

Agenda

Annual Council Meeting

December 4, 2024

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Council

Dr. Wade Wright,
President
Dr. Patricia Alderson
Dr. Claire Beauchamp
Dr. Kathleen Day
Dunbar

Ms. Cathy
Hecimovich
Dr. Louise Kelly
Ms. Catherine Knipe
Dr. Lena Levison
Dr. Clayton MacKay

Dr. Sean Marshall
Dr. Alana Parisi
Dr. Sami Qureshi
Dr. Jessica Retterath
Mr. Douglas Reynolds
Ms. Rena Spevack

Dr. Yashvir Varma
Dr. Michael Zigler

Agenda Information

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Annual Reports of Committees (pg 2)
 - Statutory
 - 3.1. Accreditation (pg 3)
 - 3.2. Registration (pg 7)
 - 3.3. Complaints (pg 10)
 - 3.4. Discipline (pg 13)
 - 3.5. Executive (pg 15)
 - Non-Statutory
 - 3.6 Quality Assurance (pg 17)
 - 3.7 Governance, Audit and Risk (pg 21)
- 4.
5. Appointment of Auditor (pg 24)
6. 2024 Annual Report of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario (pg 25)
7. President's Remarks
8. Recognition
 - President
9. Close



AGENDA ITEM 3.

TOPIC: Annual Reports of Committees

Statutory

- 3.1 Accreditation
- 3.2 Registration
- 3.3 Complaints
- 3.4 Discipline
- 3.5 Executive

Non-Statutory

- 3.6 Quality Assurance
- 3.7 Governance, Audit and Risk

Area of Focus

- Governance
- Legislation
- Public Policy
- Stakeholders
- Strategy

Annual Report to Legacy Council

Accreditation Committee

For the period October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024

Committee Meetings

There were 4 meetings held

- October 25 & November 21, 2023
- April 5 & September 17, 2024

Relevant Data

Registrar Referrals

The Committee reviewed 3 applications for exemptions from the *Minimum Standards for Veterinary Facilities in Ontario*, for which

- 3 had exemption requests granted

The Committee reviewed 2 applications for extensions on the veterinary facilities certificate of accreditation.

New Accreditation Standards for Veterinary Facilities

Number of accredited practices - 1760

Number of inspections - 354

- In person inspection - 328
- Virtual inspection – 26

Inspection Types:

- Renewal - 261
- Opening a New Facility - 55
- Moving the Facility - 26
- Adding an Additional Scope of Practice Service – 6
- Adding an Additional Species - 2
- *Facility for Veterinarians Treating their Own Animals - 4

*Facility for sole purpose of treating animals owned by the facility director with non-controlled drugs and biologic

Facility Inspection Compliance

- 20% of practices inspected were fully compliant with all requirements
- 51% of practices inspected had 5 or less non-compliant requirements

Committee Membership

Dr. Jessica Retterath, Chair (term ended Dec 2023)
Ms. Cathy Hecimovich, Chair (start date January 2024)
Dr. Farrukh (Sami) Qureshi (term ended Dec 2023)
Dr. Yashvir Varma (start date January 2024)
Dr. Sean Marshall (start date May 2024)
Dr. Clayton MacKay
Dr. Barinder (Bick) Jassal

Staff

Dr. Kim Lambert
Ms. Aneeta Bharij
Ms. Megan Farias
Ms. Kristina Mulak

Committee Responsibilities

The Accreditation Committee oversees the accreditation of veterinary facilities in Ontario and considers policy matters related to accreditation.

- 29% of practices inspected had 6 or more non-compliant requirements

100% of practices with non-compliance of requirements at inspection were fully compliant within 30 days.

Top 5 Non-compliant Requirements:

- #1-#3 are new requirements
- #4 – changed weekly controlled drug audit to every 21-31 days and added the new requirement of inventory management of non-controlled drugs for all veterinary facilities, including large animal
- #5 – pre-existing requirement

Note: number in brackets is the number of practices that were non-compliant.

1. Essential Standards: Biosecurity and Biomedical Waste Management (75)

The practice has a written policy for dealing with infectious and zoonotic cases, as well as overall infection control, such that team members are aware of said policy.

2. Essential Standards: Pharmaceutical Management (56)

Proper storage and handling of medication is evident to ensure the integrity and efficacy of the medication and adheres to the manufacturer's recommendations.

3. Essential Standards: Safety Management (51)

The practice is expected to comply with federal, provincial, and municipal legislation regarding workplace safety

4. Essential Standards: Pharmaceutical Management (45)

Maintains a record keeping system for inventory management of all medication that includes regular audits. If controlled drugs are used, proper logs and inventory management is expected to follow provincial and federal legislation. A current verifiable monthly inventory of controlled drugs is required (a controlled drug audit is performed every 21 - 31 days).

5. Additional Scope of Practice Service: In-facility Anesthesia (44)

When inhalant anesthetic is used, the practice has a scavenging system for waste anesthetic gases. Efforts are made to prevent exposure of gas anesthetic agents to team members. There is documentation that the gas scavenging system has been inspected and verified by a qualified technician from an independent third-party company within the previous 24 months or within the timeframe recommended by the manufacturer.

