

RECEIVED and FILED by the
NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF
VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS
on this date of: 11-26-08

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STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS

IN THE MATTER OF :

IRIS FURLONG, D.V.M. :

TO PRACTICE VETERINARY MEDICINE :
IN THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY :
_____ :

Administrative Action

CONSENT ORDER

This matter was opened to the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") following the Board's review of a consumer complaint filed by Melissa Strelec and Lamar Windon regarding the veterinary care and treatment rendered to their one (1) year old Pitbull, "Duchess," by the respondent, Iris Furlong, D.V.M., on or about June 17, 2008. In their complaint to the Board, Ms. Strelec and Mr. Windon alleged that the respondent was negligent in her treatment of Duchess.

According to the complaint, Duchess was presented to the People for Animals Low Cost Spay/Neuter Clinic ("Clinic") for

spaying on June 17, 2008. The surgery was performed by Dr. Furlong and Duchess was sent home later that same day. The owners maintain that, approximately five (5) days later, dark red blood began discharging from the dog's vagina. The Clinic was closed on that day so the owners contacted the covering veterinary facility as instructed by the Clinic for assistance. The owners were informed that if the bleeding was not heavy, Duchess could wait until the following day in order to be treated by the Clinic and Dr. Furlong. However, on the following morning, the owners maintain that Duchess' bloody discharge was heavier. The Clinic was again closed on this day, Monday, June 23, 2008. The owners sought veterinary medical attention from a subsequent veterinarian.

The second veterinarian examined Duchess and concluded that the dog was bleeding internally and recommended an immediate second surgery. The owners maintain that they inquired as to whether they could wait until the following day so that Duchess could be seen by Dr. Furlong but were advised that prolonging treatment was not in the best interest of Duchess. The owners consented to the surgery which was performed on June 23rd and Duchess recovered. The owners allege that Dr. Furlong's initial spay surgery was not performed correctly.

In correspondence written on her behalf, dated August 1, 2006, Dr. Furlong maintains that emergency surgery was not indicated and that Duchess' medical issues could have waited until

the Clinic was opened. Moreover, the respondent asserted that she was not negligent in her spay of the dog and that this conclusion was corroborated by the subsequent veterinarian in later telephone conversations.

A review of the patient records of Duchess maintained by the respondent revealed that Dr. Furlong did not record specific physical examination findings nor a description of the surgery or post-operative care.

The Board, following its review of the patient records and other relevant documents in this matter, determined that the veterinary medical services provided by Dr. Furlong did not substantially deviate from acceptable veterinary medical standards of care to warrant disciplinary action. However, the Board concluded that the respondent violated or failed to comply with its patient record regulation, N.J.A.C. 13:44-4.9, in that her medical records for Duchess do not contain information required by the regulations.

Specifically, the Board noted that the records maintained by Dr. Furlong failed to contain the following information, including, but not limited to: 1) the identification of the facility; 2) all pertinent symptoms and signs observed, namely, pre-surgical physical examination findings; and 3) treatment or treatment plan prescribed, for example, notations regarding post operative care directives. This conduct constitutes a violation of

N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(h), and specifically N.J.A.C. 13:44-4.9, and therefore establishes a basis for disciplinary action.

The parties desiring to resolve this matter without the need for further disciplinary proceedings; and the respondent acknowledging and not contesting the findings of the Board; and the Board having been satisfied that the within resolution adequately protects the public health, safety and welfare, and for good cause shown:

IT IS, THEREFORE, ON THIS DAY OF NOVEMBER 2008,

ORDERED THAT:

1. The respondent, Iris Furlong, D.V.M., shall cease and desist from any further violations of N.J.A.C. 13:44-4.9.
2. Dr. Furlong shall pay a civil penalty in the amount of \$1,000.00 for her violation of the patient record regulation, N.J.A.C. 13:44-4.9(a), as detailed above. Such penalty shall be paid by certified check or money order made payable to the State of New Jersey and submitted to Leslie G. Aronson, Executive Director of the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners at 124 Halsey Street, Post Office Box 45020, Newark, New Jersey 07101, contemporaneously with the entry of this Order. Subsequent violations will subject respondent to enhanced penalties pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-25.
3. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Order or remit any and all payments required by this Order will

result in the filing of a certificate of debt and may result in subsequent disciplinary proceedings for failure to comply with an Order of the Board.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF
VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS

By: Mark W. Logan VMD
MARK W. LOGAN, V.M.D.
President

I have read and understand
the within Consent Order and
agree to be bound by its terms.
Consent is hereby given to the
Board to enter this Order.

Iris Furlong, DVM
IRIS FURLONG, D.V.M.

DATED: 11/19/08