



Facing the Future Head On!



CONTENTS

Snapshot of the Profession 2

Welcome 3

Leadership Message 4

Strategy 2023 6

Strategy 2026 7

 Championing legislative reform
 to affirm an agile future 7

 Partnering for improved access
 to veterinary services 8

 Creating space for innovation
 and technology 9

 Promoting the importance
 of One Health 9

 Focusing regulation on people
 and context 10

 Assuring impact 12

Financial Summary Report 13

Snapshot of the Profession

5,500+
licensed veterinarians

2,400+
accredited
veterinary facilities

For more data about the
veterinary profession and
facilities, please visit the 2023
supplementary data report.



Welcome to our 2023 Annual Report

The College of Veterinarians of Ontario regulates the practice of veterinary medicine in Ontario. 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.

What do we do?

- **We ensure** Ontario's veterinarians practise competently while meeting licensure requirements.
- **We set** standards that support the public's access to safe, quality veterinary medicine.
- **We inspect and accredit** veterinary facilities, ensuring they contain essential equipment for patient care.
- **We address** concerns or complaints about the conduct of veterinarians.
- **We demonstrate** compassion and provide exceptional customer service.
- **We encourage** veterinarians to engage in ongoing quality improvement and to demonstrate professionalism throughout their careers.
- **We educate** the public about the role of the College.
- **We publish** a Public Register to help the public make informed choices about veterinary care.



Dr. Alana Parisi
President



Jan Robinson
*Registrar and
Chief Executive Officer*

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Facing the Future Head On!

And is there any other choice!

This year has been filled with anticipation:

- Returning to in person meetings, especially with Council
- Moving to a new office location — eco-friendly, space for collaboration, tech savvy
- Waiting for a government announcement to begin the process of reforming the Veterinarians Act
- Finalizing a new strategic plan
- Reinvigorating our principled approach to regulation
- Introducing a new website
- Launching a new Panel to embrace innovation in veterinary care delivery
- Approving new accreditation standards for veterinary facilities
- Seeking an opportunity to support solutions to animal care access through regulatory sandbox projects

And the list could go on...

This profession has had a long regulatory journey — one of the longest, with our first piece of legislation being enacted in 1877. This is a unique and important part of our story — of history. It is a road well-travelled, one with lots of learnings, lots of challenges and accomplishments and one also filled with vision and always hope for the future. And here we are again, on the cusp of change, with a new Act and new beginnings just around the corner, supporting veterinary medicine, the public and, of course, animals.

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE cont'd...

This year's annual report shares our most recent story of where and who we are right now. It recognizes the breadth and depth of the veterinary profession in Ontario. It takes in the facilities that veterinarians practise from and how we are modernizing our approach to practice. It speaks to relationships at the local, provincial, national, and international levels, and, in fact, across professions and the broader industry in its varied dimensions. It celebrates our work with our colleagues at the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA), the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC), the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians (OAVT) and the Canadian Council of Veterinary Registrars (CCVR).

Most exciting of all was the announcement, last November, by the Hon. Lisa Thompson, Ontario's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, that the Veterinarians Act was due for modernization. Councils over the last decade have been seeking this change. Modernization will provide an opportunity to embrace veterinary technicians as licensed professionals; a chance to better leverage team-based care and overall access to animal care; improvements to our regulatory processes, and a focus on the quality of the delivery of veterinary medicine in Ontario. While achieving new legislation will take a couple of years, getting onboard early with the changes ahead is key to our success. The College and its Council appreciate our collaborative

relationship with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and of its leadership in this landmark initiative.

Council is excited to be leading a path of change. It is a path that challenges us all to face forward and to embrace what is next. A future that moves the profession and the care of animals of all sizes and species forward. It embraces technology. It speaks to the importance of veterinary science and society at large.



As the College moves forward toward a new piece of legislation and the next step of the profession's journey in regulation, we do so with anticipation, confidence and excitement.



Strategy 2023

Strategy 2023 concluded in March 2023 and demonstrated Council's diligent attention to making tactical progress, in spite of the pandemic.