Number of Registrar Referrals = 0

Trends

The number of applications for new veterinary practices has increased significantly, driven by the introduction of a new accreditation model and more flexible standards. This model supports veterinarians by allowing them to adapt their practices to different scopes that suit their community needs. Consequently, veterinarians are now more empowered to pursue innovative areas within veterinary medicine, broadening their reach and services.

Moreover, there has been a rise in inquiries as veterinarians seek clarification on compliance requirements, and the new accreditation processes. Many veterinarians are exploring how they can leverage these new standards to establish or diversify their practices while ensuring they meet all regulatory expectations. This influx of inquiries highlights the growing interest among veterinarians to align their services with the evolving demands of clients and patients, demonstrating a proactive approach to quality care.

The flexibility embedded in the new model encourages the veterinary community to support a wider range of care options, which benefits both veterinarians and the communities they serve.

Other Information

Implementation of New Accreditation Standards for Veterinary Facilities in Ontario

At its September 2023 meeting, the College Council approved the Accreditation Standards for Veterinary Facilities in Ontario to be implemented effective October 1, 2023. The new model and its standards are the result of 10 years of research and consultation to ensure they reflect the evolving nature of veterinary practice and meet the public's expectations. The new accreditation model permits a veterinarian to define their facility's scope of practice and then meet the facility standards that are relevant to their scope.

New Accreditation Fees

At its June 2023 meeting, the College Council approved changes to the accreditation fees which are set out in the College By-Laws. The annual fee reflects the scope of services offered from the practice. There is no longer a facility inspection fee paid at the time of an inspection. Other fee changes associated with the new accreditation model include a late annual fee penalty, unannounced inspection fee, new facility inspection fee, incomplete inspection fee, cancellation and re-scheduling fee, and failure to notify fee.

Veterinarians Treating their Own Animals and Accreditation

The launch of the College's new accreditation model and standards, provided an opportunity for the Accreditation Committee to review how accredited veterinary facilities owned by a veterinarian for the sole purpose of prescribing and dispensing drugs to their own animals, fit into the new accreditation scheme. The Accreditation Committee acknowledged the continued enforcement of the existing regulations requiring a veterinarian to practice at an accredited veterinary facility to possess drugs for prescribing, dispensing, or administering to animals, including their own animals. A veterinarian may apply for an accredited veterinary facility for the sole purpose of purchasing and administering pharmaceuticals, excluding controlled substances, to treat animals they own, and sign an acknowledgement and undertaking that they meet the accreditation requirements identified by the Accreditation Committee for this scope of practice. Once accredited, they pay an annual accreditation fee of \$125 plus HST on a yearly basis. The new practice inspection fee of \$450 is waived.

Portable Radiology for Companion Animals

The Accreditation Committee decision to permit companion animal mobile facilities to utilize a portable x-ray is a significant milestone. This decision, informed by a thorough risk analysis and environmental and literature scan, reflects an understanding of new modern accreditation standards and facility directors' responsibilities. This decision recognizes the new accreditation standards support facility directors' obligations concerning any radiology services they provide, whether it be a permanent fixed x-ray unit or a portable x-ray unit. This may reduce the burden on hospitals to perform this service and decrease delays in animals receiving this diagnostic service thereby improving access to veterinary care. By aligning radiology services with flexible, modern solutions, the Committee's decision underscores the importance of adapting regulatory standards to better meet evolving healthcare needs in the veterinary field. Previously, companion animal mobiles were restricted from providing radiology services and were required to have a written agreement with a companion animal hospital to provide radiology services to their clients.

Policy on Reviewing Accreditation Standards

The Accreditation Committee's new internal policy and procedures on reviewing the accreditation standards will ensure regular review and enhancement of the accreditation standards. This review

process will also ensure that the accreditation standards remain up to date and are reflective of the veterinary medicine being practiced in facilities. This review and revision of the accreditation standard will include incorporating principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Facility Director Communication Initiatives

An eUpdate newsletter for facility directors was introduced to support facility directors in the transition to the new accreditation model and standards and is published on a quarterly basis. Two webinars were produced to assist facility directors in understanding the new accreditation model and standards. A video was created to assist facility directors of companion animal and large animal facilities in how to prepare for an inspection.

Drug Management in Veterinary Facilities - Lock, Label, Locate Campaign

The "Lock, Label, Locate" campaign, introduced in November 2022, has garnered significant recognition and support from both veterinarians and veterinary technicians. The campaign aims to improve the separation of expired drugs from those in use, enhance the security of controlled substances, and ensure the proper disposal of all drugs. The "Lock, Label, Locate Toolkit"—designed to reinforce proper drug management practices—is readily available for download. Complementary resources, such as tip sheets and 3 brief instructional videos, have been created to assist facility directors and their veterinary teams in achieving best practices in drug management.

Accreditation Emblem

The newly designed accreditation emblem is now available for use by veterinary facilities which have received a Certificate of Accreditation in Ontario. The emblem may be displayed on the facility's website, and their social media platforms.



Annual Report to Council

Registration Committee

October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024

The College's Registration Committee reviews applications that are referred by the Registrar from applicants who do not meet all licensure requirements or who seek exemption from one or more licensure requirements. CVO Staff process applications that meet all requirements for licensure.

