

Use of Forms of Energy in the Treatment and/or Care of Animals

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Purpose

This Position Statement serves to communicate the Council's position pertaining to the use of forms of energy by veterinarians in the treatment and/or care of animals.

Background

Council acknowledges the use of various forms of energy by veterinarians in the treatment and/or care of animals across multiple species. Some of these forms are well-researched and established, while the use of others has emerged in recent years and may have a more limited scientific basis. In continuing to assure public protection and animal welfare, while appreciating business and technology innovation, Council has determined that risk-based oversight is required in the applied use of energy by a veterinarian. Council has conducted a thorough review and developed a risk-based approach to ensure the safe, quality treatment and/or care of animals when any form of energy is applied.

Definitions

Forms of Energy: There is no specific definition of forms of energy that can be found across the professions who utilize them. Forms of energy generally refer to the use of a tool and/or equipment to create either ionizing or non-ionizing radiation designed to produce a specific outcome



to aid or enhance the treatment and/or care of a patient. The particulars of the desired outcome vary based on the form and method used.

Position

It is the position of Council that the use of a form of energy in the practice of veterinary medicine poses a risk of harm to an animal(s) and/or provider(s), dependent on its application. Given research and evidence-based analysis, the Council has determined that a form of energy may be used in the treatment and/or care of an animal based on the following three categories:

Category One

The first category of regulatory oversight oversees forms of energy that have been determined to have high levels of real or potential harm associated with their applied use in animals. Forms of energy that fall under this category are to be used only by a veterinarian, or an auxiliary working under a veterinarian's delegation with immediate or direct supervision.

Category Two

The second category of regulatory oversight oversees forms of energy that have been determined to have moderate levels of real or potential harm associated with their applied use in animals. Due to the specific characteristics associated with these forms of energy, this category of classification has been divided into two subcategories. Forms of energy that fall under Part A of Category Two are to be used only by a veterinarian, or an auxiliary working under a veterinarian's delegation with a level of supervision determined appropriate by the veterinarian. Forms of energy that fall under Part B of Category Two are to be used only by a veterinarian, an auxiliary working under a veterinarian's delegation with a level of supervision determined appropriate by the veterinarian, or by a non-veterinarian on referral from a veterinarian. Since the first two categories contain high to moderate levels of associated risk that require veterinary oversight, it is the position of the Council that the use of these forms of energy on animals constitutes the practice of veterinary medicine and, therefore, remain under the College's regulatory authority.

Category Three

The third category of regulatory oversight oversees forms of energy that have been determined to have lower levels of real or potential harm associated with their applied use in animals. Forms of energy that fall under this category may be used by a veterinarian or a non-veterinarian, as long as the non-veterinarian does not represent themselves as practising veterinary medicine.



Legislative Authority

Veterinarians Act R.S.O. 1990, c. V.3 s. 3

Ontario Regulation 1093 R.S.O. 1990 s. 19 made under the *Veterinarians Act*

Resources

The following can be found at the College's website at cvo.org:

1. *Policy Statement: Use of Forms of Energy in the Treatment and/or Care of Animals*
2. *Professional Practice Standard: Delegation*

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) to ensure you are referring to the most recent version of any document.