

# CARROT OR STICK?

For close to two decades, I have been lecturing on the many benefits of embracing veterinary dentistry. It is a Win-Win-Win situation that is good for the patients, their owners and your practice. See this - [Why Bother](#). This is the carrot. There are many incentives for veterinarians to get on board. But for many, this carrot has not been enough. So now I am going to show you the stick.

In the December 2012 issue of the [CVO Update](#), there is summary of a discipline committee case. I have included an image of the relevant page with the doctor's name redacted. The name is published in the original as is the policy when a member is found or pleads guilty. I chose to black out the name as it is irrelevant. Any member who has not embraced intra-oral dental radiography, who leaves root remnants behind, who is not keeping detailed dental and anesthetic records could find their name in the black boxes. I know for certain that the guilty party in this single case has a lot of company, but most clients either are unaware or do not want to "rock the boat".

But having a license suspended for providing inadequate dental care is not a really new phenomenon. In June of 2010, there was another case of a member pleading guilty to charges of:

- Failing to supervise an auxiliary.
- Failing to maintain proper records.
- Failing to address all of the patient's oral health issues.

The "Standard of care" is a moving target and it always moves forward (the bar is constantly being raised). For clinics lagging behind, they should not wait for the bar to come down to their level as this simply will never happen. It is time for every clinic in Ontario to either "fish or cut bait". In other words, if a clinic chooses to continue to offer dental services at all, they need to bring the level of dental care they provide up to the standards laid out in the 2013 [AAHA Dental Care Guidelines](#). These guidelines replaced the ones published in 2005, so this is not something new.

And the [CVO's position on dentistry](#) also should be taken to heart. It is already many years old (posted in 2008), so again, this is not new information. Both of the discipline cases I have included here occurred after these guidelines were available. So the message is "ignore them at your peril".

[2010 Discipline Case Summary](#)

[2012 Discipline Case Summary](#)