

Adelaide Couple Plead Guilty After Refusing Veterinary Treatment For Elderly Dog

RSPCA South Australia attended court today for the sentencing of an Adelaide couple who pleaded guilty to failing to mitigate harm under the Animal Welfare Act in relation to their elderly dog.

The charges relate to the owners refusing veterinary treatment for the dog. The Labrador cross had not been able to stand up for a period of approximately one month, and had been lying in her own urine and faeces for that period of time.

Over a one month period Graham and Gloria Richards were provided with information and options for mobile vets to attend their property to examine the dog. Following the failure over this time to arrange vet treatment for their dog, the case was then reported to the RSPCA South Australia Inspectorate.

Upon attendance and examination by RSPCA South Australia Inspectors it was discovered that the dog had large areas of urine scalding and associated fur loss along her right hand side, was bleeding from infected pressure sores on her legs, was suffering from diarrhoea and was significantly distressed. Accordingly, the dog was removed by Inspectors for examination by an external emergency veterinarian.

Given the dog's inability to stand unaided, advanced age, the significance of her medical issues and associated level of suffering, the external veterinarian advised the dog's prognosis was very poor and recommended the dog be humanely euthanised.

Today Magistrate White handed Mr and Mrs Richards a prohibition order banning them from owning any animals until further notice. RSPCA South Australia is satisfied that the court granted the prohibition order which had been sought.

This case serves as a reminder to pet owners that they have a duty of care to their animals, and are legally obligated under the Animal Welfare Act to seek veterinary attention for any significant medical issues their pets may be suffering from.

If an owner is unable to provide the medical care their animal urgently needs, it is recommended they discuss payment plans with their vet or contact RSPCA South Australia, Animal Welfare League or another reputable rescue group as soon as possible for advice and information on surrendering the animal.

The Images below were taken during examination by an external emergency veterinarian show the dog's urine scalding, infected pressure sores and associated fur loss:



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