



### **Completing Your Professional Practice Profile**

The first crucial step in effective continuing professional development (CPD) is to assess and describe your practice (whether it be clinical, regulatory, governmental, consulting, or academic) in order to identify relevant CPD learning needs or opportunities for your professional improvement. You and your veterinary colleagues evaluate your own success in practice in order to answer two questions: “How good a job am I doing?” and “How can I do a better job?” Self-assessment of your practice in the CPD Cycle is similar: identifying CPD opportunities that will help you to “do a better job” as you see fit demonstrates professional self-reflection, which is a requirement of professional self-regulation.

There are challenges to completing effective self-assessment. Health-care professionals often struggle to accurately assess their abilities and competencies, especially in isolation without established criteria for comparison. However, using objective data from a Professional Practice Profile improves your ability to accurately identify those CPD learning needs which are relevant to your practice. Data sources available to help you complete your Practice Profile include:

- Analysis of the Professional Roles of a veterinarian
- Description of Patient or Animal Populations
- Identification of Therapeutic, Research, Teaching areas in Scope of Practice
- Prioritization of most frequent services provided or challenges encountered

Professional Roles of a Veterinarian are synergistic and related domains of professional activity and expertise, which include:

- Veterinary Medical Expert: applies medical knowledge, clinical skills, and professional attitudes.
- Communicator: conveys effective oral and written communications.
- Collaborator: works with colleagues and team members.
- Manager: organizes sustainable practices and makes decisions about resources.
- Public Health Promoter: protects the health of animals and humans
- Scholar/Educator/Researcher: demonstrates a lifelong commitment learning
- Professional and Leader: leads by engaging in ethical practice and professional self-regulation.

Patient or Animal Population can be analyzed using hard data extracted from the medical records and/or an intuitive assessment of your practice. For veterinarians who do not work in primary clinical practice, “animal population” describes the species addressed by your research, teaching, policy development, or consulting, which may include human health.

Scope of Practice in veterinary medicine is quite diverse. Many veterinarians have professional responsibility in a wide diversity of therapeutic, research or teaching areas. New areas in your scope of practice or areas where you are less confident may indicate an opportunity to engage in CPD.

Services Provided may include medical problems diagnosed, surgeries performed, medications prescribed, or diagnostic test ordered. In non-clinical practices, services may include policies developed, issues addressed, or regulations enforced. Analyzing professional challenges in this way may also identify CPD opportunities.

By reviewing objective data from your Professional Practice Profile, you can identify areas on which to focus in order to engage in effective and relevant CPD activities.