Specific achievements include:

- Established an impact strategy unit to evaluate the effectiveness of policies.
- Adopted a new risk analysis framework.
- Implemented changes to the complaints process to increase efficiency.
- Launched an online Ethics Resource Hub to support skills in resolving ethical dilemmas.
- Contributed to the development of the Essential Competencies for Practice in Veterinary Medicine in North America.
- Adopted a compassionate regulation approach to the delivery of College programs.
- Released the Lock Label Locate Toolkit to support drug management within the facility.
- Received regulatory changes to support a new model of facility accreditation.
- Supported the delivery of veterinary medicine during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Established a new Ontario Veterinary Regulatory Innovation Panel to support innovative solutions to veterinary care delivery.
- Focused on veterinary well-being by establishing a provincial working group to review resources and supports.
- Convened a One Health leadership table to develop public education materials that explain how the health of animals, people and the environment are connected.



Strategy 2026

Championing legislative reform to affirm an agile future

The College welcomes the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' (OMAFRA) commitment to modernizing the regulation of the veterinary profession in Ontario. The College has been working towards this objective for several years. The College, along with the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians and the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association, are working collaboratively on modernization to strengthen public protection and more accurately reflect current veterinary practice.

To support the modernization, the College:

- Communicates regularly with OMAFRA officials to assist with the work.
- Attends consultation sessions hosted by OMAFRA.
- Shares updates with the veterinary profession and the public regarding the work towards modernization.
- Meets with the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians (OAVT) regarding scope of practice and other regulatory matters.
- Meets with all interested organizations and individuals on strategic considerations relating to legislative reform.

New accreditation model and standards:

The changes in Regulation 1093 paved the way for introducing a new accreditation model in 2023. The new model assures the public veterinary facilities meet the standards that are relevant to their scope of practice. As a flexible program, the model adapts to the evolving nature of veterinary practice in Ontario. The new model and standards were approved by Council and launched October 1, 2023.

Partnering for improved access to veterinary services

Access to veterinary services is paramount to animal health and welfare. The College recognizes the public demand for veterinary services has escalated to a crisis level across Ontario. The College is committed to improved access to veterinary care.



Limited licensure: The College, and its national partners, are building an alternative pathway to licensure for internationally educated veterinarians, who may not have competence across all practice areas to pursue general licensure. This approach will allow individuals in one of three streams, companion animal, production animal or equine, to undergo competency assessments focused on their area of practice. The process includes demonstrating evidence of essential competencies, and completing a placement to assess their clinical practice. Upon completion, the individual will be eligible for a license that is limited to their area of practice. This project will launch in 2024.

Team-based care: The College works with the OAVT to identify policy opportunities that will strengthen teamwork between veterinarians and veterinary technicians. Several communications have been published with a focus on team-based care.

Spectrum of Care: In December 2022, the College Council approved its position on balancing access to veterinary care with options. Council's position recognizes a range of care options are available for each animal or group of

animals. Considering options along a spectrum requires the veterinarian and the client to weigh various factors to determine the appropriate course of action.

New professionals program: The College Council recognizes newly licensed members need support as they gain confidence in frontline practice. Council approved a research project to study how the Peer Advisory Conversation may assist new graduates in building confidence. As well, a webpage compiles the College tools supporting newly licensed members.

Jurisprudence exam: An applicant can request testing accommodations for the Jurisprudence Exam. This policy was revised to clarify how to apply for testing accommodations, what documentation must be submitted and how requests will be considered. This increases transparency about the College's requirements and decision-making process.

The College has completed its first revision of the Jurisprudence Exam. An Advisory Group supports the continuous improvement of the exam. A revised version of the exam was introduced in July 2023.

Creating space for innovation and technology

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

Innovation panel: In February, the College Council launched the Ontario Veterinary Regulatory Innovation Panel. The panel is exploring ideas to support the public's access to safe, quality veterinary care. The panel evolved from the 2017 international advisory group. In response to the current challenges facing veterinarians in clinical practice, the regulatory sandbox provides an environment to test projects that may require flexibility from current rules.

The Council approved its first sandbox focused on improving access to food animal veterinary medicine in northern Ontario.

Promoting the importance of One Health

Since 2017, the College Council has recognized the importance of animal and human health initiatives. One Health recognizes the intersection of the health of animals, humans, and the environment. The College Council is a convener and influencer in One Health activity in Ontario.

