patient shall be re-evaluated for the continued need for an opioid or a controlled substance
- The medical record for prescribing opioids shall include all appropriate information

Prescribing of Opioids for Chronic Conditions

- A Veterinarian may prescribe an opioid for management of chronic pain, terminal illnesses, or certain chronic conditions, such as chronic heart failure, chronic bronchitis, osteoarthritis, collapsing trachea, or related conditions.
- When prescribing chronic use of an opioid for terminal illnesses the Veterinarian shall develop a treatment plan for the patient including
 - A means to measure progress in treatment
 - possible lowest effective dose further
 - criteria to guide owners on follow-up visits
 - extent to which the pain or condition is associated with physical impairment
- For continued prescribing of an opioid for chronic conditions, the patient shall be seen and reevaluated at least every XX months,

FDA

- FDA Education Blueprint for Health Care Providers Involved in the Treatment and Monitoring of Patients with Pain
 - Published September 2018
 - FDA Education Blueprint for Health Care Providers Involved in the Treatment and Monitoring of Patients with Pain
 - The Basics of Pain Management
 - Creating the Pain Treatment Plan

FDA - What Veterinarians Need to Know

- Follow All State & Federal Regulations on Prescribing Opioids
- Educate Clients on Safe Handling, Storage and Disposal of Opioids
- Use Alternatives to Opioids
- Know What to Do If a Pet Overdoses on Fentanyl or Other Opioids

Have a Safety Plan and Know the Signs of Opioid Abuse

- Develop and work a plan
 - Determine scenarios - diversion, clients seeking opioids
 - Talk to local law enforcement
 - Develop protocols
 - Develop team member training
 - Train you team
 - Drill – Discuss – Re-evaluate

Veterinary Teams in our own Crisis

Burnout / Suicide Resources

In The News

- *Veterinary surgeons and suicide: a structured review of possible influences on increased risk*(Vet Rec. 2010 Mar 27; 166(13):388-97)
- Suicide in veterinary medicine: Let's talk about it (Can Vet J. 2015 Jan; 56(1): 89–92)
- JAVMA (January 1, 2019, Vol. 254, No. 1, Pages 104-112)
- JAVMA (September 1, 2019, Vol. 255, No. 5, Pages 595-608)
- Veterinarians Face Unique Issues That Make Suicide One of the Profession's Big Worries – Time Magazine (September 12, 2019)

Veterinary Suicide

- Suicide among veterinarians in the United States from 1979 through 2015 - Suzanne E. Tomasi DVM, MPH; et al
 - Nearly 400 veterinarians died by suicide
 - female veterinarians are up to 3.5 times more likely to kill themselves than members of the general population
 - 39% deaths by suicide among veterinarians resulted from pharmaceutical poisoning
- Suicides and deaths of undetermined intent among veterinary professionals from 2003 through 2014 - Tracy K. Witte PhD; et al
 - Poisoning was the most common mechanism of death among veterinarians; the drug most commonly used was pentobarbital

Taking Care of Ourselves

- Not One More Vet
 - <https://www.nomv.org/>
- #4 eyes save lives
 - <https://drandyroark.com/what-do-we-do-about-suicide/>
 - <https://todaysveterinarybusiness.com/save-a-life/>
- VIN Foundation - VETS4VETS® RESOURCES
 - <https://vinfoundation.org/resources/vets4vets-veterinary-mental-health-resources/>

Diversion of Drugs in Veterinary Practice

Clients and Employees

HOW TO RECOGNIZE A VET SHOPPER

- New clients bringing in seriously injured animals with vague histories
- Old, incomplete, or missing veterinary care records
- Describing clinical signs that are inconsistent with findings on examination of the patient
- Describing clinical signs that require specific medications
 - hydrocodone bitartrate, tramadol hydrochloride, and codeine sulfate

HOW TO RECOGNIZE A VET SHOPPER

- Requesting medications by name (e.g., Tramadol or Xanax)
- Refusing medications as prescribed and suggesting alternatives
- Requesting early refills of medication or claiming medications were lost or stolen
- Requesting refills, while missing appointments
- Uncooperative and aggressive behavior

Ways to Slow Client Misuse

- Train your Team how to recognize “red flag” behavior in Clients
- Take the time to always check the prior medical record information
- Utilize alternatives to controlled substances when appropriate
- Dispense in smaller quantities
- Require re-evaluations for refills
- Require photo ID’s for all controlled substance script pickups
- Script out all controlled substances to a pharmacy
- Counsel your Clients regarding proper drug storage at home

Employee Opioid Use – What is Their Normal?

- Recognize outside risk factors
 - Family issues
 - Recent breakups
 - Accident or injury of a family member
- New “experience” in Controlled Substance activities
- Spending time in Controlled Substance storage area

Employee Opioid Use – Behavior Changes

- Mood swings, anxiety, or depression
- Mental confusion and an inability to concentrate
- Making frequent mistakes at work
- Not showing up for work
- Overbearing attitude toward Controlled Substance activities

Employee Opioid Use – Practice Irregularities

- Drop in normal effectiveness of injectable drugs
- Unexplained issues with
 - Inventories
 - Ordering / receiving
 - Logging discrepancies

Ways to Slow Employee Misuse

- Background checks
- Proper training regarding controlled substance handling
- Enhance security
 - Camera utilization
 - Controlled access – electronic / biometric
- Timely reconciliation of inventories
- Develop and utilize SOPs and best practices

Resources

- The Opioid Epidemic: What Veterinarians Need to Know
 - <https://www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/resources-you/opioid-epidemic-what-veterinarians-need-know>
- Opioid-Sparing Pain Therapy in Animals: Working Task Force
 - <https://acvaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Opioid-Sparing-Pain-Therapy-in-Animals-Working-Task-Force-Document.pdf>
- AAVSB - Model Regulations for Appropriate Use of Opioids
 - <https://aavsb.org/Download?url=s/npgytxnowhz906b/AAVSB%20Model%20Regulations%20Appropriate%20Use%20of%20Opioids.pdf>
- Prescription Opioid Epidemic: Do Veterinarians Have a Dog in the Fight?
 - <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/pdfplus/10.2105/AJPH.2018.304603>
- JAMA - Are Some People Using Their Dogs to Get Opioids?
 - <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2720587>

Thank you for your attention!



Questions or Comments:

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