



# 2010 AND BEYOND

**A plan for the College of Veterinarians of Ontario to work with its members on issues that impact the profession in order to protect the public interest**

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## **Introduction**

Since the last Strategic Plan was created and developed by the College of Veterinarians in 2005, veterinarians' roles have become far wider and more complicated than anyone could have predicted.

Council has created a new Vision and Mission in order to focus on the coordination of efforts to identify and understand the issues, and to determine the ways in which the College can assist in making it convenient and practical for our members to collaborate in creating ideas for resolution, and working to implement them.

The College's new Vision and Mission are as follows:

### **VISION**

**Trust earned through leadership and innovation**

### **MISSION**

**To guide, govern and inspire excellence in the profession through partnerships with veterinarians and the public in the service of society**

Our Vision compels the CVO to provide the leadership and innovation that will earn the trust of those we serve. Our Mission continues the legislated mandate and Council's resolve to strive for excellence in the profession by working in partnership with the public whose interest we protect.

The plan we have formulated to accomplish this over the next 3 years concentrates on 3 Key Results Areas. By using these as our guide, we will develop relevant programs and processes that will help us to reach our goals. We will create an operations plan with detailed actions for each Key Results Area on approval of this business plan.

## **The Key Results Areas**

- A) Member Engagement
- B) Efficiency of Discipline and Complaints Processes
- C) Preparedness for Legislative Opportunities

## **Enabling Action**

### **Key Result Area:**

#### **A) Member Engagement**

We are aware that it is sometimes very frustrating for our members to be forced to comply with the rules of a governing body, simply because they want to fulfill their dream of working with animals. There is an ongoing trade-off between the privilege of having the exclusive right to practice veterinary medicine and being subject to rules and regulations as to the manner in which that practice is conducted.

The issues involved in both the medicine and the delivery of it are fascinating, always changing, rapidly widening and crucially important in the global context. They affect human health in ways that were never possible or even contemplated until people began to move themselves, their knowledge, and their goods and services, with ease and rapidity, all over the planet. This means that expertise is available on any given subject, and can be shared with the vast majority of the world's population. It also means that diseases of both humans and animals and environmental threats can travel farther and faster than ever before.

Our business plan calls for the College to take a pro-active role in facilitating groups of veterinarians to come together with numerous of their colleagues and their human medicine counterparts to develop working relationships for the benefit of all. The "One Health" philosophy and initiatives are worthy of planning and research, and will be further explored and utilized as we go along.

The plan is for collaboration of individual veterinarians and other health care providers, including researchers, educators, veterinary and human medical specialists, and veterinary technicians to name a very few. While interprofessional collaboration is not a new idea, it must be organized efficiently, and the College believes that we can assist in this area. As well we are inviting representatives of veterinary associations to visit Council meetings to observe the work of their College and become more familiar with us. We plan to recruit members for task forces on multiple issues, and use satisfaction surveys after events to measure the level of positive and negative results, so that we can change the processes that are not found to be useful. In addition we will post questions and issues on our website and ask the members to reply with their suggestions.

We will of course, continue with the vigorous Quality Assurance program and its pilot projects, workshops, Continuing Professional Development activities and working groups, and we will hold this year's Members' Forum as usual, and focus it on advertising of veterinary services.

We are in the midst of a database renovation, which, when completed, will make member services much more efficient and satisfactory. We will be looking at on-line renewals as well as fees payments, interactive delivery of workshops, a CPD Portal, an enhanced Website, and articles by members in Update – the first of which will appear in the September issue.

These are not all, by any means. The idea is to ensure that our members appreciate the partnership which exists between them and their governing body in exploring the endless possibilities inherent in the practice of veterinary medicine.

In addition, we will be exploring the possibilities for engagement of the public that we serve. Some of our peers in the human health regulatory bodies have studied ways and means of creating opportunities for the public to take an active part in formulating ideas for delivery of medical services and communications between themselves and their professional caregivers. The College plans to liaise with those who have experience in this field so that we can use the lessons learned to develop our own approach to the development of true meetings of mind.

