

Charting two courses

Annual Report **2025**



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Welcome

Our 2025 Annual Report provides an overview of our focus, priorities, and achievements. 2025 has been an extraordinary period of transition as the College moves towards its new future as the College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario (CVPO)!

The College of Veterinarians of Ontario (College) regulates the practice of veterinary medicine in Ontario. Veterinarians are required to have a licence to practice veterinary medicine in this province. We serve the public by understanding the risks involved in the practice of veterinary medicine and working with our partners to reduce the potential for harm to animals and people. We are happy to help you understand the role of the College and its future as the CVPO.

Our mission:

Governing the veterinary profession in the public interest.

Our vision:

Public confidence in veterinary regulation.

What we do:

- **Licensure:** Veterinarians are required to meet licensure requirements and practise competently. Our Public Register helps the public make informed choices about veterinary care.
- **Accreditation:** Veterinary facilities are inspected and accredited to ensure they contain equipment needed for patient care.
- **Quality Assurance:** Veterinarians are encouraged to engage in ongoing quality improvement and to demonstrate professionalism throughout their careers. The College provides tools and resources to assist veterinarians with ongoing learning.
- **Guidance:** The College sets standards that support the public's access to safe, quality veterinary medicine. We demonstrate compassion, offer guidance, and provide exceptional customer service.
- **Investigations:** The College responds to concerns about veterinarians in Ontario and conducts investigations as required.

Our principles:

We strive to be: transparent, reliable, relevant, independent, compassionate, inclusive, and accountable.





Leadership Message

Charting two courses simultaneously — the adventure of the familiar and the new.

This Annual Report is unlike any other. It speaks primarily to the continuing solid and thoughtful leadership of the existing College of Veterinarians of Ontario (College) and recognizes the emerging important strategic work of the Transition Council of the yet to be proclaimed College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario (CVPO).

This is a daunting and exhilarating period in our history. The energy and commitment of two Councils and College staff cannot be overstated as we work tirelessly with our many sector partners to serve the public interest in the regulation of veterinary medicine in Ontario.

With the anticipation of the proclamation of the new Act in the coming months, the College remains steadfast in delivering its mandated regulatory programs — licensure, facility accreditation, complaints management, and quality assurance. And while the development of new policy at the College is winding down, attention to our continued advancement and improvement remains front and centre.

Each initiative demonstrates the positive impact of our work on veterinary regulation.

As we anticipate the introduction of the new *Veterinary Professionals Act* and the regulation of the veterinary team under a one profession, two professionals' model, the Transition Council has shone this year with its remarkable leadership in developing the regulatory concepts to support proclamation. Their final submission to government was sent in September 2025. A special update on their work can be found starting on page 14 in this Annual Report.

We applaud and thank our veterinary community in Ontario for its innovation, its resilience, and its support of safe, quality veterinary care that serves both animal health and the public good. Continue to follow this adventure from the familiar to the new — our future together holds great outcomes.



Dr. Jessica Retterath
President



Jan Robinson
Registrar and
Chief Executive Officer

This Annual Report

provides highlights of accomplishments that are recognized provincially, nationally and internationally:

The creation of new resources and supports specifically for our facility directors and our accredited veterinary facilities.

The development of a first in kind valid pathway to limited licensure for internationally educated veterinarians or those returning to practice with years of experience.

A new validated benchmark for all language testing in either French or English.

The promotion of our complaints navigator role to support both complainants and veterinarians in the process.

The use of our peer review of medical records program to assist with resources for veterinarians in areas of identified risk.

Snapshot of the profession

5,890+

licensed veterinarians

1,790+

accredited veterinary facilities



For more data about the veterinary profession and facilities, please visit the 2025 Supplementary Data Report.

Strategy 2026



The evolution to the College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario remained a primary focus throughout 2025. However, work continues on all strategic priorities. The College is now moving through the third year of Strategy 2026.

Championing legislative reform to affirm an agile future

The College welcomes the *Veterinary Professionals Act*, the new governing legislation for the College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario. The Transition Council is overseeing the transition to a modern framework for the regulation of the veterinary profession in Ontario.

Achievements in championing legislative reform focus on the work of the Transition Council, including:

- Submitting regulatory concept recommendations to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness.
- Developing By-Laws for the College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario.
- Reviewing College standards and policies to prepare for the transition.

In supporting the transition period, the College and its Legacy Council have been:

- Liaising with multiple partners who have an interest in the evolution to the CVPO, including the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association and the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians.
- Continuing to oversee member matters and responsibly managing operations of the College in the Transition period.
- Communicating with veterinary teams and partner organizations, including town halls, conferences, newsletters, information at cvo.org/modernization, and speaking engagements.
- Developing internal processes to support implementation of the new legislation.



