



SPEAKING FRANKLY

A Report on the Veterinary Practice Advisory Panel

November 2019

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 meets 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 meeting of the Veterinary Practice Advisory Panel was held on November 29, 2019.

KEY AREAS

(A) Standard of Care

1. When you think of the term “standard of care” what does it mean to you?
2. How would you define it?

Highlights included:

- What is best for the animal in the circumstances
- Keeping in mind “do no harm”
- Using the most current evidence for treatment decisions
- The standard that any veterinarian working with a species should be able to meet
- What a reasonable veterinarian in the same circumstances would do
- The standard changes as new knowledge and evidence emerge
- The minimum level of acceptable care that a veterinarian should be comfortable providing

- Offering clients the gold standard first and if the client refuses, then offering alternate levels of care, still meeting the minimum standards

(B) Own Use Accounts

1. Have you been hearing any concerns from colleagues related to the notice sent by the College last spring (attached)?
2. If so, what concerns are you hearing?

Highlights include:

- Concern that some veterinarians will not be able to treat their own animals
- A sense from some veterinarians that this rule creates “two classes of veterinarians”
- Some veterinarians treat animals through their clinics which can work, depending on the practice type

(C) Non-Drug Veterinary Products

1. If veterinarians increase the sales of non-drug veterinary products (for example, Advantage or veterinary health products) within a facility without a prescription or physical examination and premise visit, what are your thoughts on public perception related to a veterinary facility viewed as a doctor’s office or as a pharmacy?
2. Should the profession care about this distinction?

Highlights include:

- There was a lack of concern about veterinary clinics being perceived as pharmacies rather than/in conjunction with doctors’ offices
- The policy caused some confusion and could provide greater clarity
- The policy may allow for an opportunity to create a new long-term veterinarian-client-patient relationship where none existed before

(D) Facility Directors

1. How do you view the role of a facility director?
2. What do you see as their accountabilities in practice and to the College?
3. Can you assist us in understanding how the role of the facility director is identified in practice and whether clients are aware of a facility director role?

Highlights include:

- There was widespread lack of knowledge about this role
- Many facility directors are not clear about their roles and responsibilities
- Clients are often not aware of who the owner and facility director is



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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.