



## **Supporting conversations with clients during COVID 19:**

During these challenging times of service restrictions and maintaining strict public health measures, communication with animal owners is key in the efforts to minimize risk to animal health and human health.

Here are tips to support veterinarians in communicating with clients:

- The order related to veterinary services comes from the provincial government and not the College. It is important to clearly explain to clients how the government directive and public health measures have impacted service delivery at your practice.
- Clients may express concerns or have questions about how their animal will be impacted. Take the time to answer their questions and address their concerns. Acknowledge how they are feeling – this is a difficult time for everyone.
- Each animal, circumstance and context is unique and requires a tailored solution. Provide recommendations and involve the client in the decision-making process. Clearly explain the risks and benefits of each possible course of action.
- If postponing a service, discuss a follow-up plan and reassure them when their animal will be reassessed.
- If applicable, provide the client with alternate strategies they can use at home to manage the situation safely (e.g., prevent exposure to infectious disease or other animals where possible).
- Where appropriate, provide virtual care using telemedicine to manage the patient and address the client's concerns.
- When an appointment is scheduled, provide information before the in-person visit about public health measures and infection control procedures that will be taken to protect the health and safety of all involved.

Veterinarians and their clients must do their part to address the public health crisis. It is important to work together to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and support the health of animals and people during this public health emergency.

The College's [learning modules page](#) has links to learning modules on communication that may be a helpful resource for veterinarians and veterinary teams: [www.cvo.org/Learning-Modules](http://www.cvo.org/Learning-Modules)

See the [College's Professional Practice Standard: Informed Client Consent](#)