Partnering for improved access to veterinary services

Access to veterinary services is central to animal health and welfare. An increase in public demand for veterinary services and a shift in working hours have contributed to challenges impacting access to veterinary services across North America.



- **Limited licensure:** A national project to produce competency assessment tools for limited licensure is complete. In June, the College Council approved limited licensure as a pathway which supports the assessment of internationally educated veterinarians and provides them with a licence that is limited to those areas where they demonstrate competency. The College collaborated with Canadian veterinary regulators to develop new competency assessment tools that will permit experienced and/or internationally educated veterinarians to seek a limited licence in equine, production animal, or companion animal practice.

The assessment tools were piloted throughout 2024 in Ontario and Alberta and the research concluded limited licensure is valid and viable as a competency-based assessment model. Each provincial veterinary regulator is being asked to consider adoption of limited licensure as a new pathway to the veterinary workforce. Discussion related to full and timely implementation continues with the National Examining Board.

- **Language Skills Evaluation Project:** In 2023, the College embarked on a project to set new language benchmarks for veterinary medicine in Ontario so the College can meet its requirements related to language proficiency testing within a broad testing environment. In September, the Legacy Council adopted national benchmark scores for reading, writing, listening and speaking.

- **Team-based care:** The College is working with our partners to share opportunities that will support and promote team-based care under the new legislative model. Several communications have been published with a focus on team-based care. The College completed the first phase of a research project to study how teams are currently working which will allow for a better understanding of the impact of the legislative changes.

Communications around team-based care continue, including new podcasts in the Elevating the Veterinary Team series which discuss a range of topics, such as unique challenges in rural care, revolutionizing emergency care, and setting a team-based culture. Further, the College continues to explore how best to assist veterinary teams in leveraging the roles of veterinary technicians in practice, inclusive of a regulatory sandbox.

- **Spectrum of Care:** In 2023, the College Council approved its position on balancing access to veterinary care with options. Council's position is that veterinarians consider available care options along a spectrum which requires the veterinarian and the client to weigh various factors to determine the appropriate action. Through its Practice Advisory Service, the College promotes the spectrum of care, as well as through communications, including articles in various publications.

Creating space for innovation and technology

A sustainable future for veterinary medicine in Ontario depends on understanding, appreciating, and supporting innovation and emerging technology. The College has a long history of embracing technology and fostering new approaches in a safe environment.

- Embracing Innovation and the Digital Age in Veterinary Medicine:** The College Council approved a position statement on Embracing Innovation and the Digital Age in Veterinary Medicine which encourages innovation within the veterinary community while acknowledging the need to manage risks in an unregulated environment. Late in 2024, the College published a companion guide, Use of Medical Devices Enabled by Artificial Intelligence in the practice of veterinary medicine, which helps veterinarians adopt medical devices enabled by artificial intelligence (AI) in their practice.

- Innovation panel:** The Ontario Veterinary Regulatory Innovation Panel continues to meet and provide advice on how to support innovation in veterinary practice in Ontario. The Panel plans to host discussions to learn more about regulation of AI devices in human medicine, how international veterinary regulators are currently managing AI devices, and how to best support veterinary decision-making when it includes the use of technology.

- Regulatory sandboxes:** The Ontario Veterinary Regulatory Sandbox is a Council initiative which supports problem-solving through innovative strategy. It permits the managed exemption of certain regulatory requirements to test new products, services or ways of practising veterinary medicine on a time limited basis and with appropriate safeguards for public protection. Council continues to review, approve and monitor sandbox approaches which bring innovative solutions to the delivery of veterinary care throughout Ontario.

A close-up photograph of a woman with short brown hair wearing a white lab coat. She is using a stethoscope to listen to a dog's chest. The dog is a light-colored breed, possibly a Golden Retriever or similar. The background is slightly blurred, focusing on the interaction between the vet and the dog.

The College has a long history of embracing technology and fostering new approaches in a safe environment.

Promoting the importance of One Health

The College recognizes the importance of broader animal and human health initiatives within its work. A One Health approach to public policy is increasingly recognized for its importance for animals, humans and the environment. The College is attentive to how veterinary regulation intersects with a broad array of evolving issues and remains committed to influencing discussion and action.

