



## **SPEAKING FRANKLY**

### ***A Report on the Veterinary Practice Community Reference Panel***

February 2022

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#### **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 February 2022 and outlines opportunities for College consideration.

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#### **KEY AREAS**

##### (A) Telemedicine

The College is looking to begin to communicate upcoming changes to the telemedicine standards in April 2022 and sought the Panel's guidance on how best to disseminate this information to veterinarians. Comments from the Panel included:

- The Standard clears up questions about who is permitted to practice via telemedicine
- A Guide with examples will help relate this Standard to real practice
- Informing licensed members before implementation will be helpful
- Using different formats will capture more licensed members (e.g., webinar, Q&A session, etc.)
- Important to address themes and questions from the consultation since not all licensed members read the consultation report

## (B) Fighting the Good Fight: Animal Welfare

The College sought the Panel's feedback on proposed session topics for a podcast series titled "Fighting the Good Fight: Protecting Animal Welfare in Today's World", which is in its early stages of planning. Comments from the Panel included:

- Practical session topics are helpful
- Introducing One Welfare early on in the series would be helpful
- Sessions would benefit from examples such as large animal practice or wildlife
- Affordable and accessible care is an important component of One Health
- Shorter episodes will make them more easily consumed
- Could this be an annual series?
- Panel is generally supportive of and excited for the project

## (C) Feedback from the Consultation on the *Professional Practice Standard: Establishing, Maintaining and Discontinuing the Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR)*

The College asked Panel members to review the Consultation on the *Professional Practice Standard: Establishing, Maintaining and Discontinuing the Veterinarian-Client-Patient-Relationship (VCPR)* and come prepared to share feedback and/or questions related to the proposed changes. Comments from the Panel included:

- The Professional Practice Standard does not provide a clear definition of the VCPR
- Discontinuation of the VCPR is not clear
- Establishing the VCPR is not clear
- Clients do not understand what a VCPR is
- Conversations about the VCPR can be awkward, especially with vulnerable clients
- Thinking about the VCPR living with the veterinary team is an important consideration

## (D) Ongoing Trends

This item offered Panel members the opportunity to raise any current trends or issues within the veterinary sector that they believe should be raised for the College's consideration. Comments from the Panel included:

- Access to Care
- Recent grant announced for Veterinarians Without Borders
- In the United States, there is a Veterinary Nurse Practitioner pilot project
- Delivery models continue to evolve to meet needs
- Sustainability of wellness in the industry
- Demographic of veterinarian students
- Reputation of the industry and public perception

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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.