Virginia Board of Veterinary Medicine

Veterinarians and Wildlife Rehabilitators – Prescription Drugs

There is no allowance in law for a veterinarian to provide a wildlife rehabilitator with a general stock of controlled substances to be administered to wildlife, either by donation or for a fee. **In Virginia, the term "controlled substances" is defined as any prescription drug including Schedule VI drugs**. The meaning of "donation" in this context refers to the transferring of controlled substances without a prescription. However, a veterinarian may opt to not charge for a properly dispensed controlled substance.

A veterinarian is allowed to prescribe, administer, and dispense controlled substances in keeping with the requirements of the Virginia Drug Control Act, specifically § 54.1-3409 of the *Code of Virginia*, and the statutes and regulations governing the practice of veterinary medicine. A veterinarian may prescribe, label and dispense a drug to a wildlife rehabilitator for the treatment of a specific animal after establishing a bona fide practitioner-patient relationship.

The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) only permits the transfer of Schedule II-V drugs from one DEA registrant to another DEA registrant. Violations of this requirement can result in DEA imposing on the veterinarian a $10,000 fine per incident. State law does not prohibit a veterinarian from receiving back an already dispensed Scheduled VI drug for destruction purposes, but there is no provision in law for a veterinarian to re-dispense a returned drug, either by donation or for a fee.

For more information on controlled substances in veterinary practice, please review the Board of Veterinary Medicine's Guidance Document 150-13: Controlled Substances in Veterinary Practices located at http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/vet/vet_guidelines.htm .