Committee Meetings

8 Registration Committee meetings occurred during this reporting period.

- 2023: November 14
- 2024: February 2, February 20, March 27, May 1, May 15, July 3, September 10

Relevant Data

Applications Considered

The Committee reviewed 335 applications.

- 117 accredited university graduands (for which a Dean's letter was submitted); and
- 171 referrals to the Committee, including referrals from the Registrar and requests for various exemptions by applicants.

331 licences were approved for issuance and 4 licence applications were denied.

Mobility Data

79 licences were issued to applicants under the *Ontario Labour Mobility Act* from October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024.

Policy Issues Considered

CVO Jurisprudence Exam Policy

The College began offering the jurisprudence exam in testing windows beginning in March 2024. Through the new format, applicants have specific opportunities to take the exam. The move to exam windows enables the College to find a balance with having the exam frequently and regularly available to applicants while also ensuring the exam remains current and relevant.

Committee Membership

Dr. Alana Parisi, Chair
Dr. Kathleen Day Dunbar
Dr. Chiemi Ogawa
Mr. Douglas Reynolds
Dr. Michael Zigler
Dr. Jessica Peatling (until December 2023)
Dr. Louise Kelly (until December 2023)

Staff

Lindsay Sproule
Shilo Tooze
Kristina Mulak

Committee Responsibilities

The Registration Committee endeavours to maintain standards of entry-level competence that ensures both public protection and equitable access to the profession.

The exam was available to applicants in four testing windows in 2024 (April, July, September, November). Each testing window is two weeks long.

With the introduction of exam windows, the exam reattempt policy was flagged for revision as it is necessary to clearly communicate that applicants are only permitted one exam attempt in a single exam window. The Exam Advisory Group (EAG) discussed and supported the policy revisions at its meeting on January 29, 2024 and directed that it be forwarded to the Registration Committee for decision. The Registration Committee reviewed and adopted the revised policy at its February 2, 2024 meeting.

CVO Jurisprudence Exam attempts

At its July 3, 2024 meeting, the Registration Committee asked staff to provide information about the number of applicants who have exhausted their CVO Jurisprudence Exam attempts as per the exam attempt policy and the decisions that the Registration Committee has made when reviewing the requests for additional exam attempts. At its September 10, 2024 meeting, the Committee reviewed exam data, previous decisions related to additional exam attempts and considered the College's current position of moving towards new governing legislation which means that existing practice standards and policy statements are not being reviewed and updated. The Committee discussed and approved a revised CVO Jurisprudence Exam attempt policy that shifts from a three attempt limit to removing the attempt limit.

Other Information

CVO Jurisprudence Exam

John Wickett of Wickett Measurement Systems conducted a presentation reviewing the 2023/2024 CVO Jurisprudence Exam update project for the Committee at its meeting on May 15, 2024. The Committee was informed that key validation took place at the Exam Advisory Group meeting on May 2, 2024. On May 8, 2024, the Exam Advisory Group recommended a pass mark for the 2024 field test and a pass mark for the next iteration of the CVO Jurisprudence Exam. The Registration Committee approved the recommended pass marks.

Limited Licensure Project

The College is involved in the development of the Limited Licensure Assessment Project with the Canadian Council of Veterinary Registrars (CCVR) and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association – National Examining Board (CVMA-NEB). The project is developing tools comprised of a portfolio assessment and a supervised clinical practice assessment in order to evaluate the competence of an experienced veterinarian who wishes to work in a limited scope. Applicants with at least five years of practice experience from a licensed jurisdiction will be able to undergo the assessment in the area of small/companion animal, equine or production animal. A pilot of the assessment process began in 2024. The Committee granted licences to those who will be participating in the clinical portion of the assessment and is excited to see the results of the pilot.

Office of the Fairness Commissioner Risk Rating Letter

The Committee received an update in March, 2024 that the College had received its 2023/24 risk rating from the Office of the Fairness Commissioner and that the College has been placed in the low-risk category for the period of April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2026.

Language Skills Evaluation Project

In September 2023, Council approved funding for a project to set new language benchmarks for veterinary medicine in Ontario so that the College can meet its legislated requirements under the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006* related to language proficiency testing. The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks is assisting the College with this project and the project is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2024.

Supporting New Licensees

The College's Strategic Plan, Strategy 2026, Objective 2 Partnering for Improved Access to Veterinary Services has a year one tactic which reads, "to consider programs that support new graduates to gain confidence in front line practice." The Registration Committee was directed by Council to study the issue of whether new supports are needed and whether a graduated entry to practice model would be appropriate. The Committee completed its analysis and in December 2023 provided a briefing note and its research to Council. Council discussed graduated licensing as an option to support newly licensed veterinarians in practice in Ontario. Council directed the Registration Committee to move forward with developing and implementing a work plan to provide resources and supports to newly licensed veterinarians, employers and mentors exclusive of a graduated licensing system. In March 2024, the Committee received and discussed the Supporting New Licensees work plan and provided staff with direction about which resources and supports for new licensees should be designated as priorities to develop.

