



## **SPEAKING FRANKLY**

### ***A Report on the Public Advisory Panel***

October 2019

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#### **BACKGROUND**

As a component of its Strategy 2020 objectives, the Council of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario formed a public advisory panel to assist with its work. The public advisory panel's specific mandate includes:

- to provide early advice to the College on emerging policy matters
- to provide feedback on the clarity of draft policy to the general public
- to provide input on the public communication strategy
- to identify emerging trends related to the animals, animal care and public perspective

The panel meets at least three times a year, once face-to-face with Council.

This report summarizes key areas highlighted by the panel and outlines opportunities for Council consideration.

A meeting of the public advisory panel with College Council was held on September 24, 2019.

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#### **KEY AREAS**

(A) Trends to Consider for the Future of Veterinary Medicine Symposium

- The expanding scope of pharmacies and pharmacists
- Telemedicine and the digitalization of medicine
- Animal welfare and provincial animal welfare legislation
- Cannabis, CBD and essential oil use in animals
- Availability of veterinary drugs, veterinary drug label claims
- Value of veterinary services
- Mental health and animal ownership
- One Health

(B) Suggestions for Council to Consider Related to Medically Unnecessary Surgery

- Large public support for banning of the procedures
- Concerns about animal welfare
- Concerns about procedures going “underground”

- The difference between policy and regulation and their effect on society
- Need for change in public opinion
- Need for change to occur at the societal/government level
- Concerns around safety, pain management, and other side effects when procedures are performed by breeders

(C) Suggestions for Council to Consider Related to its Regulatory role

- Off-label use of drugs
- Expanded scope of pharmacy and knowledge required for dispensing to animals
- CBD therapy and a veterinarian's ability to provide guidance
- Use and value of prescribing data related to antimicrobials
- Infection control in veterinary practice
- The opioid crisis and drug diversion – and the College's role
- Continuing education for veterinarians
- Use of category one antimicrobials

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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.