



SPEAKING FRANKLY

A Report on the Veterinary Practice Advisory Panel

May 2020

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 advisory 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 aims to meet at least three times a year, once face-to-face with Council.

This report summarizes key areas highlighted by the panel at its most recent meeting, and outlines opportunities for College consideration.

This teleconference meeting of the Veterinary Practice Advisory Panel was held on May 28, 2020.

KEY AREAS

(A) Sale of Non-Drug Veterinary Products

1. What comments and feedback does the panel have with respect to the draft *Policy Statement: Sale of Non-Drug Veterinary Products* and draft *Guide to the Policy Statement Sale of Non-Drug Veterinary Products*? Is it clearer? Is it more helpful? Does the panel have any other advice?

Highlights included:

- The documents are much clearer than previous versions
- The definition of veterinarian-client-patient relationship could cause confusion
- Difference between selling a non-drug veterinary product and recommending that a client purchase one elsewhere
- Suggestion that the scenarios in the guide be marked as “appropriate use”

- Suggestion that the practice expectation related to on-label/off-label use be further defined

(B) Modernization of the *Veterinarians Act*

1. The College is in the process of modernizing the legislation and regulations of veterinary medicine in the province. Given that this is not an everyday topic of veterinary conversation, what advice do you have for Council with respect to communication regarding its initiative? What would be important for veterinarians to know about this process?

Highlights include:

- Use of travelling information sessions
- Use of targeted consultations (i.e. regulatory unions, regional veterinary associations, commodity-based groups, etc.)
- Use of personalized invitations or emails
- Breaking down of messages into smaller communications to avoid reader burnout
- Use of licensing information to send practitioner specific interest
- Condensing information and using short, plain language

(C) Trends

1. What trends or issues related to the profession do you believe are important for Council to be aware of?

Highlights include:

- General expression of gratitude for College Covid-19 messaging
- Note that some Covid-19 messaging seemed small-animal focused
- Request for College to take a stance on homeopathy
- Concerns around return to normal practice after Covid-19
- Removal of veterinary products from store shelves to behind-the-counter due to public seeking alternative treatment methods for Covid-19

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.