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Date: December 20, 2013
To: House of Delegates
From: Executive Board
Cc: Office of the Executive Vice President
Re: Resolution #3-2013: Homeopathy

The AVMA believes that scientific discovery is critically important for the continual evolution of clinical practice and should be the basis for the development of public policy in veterinary medicine, public health, agriculture, food safety and the environment.

It is the role of the scientific community to engage in high-quality research and publish their findings in the scientific literature. Clinical practitioners must critically review the literature to determine the best practice for their patients; this is the model for evidence-based medicine. These standards are, of course, constantly evolving and should be the subject of vigorous debate.

There is a role for professional organizations to convene experts to review the scientific literature on broad subjects, and to develop evidence-based guidance for developing policy. However, as the board of the national organization for the veterinary medical profession, the AVMA must ask itself whether it is the proper arbiter of specific clinical practices. Furthermore, the Executive Board must ask itself whether going down the path of reviewing and judging particular clinical therapies, whether traditional or alternative/complementary, will be supportive of our mission or divisive in our community.

Where does it stop? Consider the wide range of current medical and surgical interventions that could be adjudicated by the AVMA, many of which have varying and conflicting levels of scientific evidence. Popular practices, over time, often turn out to be ineffective, or even harmful.

For the AVMA not to condemn homeopathy should not presume endorsement; it simply means that we trust our system of research, practice, teaching and continuing education to sort through the evidence and determine appropriate therapies.