

SPEAKING FRANKLY

A Report on the Veterinary Practice Community Reference Panel

October 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 October 2022 and outlines opportunities for College consideration.

KEY AREAS

(A) Standard of Care

The College has become increasingly aware of a common misunderstanding amongst the profession related to the difference between standard of practice and standard of care. To aid with this uncertainty, College staff have developed a draft document with the goal of clearing up the differences. Comments on the draft document from the Panel included:

- Provides clarity on the differences between each concept
- Comparison table was helpful
- Visual aids add significant impact
- Will be useful in practice
- Potential to add what each concept is not
- Sharing in multiple formats would be helpful
 - Podcast, social media, article, etc.

(B) Shared Care in Animal Rehabilitation

The College has a Working Group on Shared Care in Animal Rehabilitation. One of the goals of the Working Group is to promote collaboration in animal rehabilitation. To assist in delivering this message, two infographics and a joint statement have been developed. Comments on the developed materials from the Panel included:

- Unclear who they target
- Infographics feel valuable
- Benefits of collaboration are good to share with clients and professionals
- Comparative between veterinarians and other professionals was useful
- Language for the public needs to be adjusted for clarity
- Infographics are objective and non-judgmental

(C) Informed Client Consent

The College is interested in gaining a better understanding of what obtaining informed client consent looks like in practice. Comments from the Panel included:

- Wellness or annual appointments usually obtain verbal consent
- Diagnostics and procedures usually obtain written consent
- Every case is the veterinarian obtaining informed consent
- Consent does not have only one shape
- Risks are too high not to have consent, but we can have different forms to adapt to various forms of practice
- Consent is difficult to obtain when busy, stretched thin

(D) North American Essential Competencies Profile

The College was interested in hearing the reaction to the North American Essential Competencies Profile for Veterinary Medicine, which was recently developed by an Advisory Group stemming from the Canadian Council of Veterinary Regulators (CCVR). Comments from the Panel included:

- This should live beyond the CVO website
- Impressive and thoughtful
- Comprehensive and relevant to practice
- Majority of competencies are directed to clinical practice

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.