

**PROVINCIAL OFFICE**

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Created December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**Information for CVBC Registrant Veterinarians**

**Duty to Report and Dental Disease**

The BC SPCA regularly receives inquiries from veterinarians asking for clarification on when untreated dental or oral disease reaches the threshold of possible animal cruelty. We also receive calls to our cruelty hotline from both community members and veterinarians reporting untreated dental disease. In 2015, the BC SPCA consulted with a board-certified dental specialist to create training materials for BC SPCA shelter staff and animal protection officers. He simultaneously created a training slideshow for CVBC registrants. Based on the definitions of distress in the PCA Act, the following list of dental/oral conditions engage the Duty to Report in BC.

**List of conditions that veterinarians should report if not treated**

- **Fractures where there is pulp exposure** (always causes pain and eventual abscess)
- **Oral cancer** even if the animal is eating
- **Broken jaw** or severe facial trauma even if the animal is eating
- **Feline stomatitis**
- **Other painful conditions** where pain is not treated. Severe periodontal disease may fall into this category, but may not always be painful. Animals should be assessed for pain on an individual basis.

It is outside the scope of the BC SPCA's enforcement mandate to define or prescribe "treatment" for these conditions. Treatment may range from palliative medications to major surgery. As long as the animal is no longer in distress as defined under the PCA Act, treatment choices are entirely determined by the attending veterinarian in partnership with the animal guardian.