Annual Report to Council



Complaints Committee

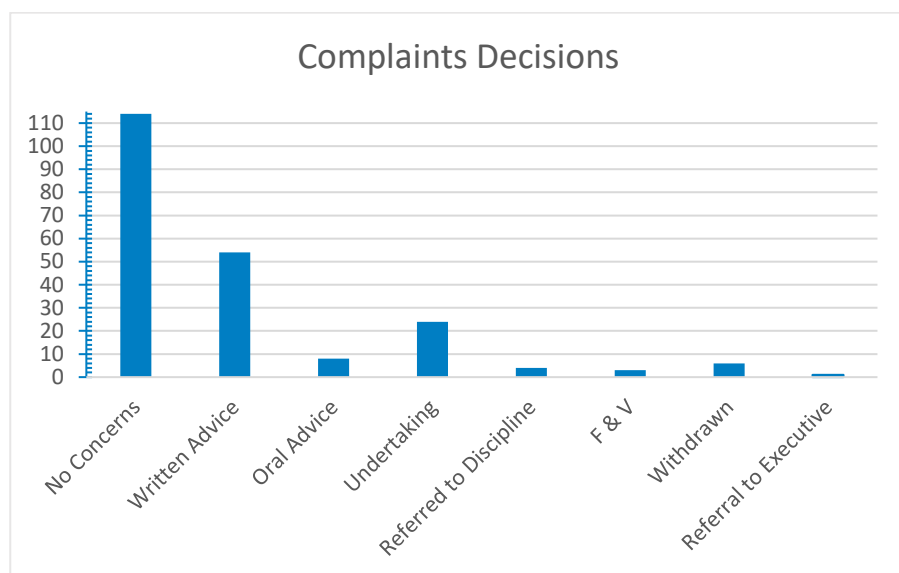
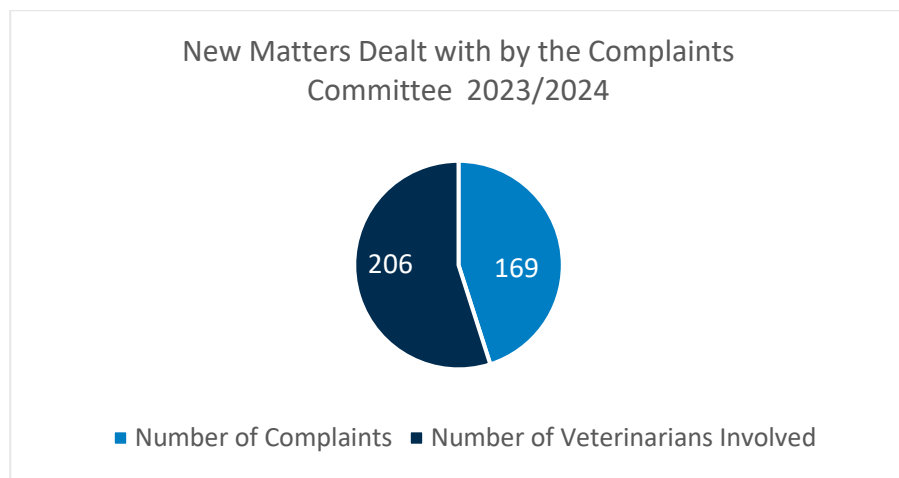
December 4 and 5, 2024

For the period of October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024

Committee Panel Meetings

- 14

Relevant Data



Committee Membership

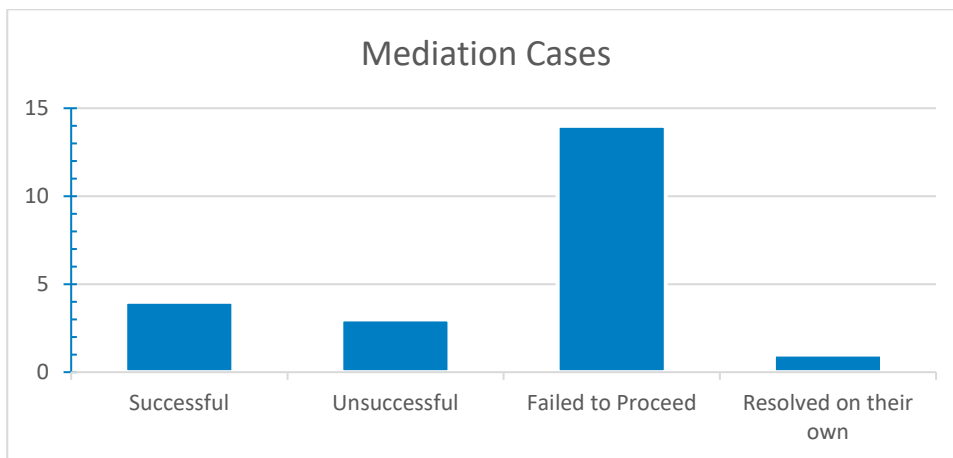
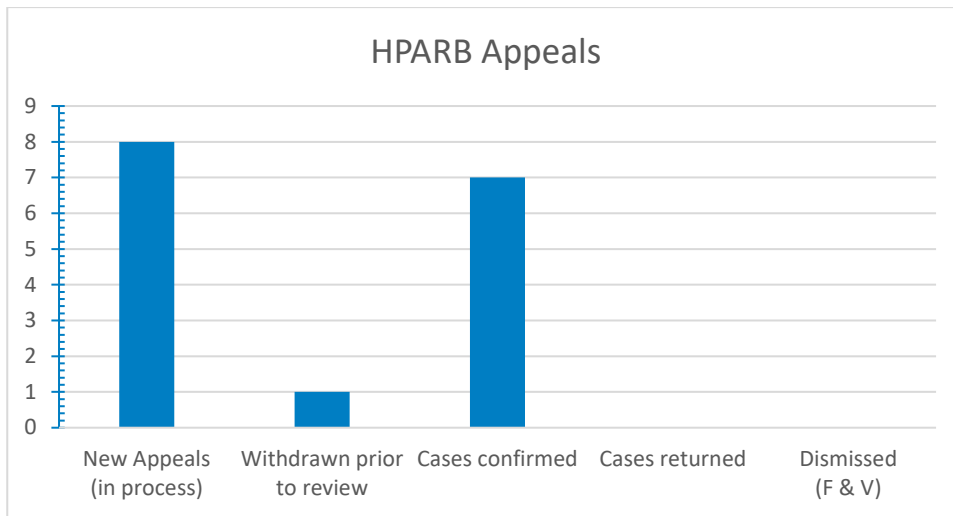
Ms. Rena Spevack
 Dr. Roselyn Allen
 Dr. Ehab Hanna
 Dr. Lisa Jones
 Dr. Lesley Ralston
 Dr. LeeAnn Sealey
 Dr. Anne Watson
 Dr. John Draper
 Dr. Lena Levison
 Dr. Tyrrel de Langley
 Dr. Helen Waters
 Dr. Aaron Shackelton