One Health Working Group: The working group meets quarterly and is developing education materials, launching in 2024, on the importance of veterinary medicine in One Health.

Lock Label Locate Toolkit: Safety is everyone's business in your practice, especially when it comes to managing drugs. The toolkit supports focus on the essential behaviours of effective drug management. Facility directors received a Lock Label Locate Toolkit, which includes tip sheets, posters and label templates.

Natural disasters: There is little attention paid to animals, beyond farm animals, during a time of natural disaster. The College is seeking to better understand its role, if any, in assisting with animal welfare in times of natural disaster and disease outbreak.



Focusing regulation on people and context

The College recognizes its trustworthiness is built on its competence, its honesty, and its reliability. Its impact, however, is built on its relationships. These relationships include recognizing veterinary well-being, compassion, and inclusivity.

IDEA action plan/Commitment to Inclusion:

The College acknowledges its important role in fostering inclusion, accessibility and equity in an increasingly diverse profession. We have strengthened our Commitment to Inclusion by introducing a comprehensive Inclusion Diversity Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Action Plan in early 2023, focusing on initiatives in four areas:

- Enriching IDEA learning for the College Council, committees and staff.
- Advancing IDEA through engagement and data collection.
- Strengthening policies and practices using equity & inclusion lens.
- Exploring opportunities to boost diversity in representation.

What we did this year?

- College staff attended a workshop on anti-racism and accessed resource topics such as inclusive communication and allyship. Our staff learn-and-share program includes presentations on Indigenous Peoples and Communities in Ontario.
- We've deepened our community involvement, meeting with partners, veterinarians and veterinary students who are also working towards a more inclusive veterinary profession.
- We've continued to identify opportunities and embed an inclusive and equitable lens with respect to how we communicate, how we deliver our programs and how we formulate our policies.

As we look ahead...

Our commitment to inclusion is a journey, and we will continue to take measured and meaningful steps towards serving our mandate with inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility lens to our policies, programs and processes.

Navigator Role: Strategies have been implemented over the last couple of years to manage complaints. The Veterinarians Act is very prescriptive in terms of the process used and the way complaints are reviewed by the Complaints

Committee. We have engaged creative approaches, including creating the Navigator role, to find efficiencies.

The Navigator role is focused on customer service and communicates with all parties involved in the complaints process. The Navigator clarifies the process and its potential outcomes, provides resources, and sets reasonable expectations. The pilot primarily focused on complainants, but also engaged veterinarians.

The pilot project ran for 10 months, and connected with over 600 people. The data suggests a significant reduction in the number of complaints filed. We know our current process is not optimal, but by providing support to those involved we can bring compassion to a challenging area. The Navigator role has now been implemented into our usual processes.

Grief Resources: Many of our complaints are related to the grief of losing an animal. Individuals struggling with grief may complain about the veterinarian to find out what occurred or as a way to cope with this grief. To assist individuals who are grieving, the College is working with Homewood Health to host quarterly webinars to provide the public with strategies to move through the grief process.

Ontario Collaborative for Well-Being in Veterinary Medicine: The College is engaged in several initiatives in support of well-being in the profession. In one such initiative, the College has partnered with the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA), Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians (OAVT), and the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) to form the Ontario Collaborative for Well-Being in Veterinary Medicine. The purpose of the collaborative is to develop and promote an integrated approach to health and well-being for veterinary teams in Ontario.

Compassionate Regulation: Compassionate regulation ensures human touch is not lost in regulation. In delivering our regulatory programs with compassion, we emphasize empathy, fairness, clarity of our role and taking into account context.

In 2023, we continued to be more intentional about focusing on the people that interact with us and our programs. Here are the areas we are striving to create a more positive experience:

- Enhancing how we communicate with empathy.
- Making our information and content easier to understand.

- Assisting our customers with clear information that helps create reasonable expectations from our process from the start.
- Providing resources that continue to assist those going through difficult situations.
- Empowering College staff through training to take a compassionate lens to their work.

We recognize that the various relationships we build with veterinarians and members of the public are integral to the impact of our work in serving our mandate. Compassionate regulation supports our culture of continuous improvement and drives a better understanding of our customers' experiences.