## **B) Efficiency of Discipline and Complaints Processes**

One of the areas of concern for many members is the length and lack of flexibility in the “policing” duties of the College.

While the two processes of Complaints Investigation and Discipline Proceedings are controlled very stringently through the *Veterinarians Act* and Regulation 1093 made under that Act, our plan is to study the new Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee that has been legislated for the human health colleges under the *Regulated Health Professions Act*. As this is a new initiative, we will be gathering information as to its structure and effect, and its usefulness to and fit for the College.

In addition, we will be exploring the possibilities of Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) models and opportunities within the Complaints procedures. Currently we use the ADR processes frequently as part of a potential referral to the Discipline Committee; and that Committee also uses them in order to effect a mutual resolution without the necessity of holding a hearing. We have had little opportunity to employ ADR techniques for Complaints Committee matters in the past, but will research the current models and resources that may now allow us to do so.

We will ensure that Complaints Committee policies address the issues of communication to participants, use of precedents and efficiency as far as the College can within the current legal mandate. As well, we will be looking into the need for changes in the legislation that may increase the number of members on the Complaints Committees, in order to ensure that the time for completion of an investigation is not delayed as a direct result of College procedure.

## **C) Preparedness for Legislative Opportunities**

The College is currently in the midst of preparing to request Regulation changes in a number of areas based on problems we have seen that necessitate some updating or clarification. One of the major Regulation changes is the establishment of a Quality Assurance Program based on the currently operating program components (CPD, Peer Review, Workshops, etc.) These will be submitted to OMAFRA once the process of drafting and approval by Council and members is completed. The *Veterinarians Act* will need Quality Assurance-specific paragraphs inserted in order to entrench the necessary authority for the Quality Assurance Program to operate.

As well, like all regulatory bodies, we are increasingly affected by legislative imperatives imposed from outside our own statute. In order to cope with the new demands from within and without, there are a number of steps the College must take to ensure that we can incorporate the changes and design and develop necessary procedures.

We are currently recruiting for staff with an eye to the future in order to be able to accommodate the internal changes in our daily tasks and the need for overview thinking. As noted above, we are working to prepare our own submissions for changes, and we are also creating and regularly reviewing a list of future changes we would welcome.

We are preparing for the necessity to accommodate the *Ontario Labour Relations Act* in its implementation of the Agreement on Internal Trade which results in the smooth transfer of veterinarians from one Canadian jurisdiction to another. We prepared and delivered a submission to the Standing Committee on Social Policy regarding the *Not-For-Profit Corporations Act*, to request exemption from application of that Act as it may seriously interfere with our governing processes and our public interest mandate. The *Fair Access to the Regulated Professions Act* requires a great deal of staff time, the *Workplace Violence and Harassment* legislation requires a risk assessment of the College's location and staff vulnerability, as well as a plan for training in emergencies. As well, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* will be implemented for the Public Relations aspects of accommodating persons with disabilities, and our own Quality Assurance provisions will necessitate a great deal of attention to ensure the program is managed such that there is smooth delivery of its numerous components to our members.

With regard to all 3 of the Key Results Areas, we are currently recruiting for more staff and distribution of individual responsibilities with an eye to the future. As the overall tasking of the College increases, we will need to be able to accommodate the internal changes in our daily work and the need for overview thinking.

## **Monitoring Progress**

During the span of this Strategic Plan, staff will be engaging in ongoing monitoring, reporting and evaluating of the plan itself and our abilities to reach targeted goals that will be set in the Operations Plan. We will be reporting on a regular basis to Council as to status and progress, as well as on the environmental and other impacts which may affect our timelines. Council will be setting aside time to review the deliverables and the goals, and to make adjustments that may be needed. In addition we will be reporting on a regular basis to our members, the public, and other stakeholders.