Staff

Dr. Colette Larocque
 Dr. Kim Lambert
 Ms. Shilo Tooze
 Ms. Cindy Rose
 Mr. Phillip Evanitski
 Ms. Alyssa Fries
 Ms. Fatima Barrow
 Ms. Kristina Mulak

Committee Responsibilities

The Complaints Committee shall consider and investigate complaints made by members of the public or members of the College regarding the conduct of a member or former member of the College.



Trends

Related to the Member

- In their response to the complaint, more veterinarians are reflecting and demonstrating steps they took to address the complainant's concerns and/or changes made to their practise.
- Some frustrations expressed regarding the length of time it takes for cases to be reviewed, but often with acknowledgement that this is an area of focus that will improve with legislative reform.
- Increased complexity about an individual veterinarian's responsibilities, particularly where the concerns included auxiliary staff, clinic protocols and business practices.

General

- Many cases involved concerns with clinic policies.
- Complaints filed by a third party acting on the complainant's behalf often included second-hand information about the incident, making it more difficult to determine what happened.
- Many complainants expressed grief, anger and frustration; some of whom did not acknowledge that their animal was ill when they sought veterinary care. This correlated with either long periods of time between the incident and the complaint being filed, or immediate filing of a complaint.

- Concerns about communication and the way someone was treated by a veterinarian and/or their staff and not the medical care their animal received.
- Complaints related to the cost of veterinary services including informed consent for costs, concerns about excessive fees, and concerns that veterinarians recommend testing/treatments for personal financial gain.
- Increased number of audio and video submissions.

Other Information

Mediated Resolutions Program (MRP)

Staff increasingly flag potential cases for the MRP, which requires both parties to be in agreement to participate. The majority of people provided the opportunity have declined to participate, which means the complaint will be formally investigated by the Complaints Committee.

Complaint Matters

The number of complaints filed in the 2023-2024 fiscal year is almost 50 percent less than the number filed in the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Based on calendar year data 2024 is on track to be lower than 2017 through 2023.

With an increase in case materials and increased complexity of cases, staff and committee members have implemented strategies to improve the efficiency and ease of case management and review where possible. A forward-thinking approach is being used in anticipation of legislative reform.

HPARB Appeals

There was a decrease in the number of HPARB appeals reported on this fiscal year. Factors involved include fewer decisions produced by the committee, fewer parties filing for appeal, and a longer timeframe between the committee making a decision and the College being notified about a new appeal.

Committee Members

We are seeking appointment of three new non-Council Committee members.

Two educational retreats were held this year.

College Staff

We welcomed the addition of a new Associate, Investigations – Fatima Barrow in December 2023.

The Associates, Investigations have now integrated the “Navigator” concept into their customer service communications. This includes reaching out to veterinarians who were recently notified of a new complaint. We continue to monitor the customer experience.

Grief Resources

The College continued its partnership with Homewood Health to offer a virtual session on ‘Navigating Grief After the Loss of a Pet’. The session is currently offered quarterly and aims to help participants understand the grief process and learn healthy ways to cope with pet loss. The webinar has been positively received with increased participation over the past year.

Annual Report to Council

Discipline Committee

December 4 & 5, 2024

From the period of October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024

Committee Meetings

- Virtual Educational Retreat was held on November 8, 2023
- Annual Orientation was held virtually on February 15, 2024

Relevant Data

Matters before the Discipline Committee during the fiscal year

Number of Veterinarians	Cases Heard	Pre-Hearing Conferences	Motion Hearings	Days of Hearing
7	8*	9	2	27

*One member had more than one case before the Discipline Committee

Completed Hearings

Uncontested	1
Contested	4
Adjourned sine die	2

Status of Discipline cases

Ongoing hearings	4
Cases waiting to be heard by Discipline Committee	12

Trends

Scheduling Hearings

There are large gaps between hearing dates for some contested hearings due to challenges with finding dates where the parties and the panel members are all available.