- **Antimicrobial stewardship:** Veterinarians and their prescribing practices are in the middle of the solution to antimicrobial resistance. Veterinary medicine is part of a national set of strategies to reduce the use of human medically important antimicrobials in the prevention and treatment of animals where possible. The College is in the midst of its latest project on this topic which includes a review of best practices in stewardship, as well as conducting focus groups to better understand barriers to achieving meaningful results in veterinary prescribing to support antimicrobial stewardship.
- **Matawa First Nations:** Over the past year, the College has been collaborating with the Matawa First Nations on improving access to veterinary services in nine northern Ontario remote indigenous communities. An Advisory Circle, composed of a range of community partners met on seven occasions and proposed initiatives which provide for herd health and an individual animal health approach to care. In September, the College Council was pleased to approve tactics which include revising existing and introducing new College resources, introducing resources for veterinary teams, as well as assisting Matawa to measure and support the work for the future. The College welcomes the opportunity to partner with the Matawa First Nations on this important work.
- **Emergency preparedness:** The College staff reviewed the proposed amendments to the Ontario Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act and have connected with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness to discuss how the College can provide support in emergencies.



Focusing regulation on people and context

The College recognizes its trustworthiness is built on competence, honesty and reliability. Its impact, however, is built on its relationships. These relationships include recognizing veterinary well-being, compassion, and inclusivity. These are areas where the College continues to develop skills.



- **Ontario Collaborative for Well-Being in Veterinary Medicine:** The College has partnered with the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association, Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians and the Ontario Veterinary College to form the Ontario Collaborative for Well-Being in Veterinary Medicine.
The collaborative launched a TeamCheck campaign to support healthy veterinary teams. TeamCheck includes several communication tools to support mental health and well-being in the veterinary workplace. Veterinary teams are encouraged to make use of the tools to assist conversations about mental health in their workplace.
- **Grief Resources:** The College offers supportive webinars for grieving pet owners. Homewood Health provides a one-hour session to assist participants in navigating and processing their grief. The presentation aims to help participants understand the grief process, learn healthy ways to cope with the loss and start on a healing process, and includes a question and answer session with a mental health professional.
- **Compassionate regulation:** The College seeks opportunities to enhance its relationships with the public and its licensed members. This work includes exploring opportunities that create a more positive experience for our customers. The Service Charter details our commitment to upholding the highest standards in all activities.
- **Navigator Role:** Focused on customer service and evolving from our commitment to compassionate regulation, the navigator role communicates with all involved in a complaint to clarify the process and its potential outcomes, provide resources and set reasonable expectations.
- **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility:** Council, Committee members and staff participate in ongoing training on inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility. A report on training outcomes provides insight for further areas of education and resource consideration. Topics explored have included anti-racism, micro-aggressions, unconscious bias, and allyship.
- **College brand:** Through the transition period, the College is attentive to sharing engaging communications to assist the profession and the public in staying informed on changes and opportunities for direct input.

Assuring impact

The Impact Strategy Unit develops strategies to implement new or revised Council policies. In measuring impact, the Unit reviews the goal of the policy, identifies methods for implementation, and sets an evaluation plan.

The following areas are moving through the outcomes-focused regulation framework:

- Role of facility directors:** To assist facility directors in their role, various tools support understanding of the accreditation model. Tactics include a dedicated facility director newsletter, a guide to understanding the accreditation model, webinars and sample inspection checklists. New videos explain accreditation requirements and assist veterinary teams in preparing for inspections. As well, infographics share insight on the steps to preparing for an inspection and also offer guidance on meeting the accreditation standards.
- Management of drugs:** This initiative endeavours to change behaviour on veterinary teams to improve drug management in veterinary facilities. The Lock Label Locate campaign was launched in November 2022 and has supported positive changes related to drug disposal and attentiveness to drug management.

- Accreditation model:** The accreditation model provides a modern and adaptable framework that aligns with the evolving demands of veterinary service delivery. The transition to the current model has been well-received, as evidenced by the increase in new practices, increased inquiries from veterinarians seeking information about the accreditation processes, and positive feedback from facility directors. To ensure continued success, we continue to track data and monitor performance.
- Building a culture of safety:** A culture of safety supports the profession's ability to discuss mistakes and risks in practice and to learn from these events. Research on opportunities continues.
- Peer Review of Medical Records:** Medical records are central to safe, quality medicine and provide the basis for the continuity of veterinary care. The Peer Review of Medical Records supports veterinarians in meeting the standards for medical records that support optimal veterinary care. The 2024 aggregate report highlights opportunities for all veterinarians to enhance their record-keeping.
- Establishing the Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR):** The VCPR is the foundation of effective clinical veterinary medicine and animal care. A video, checklist and learning module were developed to assist veterinary teams with clarity on the components of establishing a VCPR in day-to-day practice.
- Evaluation of remedial undertakings:** This initiative analyses the impact of remediation on improving a veterinarian's practice. Reports from 2020 and 2022 demonstrate the approach to remediation is working. Analysis on recent data continues.
- Cultural humility:** The Quality Assurance Committee completed research on cultural humility in developing supports related to professionalism. Knowledge-building continues in establishing an approach to professional conduct that supports anti-racism, equity and allyship. Articles and a podcast have been published to promote awareness and understanding.



