

# Informed Client Consent

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## Introduction

**Informed client consent is an essential conversation that occurs between a veterinarian and their client. From a public protection perspective, informed client consent is the basis on which a veterinarian and their client confirm the veterinary service(s) that will be provided in a specific circumstance. Consent may be implied or explicit, and explicit consent may be verbal or in writing. Informed client consent is not a one-time activity, and is obtained throughout the course of the veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR).**

## Definition

**Client:** Client means, with respect to a veterinarian, the owner of an animal(s) or group of animals that the veterinarian is treating, an authorized representative of the owner, or an individual who the veterinarian reasonably determines is acting in the interest of the animal(s) or group of animals.



## Practice Expectations

A veterinarian meets the *Professional Practice Standard: Informed Client Consent* when they:

1. Obtain consent from a client who is over the age of 18.
2. Ensure the consent relates to the proposed veterinary service(s) to be provided.
3. Provide comprehensive information to the client including:
  - the differential and/or definitive diagnosis;
  - the nature of the proposed diagnostics and/or treatment(s);
  - the proposed benefits, common side effects and any serious risks;
  - other reasonable alternative courses of action including the risks/benefits of each; and
  - the consequences if the proposed diagnostics and/or treatment(s) are refused.
4. Answer all questions and ensures that the client understands the information provided.
5. Provide an estimated cost of the proposed diagnostics and/or treatment(s), using a range when appropriate.
6. Indicate in the medical record that consent was obtained and, for diagnostics and/or treatment(s) that are of higher risk, obtains consent in writing where feasible.
7. Understand that revealing information concerning a client, an animal(s) or group of animals, or any professional service performed for an animal(s) or group of animals to a person other than the client or another member treating the animal(s) or group of animals is not permitted without the client's consent, except when doing so is required or authorized by law.

## Guide to the Standard

A separate *Guide to the Professional Practice Standard: Informed Client Consent* has been developed by the College and can be found on the Colleges' website [www.cvo.org](http://www.cvo.org).

## Legislative Authority

*Food and Drugs Act* and Regulations (Federal)



*Feeds Act and Regulations* (Federal)  
*Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and Regulations* (Federal)  
*Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act and Regulations* (Provincial)  
*Drug Interchangeability and Dispensing Fee Act* (Provincial)  
*Veterinarians Act* (Provincial)  
Regulation 1093, s. 1, 18, 23-33 (*Veterinarians Act*) (Provincial)

## Resources

The following can be found at the College's website at [cvo.org](http://cvo.org):

1. *Professional Practice Standard: Dispensing a Drug*
2. *Guide to the Professional Practice Standard: Dispensing a Drug*
3. *Professional Practice Standard: Extra-Label Drug Use*
4. *Guide to the Professional Practice Standard: Extra-Label Drug Use*
5. *Professional Practice Standard: Management and Disposal of Controlled Drugs*
6. *Guide to the Professional Practice Standard: Management and Disposal of Controlled Drugs*
7. *Professional Practice Standard: Use of Compounded Drugs in Veterinary Practice*
8. *Guide to the Professional Practice Standard: Use of Compounded Drugs in Veterinary Practice*
9. *Professional Practice Standard: Informed Client Consent*
10. *Guide to the Professional Practice Standard: Informed Client Consent*
11. *Professional Practice Standard: Medical Records*
12. *Guide to the Professional Practice Standard: Medical Records*
13. *Professional Practice Standard: Establishing, Maintaining, and Discontinuing a Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship*
14. *Guide to the Professional Practice Standard: Establishing, Maintaining, and Discontinuing a Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship*
15. *Position Statement: Balancing Available Health Care Options and Client Access to Veterinary Care*

The following additional resources are also applicable:

1. [Policy on Extra-Label Drug Use in Food Producing Animals](#), Health Canada, 2015.
2. [Position Statement: Extra-label Drug Use \(ELDU\)](#), Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, 2015.
3. Canadian [gFARAD Website](#)



4. [Veterinary Oversight of Antimicrobial Use – A Pan-Canadian Framework of Professional Standards for Veterinarians](#), Canadian Veterinary Medical Association,

College publications contain practice parameters and standards which should be considered by all Ontario veterinarians in the care of their patients and in the practice of the profession. College publications are developed in consultation with the profession and describe current professional expectations. It is important to note that these College publications may be used by the College or other bodies in determining whether appropriate standards of practice and professional responsibilities have been maintained. The College encourages you to refer to the website ([www.cvo.org](http://www.cvo.org)) to ensure you are referring to the most recent version of any document.