Other Information

CanLii

Discipline Committee decisions and reasons from 2024 are now accessible on CanLii (Canadian Legal Information Institute).

Committee Membership

Dr. Lena Levison, Chair
Dr. Patricia Alderson
Dr. Danielle Anderson
Dr. Scott Arnold
Dr. Claire Beauchamp
Dr. Kathleen Day Dunbar
Ms. Cathy Hecimovich
Dr. Davinder Jassal
Dr. Shannah Kavonic
Dr. Louise Kelly
Ms. Catherine Knipe
Dr. Kerry Lissemore
Dr. Clayton MacKay
Dr. Sean Marshall
Dr. Arif Memon
Dr. Paula Menzies
Dr. Atul Pakhawala
Dr. Sami Qureshi
Dr. Jessica Retterath
Mr. Douglas Reynolds
Dr. Ravi Sankar
Ms. Rena Spevack
Dr. Sarah Thompson
Dr. Yashvir Varma
Dr. Ines Walther
Dr. Steve Watts
Dr. Ellen Williamson
Dr. Michael Zigler

Staff

Ms. Shilo Tooze
Ms. Cindy Rose

Discipline Committee Evaluations

After the completion of a hearing, College Staff will send a survey to panel members asking for their feedback on how the hearing went and to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

Discipline Appeals

At the end of the fiscal year, there are four cases, involving three members, under appeal at Divisional Court. Three cases, involving one licensed member, have been heard and we are awaiting the decision.

Annual Report to Council

Executive Committee

October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024

Committee Meetings

There were 13 meetings held:

- 2023 – October 18, October 25, December 7
- 2024 – January 24, February 28, March 21, April 17, April 23, May 22, June 7, July 24, August 21, September 23

Annual Data Summary

The Committee considered the following investigation related issues:

- 9 Registrar's Investigations were approved
- 13 advice/caution/no further action letters were forwarded to licensees
- 3 Mutual Acknowledgement and Undertakings forwarded to licensees
- 2 approved undertaking to change Facility Director during a suspension
- 1 licensee informed to attend at an Executive Committee meeting to receive an oral caution
- 5 cases referred to the Discipline Committee

Policy Issues / Briefing Notes (forwarded to Council for consideration)

- Professional Practice Standard – Informed Client Consent
- Draft Position Statement – Embracing Innovation and the Digital Age in Veterinary Medicine
- Draft Policy – Unrestricted & Internally Restricted Net Assets
- Draft By-Law Revision – Non-Councillor Committee member terms
- Proposed Budget 2025
- Sunsetting of GAR & Community Reference Panels
- Antimicrobial Stewardship – Next step tactics
- Review of a Proposed Regulatory Sandbox Project
- Draft Year-2 Tactics for Strategy 2026

Committee Membership

Dr. Wade Wright, President
Dr. Louise Kelly
Ms. Catherine Knipe
Dr. Alana Parisi
Dr. Jessica Retterath

Staff

Jan Robinson
Shilo Tooze
Alice Couto
Martin Fischer
Kristina Mulak

Committee Responsibilities

The Executive Committee shall perform such functions of Council as are delegated to it by the Council, By-Laws or the Act. The Executive Committee, between meetings of Council, may perform any other function of the Council that, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, must be performed immediately.

The committee:

- provides leadership to Council, promotes governance excellence and facilitate the effective functioning of the College.
- has the authority to conduct an investigation at the request of the Registrar, refer cases to the Discipline Committee and act on cases involving impairment of a licensee.
- makes recommendations to prosecuting counsel on penalties for all matters referred to the Discipline process.
- considers policy issues presented by Council or the Registrar to determine if the information is complete and clear and,
- reviews operational issues of significance.

Other Information

Other matters receiving consideration by the Committee included:

- Appointment of new Councillor, Dr. Sean Marshall, to Committee appointments and additional temporary appointments to the Complaints Committee to meet public member quorum requirements throughout the year
- PUPS Act Update

Report to Legacy Council

Quality Assurance Committee

October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024

Committee Meetings

There were four meetings held this reporting period:

- November 5, 2023
- February 14, 2024
- May 29, 2024
- August 28, 2024

Relevant Data

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The College recommends that licensed members complete at least 50 hours of CPD each year, or 150 hours over a three-year period. CPD hours reported for 2023 (November 1, 2022 to October 31, 2023):

	Average Number of CPD Hours Reported
All Licensed Members	95 hours
Graduated in last 5 years	79
In clinical practice	91
In non-clinical practice	124

Learning Modules and Videos

- From October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024, the learning modules series Foundations for Medical Record Keeping: Companion Animal, has been accessed 162 times, and the Foundations for Medical Record Keeping: Food Producing Animal, Equine and Poultry, has been accessed 22 times.
- From October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024, the Ethics E-learning Module was viewed 34 times, and the Informed Client Consent module was viewed 69 times.