Moving towards the College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario

The *Veterinary Professionals Act*, approved in 2024, modernizes the regulation of the veterinary profession in Ontario. A Transition Council has been appointed and is currently working on policies and processes to support the new framework and enable the legislation to come into effect. The College is pleased to report on the Transition Council's work and progress in this Annual Report.

Transition Council

Through the Veterinary Professionals Act, the Transition Council has the authority to propose regulations and determine the By-Laws and standards that will come into effect with the establishment of the College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario. Charged with this substantial task, the Transition Council has a significant workload and meeting schedule. Since being established in August 2024, the Transition Council has had 14 meetings, with seven of those meetings held in 2025.

Who is on Transition Council

The Transition Council includes 18 members of the CVO Council, now referenced as the Legacy Council, and three Registered Veterinary Technicians (RVT), appointed by the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians.

Members of the Transition Council have a broad range of backgrounds in veterinary medicine with experience in practice ownership, shelter medicine, and corporate and independent practice. There are individuals who are working as associates and locum veterinarians, as well as in academia, public practice, and industry. Public representatives have extensive experience in regulatory environments and in public service. The Transition Council's diversity and depth have it well-equipped to serve the public interest as it fulfills its mandate of establishing the College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario.

Transition Council Chair



Catherine Knipe
Transition Council Chair

Catherine Knipe is the Chair of the Transition Council. Catherine was appointed to the College of Veterinarians of Ontario in the fall of 2020 by the provincial government. She was elected to Chair the Transition Council in August 2024.

Throughout her professional career, Catherine has held leadership roles in health care, including public health, provincial policy and program development, regional health delivery and in an advisory role to a provincial Minister of Health. She currently owns a consultancy focused on delivering global technology solutions.

Transition Council's Work

Milestones in moving towards the College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario (CVPO)



What's to come in 2026

- **By-Laws:** Consultation and finalizing draft By-Laws for the CVPO.
- **Regulations:** Provincial government consults and establishes regulations to support the *Veterinary Professionals Act*.
- **Policy:** Transition Council prepares standards and policies to support the CVPO.
- **Licensure:** Licensure opens for veterinary technicians.
- **Proclamation:** The CVPO is launched.
- **Council election:** The Transition Council continues to oversee the new College until the CVPO Council is elected and the Transition Council is dissolved.

Regulatory Concepts

In 2025, the Transition Council finalized its regulatory concept recommendations, which have been submitted to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness for consideration in developing the regulations. The Veterinary Professionals Act grants the Transition Council the ability to propose regulations to support the new legislation. Details on the regulatory concepts can be found on the College website at cvo.org/concepts.

Regulatory concepts cover the following topics:

Licensure includes concepts on licensure, professional misconduct and conflict of interest.

Transition Council provided direction on applicant requirements and licensure types for veterinarians and veterinary technicians in the CVPO. Other regulatory direction specifies types of professional misconduct applicable to each member, identifies ungovernable behaviour, incorporates the authorized activities model, and recognizes animal abuse or neglect as professional misconduct. Regulatory concepts on conflict of interest focus on behaviours and whether an interest may affect professional judgment.

Authorized Activities includes concepts on non-delegable activities, delegation, orders, initiate and forms of energy.

The authorized activities model is one of the most complex and multi-faceted aspects of the Transition Council's work. Authorized activities provides a framework which supports team-based veterinary care. Regulatory concepts identify which authorized activities can only be performed by a veterinarian member, and which can be performed by veterinary technicians through order, initiate or delegation.



Quality Team-based Care includes concepts on members' obligations prior to providing veterinary services, drugs, quality assurance, and after-hours veterinary care.

The regulatory concepts provide clarity on the formal quality assurance program, detail requirements related to after-hours veterinary care, update language on prescription portability and provide clarity on members' responsibilities related to drug management. Regulatory language related to members' obligations prior to providing veterinary services will continue.

Administrative includes concepts on alternative dispute resolution and prescribed offences.

The regulatory concepts introduce a method to resolve conflicts and disputes outside of the complaint process, and develop a list of reportable offences related to veterinary medicine and professionalism. Transition Council also proposes moving the Committee and panel composition to CVPO By-Laws, rather than in regulation.

