

**THE JOCKEY CLUB  
THOROUGHBRED SAFETY COMMITTEE  
RECOMMENDATION  
August 14, 2011**

**Recommendation: Racetrack Veterinary Fee Structures**

The American Association of Equine Practitioners issued the following statement in their white paper, *Clinical Guidelines for Veterinarians Practicing in a Pari-Mutuel Environment*, October 2010. To provide guidance to veterinarians when creating fee structures, the AAEP recommends that fees should adequately reflect professional services in addition to treatment programs. Collaboration among the veterinarian, owner and trainer is encouraged throughout the decision making process.

“Veterinary fee structures should place emphasis upon the value of professional services in addition to the administration and dispensing of medication. In addition, practitioners are encouraged to make themselves readily accessible to owners and trainers for consultation regarding diagnostic and therapeutic strategies or questions regarding the invoice. Invoices should accurately indicate all examinations, treatments and procedures performed on individual horses. Both the invoice and the medical history should avoid colloquial terminology and be in common medical terminology. It is recommended that the invoice with payment history be delivered directly to the owner or owner’s agent with a copy to the trainer at least monthly. All communication with owners and trainers should be consistent with a transparent owner-trainer-veterinarian relationship.”

Testimony provided to the Thoroughbred Safety Committee from veterinarians, owners and trainers indicated that fewer treatment program decisions were made with the benefit of consultation among the veterinarian, owner and trainer. Furthermore, fee structures for the majority of racetrack veterinary practitioners reflect less emphasis upon the value of examination and diagnostic services. Rather, veterinary fees appear to be increasingly weighted towards the dispensing and administration of medications.

In support of AAEP recommendations and based upon discussions with veterinarians, trainers and owners, the Thoroughbred Safety Committee calls for:

“Veterinary fee structures that properly recognize the value of examinations, diagnostics and professional services independent of the dispensing and administration of medications while maintaining fee neutrality. It further encourages close collaboration and consultation among the trainer, veterinarian and owner in the diagnosis and treatment of the Thoroughbred racehorse.”