Committee Membership

Dr. Patricia Alderson, Chair
Dr. Claire Beauchamp
Dr. Robert Berger (to December 2023)
Dr. Jessica Peatling (from December 2023)
Dr. Kristen Reynolds

Staff

Ms. Emily Ewles
Ms. Cindy Janakovic
Dr. Kim Lambert

Committee Responsibilities

The Quality Assurance Committee shall research, develop, review, and make recommendations to the Council respecting matters of quality assurance programs for members, including continuing education, professional development, practice review, and peer-review.

- There were 56 requests from 23 individuals for communication learning modules this year
 - 20 licensed veterinarians in Ontario
 - 3 veterinary team members in Ontario

Trends

General Trends

Articles (e.g. newspaper, research paper, etc.) on the following topics were discussed by the Committee:

- Cultural humility, including DEI resources available to the veterinary profession.
- Veterinary wellbeing, including available resources and systemic pressures in the veterinary profession.
- Culture of safety, and the importance of learning from errors and including patient safety culture in the veterinary curriculum.

Other Information

Ethics Resource Hub

The Ethics Resource Hub was launched on April 21, 2021. The hub contains a learning module, tools and frameworks, discussions, a library, and case scenarios. These components are reviewed periodically, and new resources added.

The College hosted one live discussion this reporting period. A panel of veterinarians discussed an ethical dilemma on the topic of client non-adherence to a treatment plan using a decision-making tool.

Code of Ethics

To link with the College's IDEA Action Plan, the Quality Assurance Committee sought Council's direction to make an important change to the Code of Ethics. The proposed revision would include adding ethical principles and duties for conduct that supports anti-racism, inclusivity, and cultural safety in the practice of veterinary medicine. At their September meeting, College Council approved the Committee's recommendation, and staff have begun research into IDEA language.

Cultural Humility

The Committee has been actively engaged in research on cultural humility and are aligning this work with the internal work of the College on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Staff brought this topic to the Veterinary Practice Community Reference Panel in October 2023 and to the Community Engagement Strategist in early 2024 for input and discussion. A strategy for promoting cultural humility in the practice of veterinary medicine will take a 2-phase approach: raising awareness and supporting knowledge building. Work on the strategy has begun with a poll in the April e-Update to receive feedback on topics that are most relevant to the profession and an article was published introducing cultural humility to the profession in the July edition of College Connection. Staff are continuing work with another article to be published in College Connection this winter.

Veterinary Wellbeing

At its March 24 & 25, 2021 meeting, Council approved the Quality Assurance Committee's request to research and develop recommendations on the College's role and resources in veterinary wellbeing. With input from the Committee, staff developed recommendations which were approved by Council at the December 1 & 2, 2021 meeting.

Since then, the College has implemented several initiatives, including the webpage Your Well-being is Important on the College website. 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 Collaborative is focusing on an awareness campaign for veterinary workplaces and promoting skills and training.

A project to develop an awareness campaign was initiated in March 2024. The goal of the project is to encourage awareness of mental health in veterinary workplaces. The campaign was launched in November with a social media post and will continue into 2025 using a variety of tools, including a podcast, posters, postcards, social media posts and newsletters.

Culture of Safety

The Quality Assurance Committee has been engaged in work to introduce the concept of building a culture of safety and continuous improvement within veterinary practice. Staff began to work up a strategy with the aim of building awareness within the profession of the concept of a culture of safety and the shift from a blame culture to a learning culture. The strategy includes a 2-phase approach: raising awareness of the concept of a culture of safety and determining resources/tools that support a culture of safety in practice.

Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries

Dr. Alana Parisi, President, College Council, noted at the June 2023 Council meeting that concerns about serious boundary issues have come to the College related to veterinarians. The Quality Assurance Committee made this topic a priority and reviewed research and a briefing note at their meeting in May 2024. The Committee presented the briefing note to Council at its June meeting, and Council directed that a policy on maintaining appropriate boundaries be developed.

Quality Assurance Program

Peer Advisory Conversation (PAC) – The Peer Advisory Conversation was launched as a core component of the College's Quality Assurance Program in September 2021. From October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024, six Peer Advisory Conversations were completed.

In June 2023, College Council approved the Quality Assurance Committee's request to undertake a research project on recently licensed veterinarians in Ontario and their participation in the Peer Advisory Conversation. Staff have partnered with Dr. Basem Gohar at the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) to conduct this research project with a post-doctoral student, Dr. Michael Brunt. The research project commenced in October 2024 and is expected to take one year to complete.

Peer Review of Medical Records (PRMR) – On March 22, 2018, Council established PRMR as a mandatory component of the College's Quality Assurance Program. In April 2019, the PRMR program relaunched and will be evaluated after two years.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the program was placed on hold and random selection resumed in 2022. The second year of the program was completed, and an aggregate report was shared with College Council in September 2024. The second-year aggregate report will be shared with the profession.

Recruitment and training of four additional Peer Reviewers is underway to improve timelines in the PRMR process. Peer Reviewer annual training took place in April 2024.

Quality Improvement Program

Learning Modules – The Institute for Healthcare Communication (IHC) Veterinary Communication Project closed, and Texas A&M acquired the intellectual property rights to the IHC veterinary content. The module content continues to be available through a license agreement with the Texas A&M Veterinary

Healthcare Communication (VHC) Curriculum. The New Brunswick Veterinary Medical Association has renewed their agreement with the College and the Texas A&M Veterinary Healthcare Communication (VHC) Curriculum to allow veterinarians and veterinary staff in New Brunswick to have access to the College's online communication learning modules.

