

ARIZONA STATE SENATE

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TO: MEMBERS OF THE SENATE
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

DATE: February 10, 2023

SUBJECT: Strike everything amendment to S.B. 1401, relating to animal acupuncture

Purpose

Allows an acupuncturist to become certified to treat animals if the acupuncturist is nationally certified for acupuncture and oriental medicine to treat animals and if the animal has been under the care of and referred by a licensed veterinarian for the condition being treated by the acupuncturist.

Background

To receive a license to practice acupuncture, a person must submit an application to the Board of Acupuncture Examiners (Board) that documents that the applicant as successfully completed an approved clean needle technique course and have either: 1) been certified in acupuncture by the National Certification Commission for acupuncture and oriental medicine; 2) have passed the point location, foundations of oriental medicine, biomedicine and acupuncture modules; or 3) have been licensed by another state with similar standards. The applicant must additionally have graduated from or completed training in a Board-approved program of acupuncture with a minimum of 1,850 hours of training that includes at least 800 hours of Board-approved clinical training ([A.R.S. § 32-3924](#)).

Acupuncture is a system of medicine based in traditional practices and informed by contemporary science and includes the following: 1) puncturing the skin by thin, solid needles to reach subcutaneous structures; 2) stimulating the needles to effect a positive therapeutic response; 3) removing needles; 4) using and prescribing adjunctive and herbal therapies; 5) using decision-support tools, including physical and clinical examinations; and 6) ordering diagnostic and clinical laboratory procedures to determine the nature of care or to form a basis for referral to other licensed health care professionals or both ([A.R.S. § 32-3901](#)).

A *veterinarian* is a person who has received a doctor's degree in veterinary medicine from a veterinary college. A *licensed veterinarian* is a person who is currently licensed to practice veterinary medicine in this state ([A.R.S. § 32-2201](#)).

Oriental medicine, also called Traditional Chinese Medicine, is a medical system that has been used for thousands of years to prevent, diagnose, treat disease and includes acupuncture, diet, herbal therapy, meditation, physical exercise, and massage ([National Institute of Health](#)).

There is no anticipated fiscal impact to the state General Fund associated with this legislation.

Provisions

1. Allows an acupuncturist to apply for Board certification to treat animals if the acupuncturist is nationally certified by the American Board of Animal Acupuncture or the National Certification Commission for acupuncture and oriental medicine to treat animals.
2. Allows the Board to prescribe procedures for applying for certification and paying the certification fee.
3. Allows a certified acupuncturist to apply all appropriate acupuncture modalities while treating animals.
4. Allows a certified acupuncturist to treat animals only if:
 - a) the animal has been under the care of a licensed veterinarian for the condition being treated by the acupuncturist; and
 - b) the licensed veterinarian refers the animal to the acupuncturist for treatment.
5. Excludes the actions of a certified animal acupuncturist from acts that constitute the practice of veterinary medicine.
6. Applies the statutory definition of *licensed veterinarian* used for the licensing, oversight and regulation of doctors of veterinary medicine.
7. Makes technical changes.
8. Becomes effective on the general effective date.