Regulatory Exemptions for Non-Members

includes concepts on chiropractors, pharmacy professionals, animal rehabilitation, the Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act, farriers and hoof trimmers, mass culls and embryo implantation.

The regulatory concepts support regulatory exemptions for non-members of the CVPO to perform certain authorized activities.

Accreditation: Regulatory concept provides clarity in the regulations on the accreditation of veterinary facilities related to the certificate of accreditation, a facility director's departure, and consequences of unpaid accreditation fees.

Regulatory Exemptions for Members includes regulatory exemptions for members who work under federal or provincial legislation, and for veterinary technician members who are working under a veterinarian member's treatment plan outside of an accredited facility.

Transition Council decided not to move ahead with regulatory concepts that permit a veterinary technician to carry out authorized activities outside of an accredited veterinary facility based on a written referral from a veterinary member or as an employee of a non-veterinary animal care provider offering services directly to the public.

Consultation on proposed regulatory concepts:

- **1,067 individuals** completed the questionnaire and participated in the consultation over 60+ days.
- **78% of participants** were veterinarians or veterinary technicians.



Further information: cvo.org/modernization

Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial Statements

To the Council, College of Veterinarians of Ontario

Opinion – The summary financial statements of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario, which comprise the summary statement of financial position as at September 30, 2025 and the summary statement of operations for the year then ended, are derived from the audited financial statements of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario for the year ended September 30, 2025.

In our opinion, these accompanying summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements, in accordance with the criteria disclosed in the summary financial statements.

Summary financial statements – The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario and the auditor's report thereon.

The audited financial statements and our report thereon – We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the financial statements in our report dated December 17, 2025.

Management's responsibilities for the summary financial statements – Management is responsible for the fair summarization of the audited financial statements in accordance with the criteria disclosed in the summary financial statements.

Auditor's responsibility – Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810 "Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements".

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

	2025	2024
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 362,696	\$ 518,261
Investments	3,888,993	4,623,338
Accounts receivable	30,356	61,202
HST receivable	407,915	180,954
Prepaid expenses	209,440	152,604
	4,899,400	5,536,359
TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS	\$ 1,409,832	\$ 1,566,032
	\$ 6,309,232	\$ 7,102,391
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 470,190	\$ 628,203
NET ASSETS		
INVESTED IN TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS	1,409,832	1,566,032
UNRESTRICTED	4,429,210	4,908,156
	5,839,042	6,474,188
	\$ 6,309,232	\$ 7,102,391

**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2025**

	2025	2024
REVENUES		
Registration fees	\$ 6,299,841	\$ 6,112,665
Accreditation fees	277,270	275,420
Corporation fees	233,300	193,124
Application and examination fees	217,770	125,876
Interest income	180,350	236,834
Penalties and other	173,448	245,393
	<u>7,381,979</u>	<u>7,189,312</u>
EXPENSES		
Salaries	\$ 3,961,105	\$ 3,544,978
Transition Council	652,664	0
Legal	580,374	689,251
Office facilities	523,912	511,579
Information management systems	471,381	446,930
Council and committees	337,514	465,763
Special projects	269,225	632,626
Interest and bank charges	199,222	186,857
Amortization	156,200	202,571
Networking and representation	138,584	127,520
Insurance	136,213	146,252
Investigations and hearings	120,050	157,551
Communication	118,475	130,281
Quality assurance	102,611	100,359
Office	73,940	67,887
Accounting and audit	67,417	45,100
Premises inspections	61,105	82,937
Exam administration	18,812	85,897
Policy development	18,571	14,447
Professional health program	9,750	13,395
	<u>8,017,125</u>	<u>7,652,181</u>
(DEFICIT) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES for the year	(635,146)	(462,869)
NET ASSETS, beginning of the year	<u>6,474,188</u>	<u>6,937,057</u>
NET ASSETS, end of the year	<u>\$ 5,839,042</u>	<u>\$ 6,474,188</u>

**Criteria Applied
in the Preparation
of the Summary
Financial Statements**

The criteria applied by management in the preparation of these summary financial statements are as follows:

- a) the information in the summarized financial statements is in agreement with the related information in the complete financial statements; and
- b) the summarized financial statements contain all the information necessary to avoid distorting or obscuring matters disclosed in the complete financial statements, including the notes therein.

Management determined that the statement of changes in net assets and the statement of cash flows do not provide additional useful information, and as such has not included them as part of the summary financial statements.

For more information on the College, visit: CVO.org



Public confidence
in veterinary regulation.

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