Annual Report to Council

Governance, Audit and Risk Committee October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024

Committee Meetings

There were 4 meetings held:

- 2023 – October 25
- 2024 – April 11, July 17, September 18

Annual Data Summary

- Not applicable

Policy Issues / Briefing Notes (forwarded to Council for consideration)

- No policies considered

Other Information

Risk Management

- the Committee reviewed the Internal Risk Analysis & Mitigation Unit's report on identified leading risks and strategic risks

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

- the Committee reviewed a proposed change for the new Accreditation Indicator

Council Structure under the new Act – Update

- an update was provided on a new Council structure under the new Act – this includes a period of transition where there will be work of both the existing Council and of the Transition Council

Governance Support during the Transition Period

- the Committee was provided with a group of activities, for the existing Council and for the Transition Council, that would need to take place to assist two Councils to cover the transition period
- the Committee reviewed the activities and provided its feedback

Committee Membership

Dr. Alana Parisi, Chair
Ms. Cathy Hecimovich
Mr. Doug Reynolds
Dr. Jessica Retterath
Dr. Wade Wright (ex-officio member)

Staff

Jan Robinson
Shilo Tooze
Sarah Ellery
Alice Couto

Committee Responsibilities

The Governance, Audit and Risk Committee is a non-statutory committee of Council with a primary function of monitoring the College's compliance with its governance structure and processes and recommending opportunities for continuous improvement to promote governance excellence.

Proposed Document – Achieving Decisions in the Public Interest

- the Committee discussed having a document drafted that will help the College’s governance structure keep the work of the College advancing good practices as it transitions.

Non-Councillor Terms and Legacy Approach

- the Committee discussed the approved By-law change that would remove elections to Council during the legacy period of the current Council.
- A discussion on how to manage non-Council members for the remainder of the Veterinarians Act took place. It was the intent to maintain existing members as much as possible. Committee Chairs were asked whether new members needed to be recruited. Non-Council Committee members who were selected to return were then asked if they could remain. There are a few circumstances where Council will need to appoint new non-Council Committee members.
- the Committee developed a plan to recruit new non-Council Committee members where changes are needed at its September 18th meeting

Support to the Legacy Council

- the Committee discussed support that may be useful to the Legacy Council as it moves toward sunseting the Veterinarians Act.

Provision of Competency Based Council Materials to the Transition Council

- the Committee discussed how it would like to share background material with the Transition Council for its upcoming By-law work
- the Committee decided it would not be helpful to share the information with the Transition Council and that a review of the most current examples at the time of setting By-laws for the Transition Council would likely be a better approach

Continuation of the GAR

- the Committee discussed the continuation of the Governance, Audit and Risk Committee (GAR) for 2025
- After much discussion, the Committee suggested that it was not necessary to continue and that the current audit and risk responsibilities of the GAR Committee be transferred to the Executive Committee. Council confirmed this approach at the September meeting.



AGENDA ITEM 4.

TOPIC: Audited Financial Statements

Area of Focus
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governance
<input type="checkbox"/> Legislation
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Policy
<input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholders
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy

The audited financial statements are being finalized the last week of November 2024. They will be circulated by December 2nd, 2024.



AGENDA ITEM 5.

TOPIC: Appointment of Auditor

Background

At its Annual Council Meeting on December 2023 Council appointed RLB Chartered Professional Accountants as auditors for the College of Veterinarians of Ontario for the fiscal year 2024. This is the second year for RLB providing auditing services to the College.

Discussion

The College's annual financial audit for 2024 has now been successfully completed. The GAR Committee met with RLB Chartered Professional Accountants pre and post the audit to assist Council with assurance of an independent rigorous audit process.

The College is recommending that RLB Chartered Professional Accountants continue as auditor for the fiscal year 2025. In 2025, as per Council direction, the Executive Committee will be the Council liaison for the audit process.

Options

Following discussion, Council may elect to:

- appoint RLB Chartered Professional Accountants as Auditors for the College of Veterinarians of Ontario for the fiscal year 2025
- not appoint RLB Chartered Professional Accountants as Auditors for the College of Veterinarians of Ontario for the fiscal year 2025 and request the Executive Committee consider a different recommendation to Council at its March 2025 meeting
- other

Area of Focus
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governance
<input type="checkbox"/> Legislation
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Policy
<input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholders
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy

COVER SHEET
CVO Annual Council Meeting
December 4, 2024



AGENDA ITEM 6.

TOPIC: 2024 Annual Report of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario

Area of Focus
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governance
<input type="checkbox"/> Legislation
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Policy
<input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholders
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy

To be circulated closer to the meeting date.

COVER SHEET
CVO Annual Council Meeting
December 4, 2024



AGENDA ITEM 7.

TOPIC: **President’s Remarks**

Area of Focus
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governance
<input type="checkbox"/> Legislation
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Policy
<input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholders
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy

Dr. Wade Wright will address Council.

COVER SHEET
CVO Annual Council Meeting
December 4, 2024



AGENDA ITEM 8.

TOPIC: Recognition

President
Dr. Wade Wright

Area of Focus
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governance
<input type="checkbox"/> Legislation
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Policy
<input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholders
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy