



THE COLLEGE OF
VETERINARIANS
OF ONTARIO

SPEAKING FRANKLY

A Report on the Public Advisory Panel

September 2018

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 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.

First meeting of Public Advisory Panel and College Council - September 20, 2018.

KEY AREAS

(A) Broader Environment

- need for education on zoonotic disease
- discussing animals and impact on human mental health – one welfare
- College role in stewardship of antimicrobial drugs
- public education on cannabis and animals
- understanding the link between the College and the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA)
- promoting facility accreditation

Opportunity

- engage human health medical practitioners in dialogue on zoonoses
- raise visibility of facility accreditation
- raise visibility of licensure and the veterinarian-client-patient relationship
- educate the public on antimicrobial stewardship and veterinary medicine
- publish information on cannabis and pets
- strengthen College relationship with the OSPCA

(B) How to Best Utilize Public Advisory Panel

- be clear on advisory panel objectives
- use plain language
- consult panel on hot issues, inclusive of those in the media
- leverage panel members' connections

Opportunity

- further develop focus of advisory panel
- consider best methods to seek timely feedback on hot topics

(C) Effective Communication with the Public

- use social media widely
- be transparent about processes and explain simply
- explain why Council makes the decisions it does
- foster broad collaboration of partnerships (tell people how to engage with the College)
- use non-traditional sources to push messages (e.g. Canadian Centre for Food Integrity)
- be visible

Opportunity

- review program processes to ensure they are publicly available and clearly articulated
- continue to be vigilant to discuss why decisions are made
- explore new options for collaboration and message sharing

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.