- Understanding the Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship: This project will provide clarity on what the VCPR looks like in day-to-day practice. The impact strategy unit has been having conversations to consider methods to support veterinary conversations with clients and relationship obligations.
- Antimicrobial stewardship: Conversations have been held to support our alignment with the refreshed pan-Canadian plan from Health Canada.
- Evaluation of remedial undertakings.
- Building a culture of safety.
- Embracing humility in veterinary practice.



Assuring impact

The College Council strives for effectiveness and excellence in its role as a profession-based regulator. Since 2012, the Council has been engaged in “Right Touch Regulation,” a well-supported framework for regulatory decision-making. “Right touch” ensures the College sets policy only when it is linked to a public or animal interest problem and an identifiable risk.

In 2017, Council published its position on regulatory effectiveness, which articulates the College’s role to understand risks to animals and the public in the practice of veterinary medicine and to consider solutions that reduce the potential for harm.

Impact Strategy Unit: The unit meets regularly and reviews the goals of new or revised Council policies, identifies methods for implementation, and sets an evaluation plan. Through the six phases of the framework, projects are supported with analysis, communications, behaviour change tactics, data, evaluation and reporting.

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

- Role of facility directors
- Management of drugs
- Peer Review of Medical Records

- The Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship
- Antimicrobial stewardship
- Remedial undertakings
- Culture of safety
- Humility in veterinary practice



Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial Statements

To the Members, 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, 2023 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, 2023.

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 6, 2023.

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".

Guelph, Ontario
December 6, 2023

RLB LLP
Chartered Professional Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

	2023	2022
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	\$ 225,493	\$ 254,801
Investments	5,464,018	7,104,853
Accounts receivable	59,165	64,616
Prepaid expenses	<u>213,419</u>	<u>263,183</u>
	5,962,095	7,687,453
TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 1,768,603</u>	<u>\$ 169,074</u>
	\$ 7,730,698	\$ 7,856,527
LIABILITIES		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 793,641	\$ 494,606
Deferred income	<u>0</u>	<u>18,396</u>
	<u>793,641</u>	<u>513,002</u>
NET ASSETS		
INVESTED IN TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS	1,768,603	169,074
UNRESTRICTED	<u>5,168,454</u>	<u>7,174,451</u>
	<u>6,937,057</u>	<u>7,343,525</u>
	<u>\$ 7,730,698</u>	<u>\$ 7,856,527</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.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AS AT SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

	2023	2022
REVENUES		
Registration fees	\$ 5,927,401	\$ 5,323,080
Interest income	227,237	100,976
Corporation fees	193,900	197,200
Premises Inspection	132,811	233,333
Application and examination fees	127,189	128,429
Penalties and other	<u>101,269</u>	<u>60,243</u>
	6,709,807	6,043,261
EXPENSES		
Salaries	\$ 3,033,662	\$ 2,803,531
Legal	1,048,366	821,858
Information management system	479,385	296,193
Council and committees	473,284	439,883
Office facilities	460,693	216,937
Special projects	201,553	161,025
Policy development	196,367	103,082
Amortization	185,960	106,459
Interest and bank charges	174,876	172,479
Investigations and hearings	170,928	66,044
Exam administration	143,662	52,706
Insurance	111,389	103,214
Office	77,357	62,634
Networking and representation	76,589	45,971
Premises inspections	71,606	85,348
Communication	64,986	55,517
Quality assurance	62,494	33,779
Accounting and audit	55,820	42,000
Professional health program	<u>27,298</u>	<u>40,618</u>
	7,116,275	5,709,278
(DEFICIT) EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS	<u>(406,468)</u>	<u>333,983</u>
GAIN ON SALE OF LAND AND BUILDING	<u>0</u>	<u>2,398,038</u>
(DEFICIT) EXCESS REVENUES OVER EXPENSES for the year	<u>\$ (406,468)</u>	<u>\$ 2,732,021</u>



Public confidence
in veterinary regulation.

2 – 71 Hanlon Creek Blvd.
Guelph, Ontario N1C 0B1

Phone: 519-824-5600
Toll-Free: 1-800-424-2856
Fax: 519-824-6497

Toll-Free Fax: 1-888-662-9479

**For more information
on the College and
its Council, visit:**

cvo.org