



SPEAKING FRANKLY

A Report on the Veterinary Practice Community Reference Panel

May 2022

BACKGROUND

As a component of its Strategy 2020 objectives, the Council of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario formed a veterinary practice advisory panel to assist with its work. The Veterinary Practice Community Reference Panel is the second iteration of this group which has now existed since 2017. The Veterinary Practice Community Reference Panel's specific mandate includes:

- to provide early advice to the College on emerging policy matters
- to provide feedback on the implementation of draft policy
- to provide input on the communication strategy with the veterinary community
- to assist in the identification of risk areas in practice
- to identify emerging trends and challenges in practice

The panel is intended to meet at least three times a year, once face-to-face with Council. Due to the pandemic, temporary amendments to this approach have been made.

This report summarizes key areas discussed by the panel at its most recent meeting in May 2022 and outlines opportunities for College consideration.

KEY AREAS

(A) Spectrum of Care

The College is actively engaging in conversation related to the different ways that veterinarians provide veterinary care to the public including offering services that support a "spectrum of care". Panel members were asked to assist the College in better understanding veterinarian's perceptions of spectrum of care. Comments from the Panel included:

- Technology has increased options for care, especially in specialties
- Care needs to be equitable
- Having only one standard option for care is not a solution
- Clients are unaware of the full spectrum of options

- Veterinarians already practicing spectrum of care may not be aware of the term to describe it
- Veterinarians need to offer a variety of options to clients and explain the suitability of them
- The partnership between veterinarians and client through a VCPR is an essential component of spectrum of care

(B) Use of Your Licence

The College sought the Panel's feedback on how veterinarians use their licences, either print or digital, in their daily work. Comments from the Panel included:

- Blockchain is a good direction to take licences
 - All credentials can be collected
 - Paperwork is made easier
- Physical licence is not used often
- Never use the wallet card
- Use licence number only for paperwork
- Overall agreement that a digital wallet card would be used

(B) Communication Strategies

The College sought the Panel's feedback on the most effective ways to communicate with veterinarians. Comments from the Panel included:

- Different age groups may respond to varying types of communication
- Too much information arrives in a day, difficult to read everything
- Email and physical mail are typically universal ways to communicate
- PDFs are preferred
- Some veterinarians do not use social media
- College Connection is helpful
- Interest in listening to podcasts more than reading an item

(C) Strategic Planning

Panel members were offered the opportunity to share ideas and suggestions for the College's upcoming Strategy 2026. Comments from the Panel included:

- Veterinary wellness and pressures within the profession
- Technology, inclusive of the advancement of virtual care
- Access to care for all owners and animals
- Better leveraging the skills of veterinary technicians
- Collaborating with consolidators
- Opportunities for licensure of internationally educated veterinarians
- Sustainability of the veterinary delivery model
- Mentorship of new veterinarians



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SUMMARY

The Council is grateful to the members of the advisory panel for their candid comments and willingness to engage with the profession as it aims to instill confidence in veterinary regulation. All information and identified opportunities will be considered for both immediate and future planning.