

# Agenda

## Council Meeting

Wednesday, June 19, 2024

9:00 am to no longer than 4:00 pm

### Council Chamber

2-71 Hanlon Creek Blvd.

Guelph, ON

## 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

### Land Acknowledgement

1. Call to Order (9:00 am)
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
  - additional agenda items
4. Conflict of Interest (pg 3)
5. Consent Agenda (pg 4)
  - 5.1. Approval of Minutes
    - March 20 and 21, 2024 (pg 6)
    - April 19, 2024 (pg 13)
  - 5.2. President's Report (pg 16)
  - 5.3. Registrar's Report (pg 18)
  - 5.4. Committee Reports
    - 5.4.1. Accreditation (pg 30)
    - 5.4.2. Registration (pg 33)
    - 5.4.3. Complaints (pg 37)
    - 5.4.4. Discipline (pg 40)
    - 5.4.5. Executive (pg 41)
    - 5.4.6. Quality Assurance (pg 43)
    - 5.4.7. Governance, Audit and Risk (pg 46)
  - 5.5. National Examining Report (pg 47)

- 5.6 Ratify Executive Committee Motions (pg 49)
- 6. Strategic Alignment
  - 6.1 Evaluation
    - March 2024 (pg 51)
  - 6.2 Strategic Plan
    - 6.2.1 Summary of Outcomes from Year 1 Tactics (pg 56)
    - 6.2.2 Year-2 Tactics (pg 64)
  - 6.3 Policy Review and Project Priorities Update (pg 66)
  - 6.4 Performance Measurement
    - 6.4.1 Key Performance Indicators (pg 72)
    - 6.4.2 New Key Performance Indicator for Facility Accreditation (pg 73)
  - 6.5 Outcomes Focused Regulation
    - 6.5.1 Update (pg 75)
- 7. Finance
  - 7.1 Financial Statement ending April 30, 2024 (pg 79)
- 8. Public Policy
  - 8.1 Legislative Reform Update (pg 89)
  - 8.2 Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries (pg 96)
- 9. Organizational Policy
  - 9.1 By-law – Council Election (pg 108)
  - 9.2 Draft Governance Policy – Operations Reserve (pg 115)
- 10. Council Roundtable
  - 10.1 Media Trends (pg 118)
  - 10.2 Regulatory Trends (pg 120)
  - 10.3 Legal Trends (pg 122)
  - 10.4 Public Trends (pg 127)
  - 10.5 General Trends (pg 129)
- 11. Other Business
- 12. Notice of Motion (pg 130)
- 13. Confidentiality
- 14. Evaluation Form
- 15. Date of Next Meeting
  - September 23 and 24, 2024
- 16. Adjourn

Education Session (in-camera) (1:00 – 2:30 pm)  
“Stepping into the Future”



**AGENDA ITEM 4.**

**TOPIC:     **Conflict of Interest****

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

A conflict of interest exists where a reasonable person would conclude that a council or committee member’s personal or financial interest may affect their judgment or the discharge of their duties to the College. A conflict of interest may be real or perceived, actual or potential, direct or indirect.

All Council and Committee members have a duty to carry out their responsibilities in a manner that serves and protects the interest of the public. As such, they must not engage in any activities or in decision-making concerning any matters where they have a direct or indirect personal or financial interest. All Council and Committee members have a duty to uphold and further the intent of the Act to regulate the practice and profession of veterinary medicine in Ontario, and not to represent the views of advocacy or special interest groups.

Where a Council or Committee member believes that they may have a conflict of interest in any matter which is the subject of deliberation or action by Council or its Committees, they shall:

- (i) consult, as needed, with the President, the Registrar and legal counsel and, if there is any doubt about whether they may have or be perceived to have a conflict, prior to any consideration of the matter, declare the potential conflict to Council or the Committee and accept Council’s or the Committee’s direction as to whether there is an appearance of a conflict;
- (ii) where there appears to be a conflict of interest, not take part in the discussion of, or vote on, any question in respect of the matter;
- (iii) where there appears to be a conflict of interest, absent themselves from the portion of any meeting relating to the matter; and
- (iv) where there appears to be a conflict of interest, not attempt in any way to influence the voting or do anything that might be perceived as attempting to influence the decision of other members on the matter.

The conflict of interest information can be found in the College By-laws under section 16.



**AGENDA ITEM 5.**

**TOPIC:     Consent Agenda**

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

The purpose of a consent agenda is to place items that are reports of business already completed and basically for information in one segment of the agenda.

Commonly found items include: minutes of previous meeting, ratification of motions, Registrar’s report, Committee reports, informational materials, updated organizational documents, etc. It calls for one motion to approve the consent agenda – all items at once. Should there be a question of a report on the consent agenda any Councillor can ask the Chair to remove that specific report from the consent agenda for separate discussion and a separate motion. Such a process assists Council to save its valuable time for policy work.



**AGENDA ITEM 5.**

**TOPIC: Approval of Minutes**

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



**5.1 Minutes**

- March 20 and 21, 2024
- April 19 (Special Meeting)

# Minutes



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## Council Meeting

March 20 and 21, 2024  
2-71 Hanlon Creek Blvd.  
Hybrid Meeting

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Presiding Officer: Dr. Wade Wright

Members present: Dr. Patricia Alderson (attended virtually)  
Dr. Claire Beauchamp  
Dr. Kathleen Day Dunbar  
Ms. Cathy Hecimovich  
Dr. Louise Kelly  
Ms. Catherine Knipe  
Dr. Lena Levison  
Dr. Clayton MacKay  
Dr. Alana Parisi (attended virtually)  
Dr. Sami Qureshi (attended virtually)  
Dr. Jessica Retterath  
Mr. Douglas Reynolds (attended virtually)  
Ms. Rena Spevack  
Dr. Yashvir Varma  
Dr. Michael Zigler

Appointed Officer: Jan Robinson, Registrar and CEO

Staff attending: Ms. Kim Huson, Executive Partner, Communications  
Ms. Sarah Kirby, Executive Partner, Policy  
Dr. Kim Lambert, Associate Registrar, Quality Practice  
Ms. Kali Pieters, Policy & Projects Coordinator  
Ms. Beth Ready, Executive Partner, Governance, Culture & Operations  
Ms. Shilo Tooze, Deputy Registrar

### 1. Call to Order

A Land Acknowledgement was read aloud by the President.

Dr. Wright called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. and welcomed Councillors.

It was noted that the Council meeting was live streamed. Guests and observers watched the meeting via streaming.

## 2. Roll Call

A roll call was conducted.

## 3. Approval of Agenda

**MOTION:** It was moved and seconded,

“That the agenda be adopted as circulated.”

CARRIED

## 4. Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

## 5. Consent Agenda

Councillors reviewed the consent agenda and it was requested that

5.3 Registrar’s Report

5.4.1 Accreditation Committee Report

be removed from the consent agenda to be discussed separately.

All of the following consent agenda items were approved as presented:

5.1 Minutes – December 6 and 7, 2023

Minutes – Annual Council Meeting - December 6, 2023

5.2 President’s Report

5.4 Committee Reports

5.4.2 Registration

5.4.3 Complaints

5.4.4 Discipline

5.4.5 Executive

5.4.6 Quality Assurance

**MOTION:** It was moved and seconded,

“That the Consent Agenda be approved with item 5.3 and 5.4.1 to be discussed separately.”

CARRIED

### 5.3 Registrar’s Report

The Registrar noted that a review of the Veterinary Assistance Program (VAP) is being conducted. It has not been reviewed since 2004. Dr. Wright and the Registrar will be attending a first meeting in early April.

### 5.4.1 Accreditation Committee Report

Ms. Cathy Hecimovich, Chair of the Accreditation Committee, read an email that the College received from a member informing of their positive feedback on the new accreditation model.

**MOTION:** It was moved and seconded,

“That the Council of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario accept the Registrar’s Report and Accreditation Committee Report as presented.”

CARRIED

## **6. Strategic Alignment**

### **6.1 Evaluation**

Dr. Alana Parisi introduced this agenda item.

Council reviewed the meeting evaluation from its meeting held in December 2023.

### **6.2 Strategic Plan**

#### **6.2.1 Strategy 2026 – Year 1 Tactics**

Councillors were provided with the Year 1 Tactics related to Strategy 2026.

The document was provided to Council for information.

### **6.3 Policy Review and Project Priorities**

The Policy and Project Tracking Chart was provided for information.

### **6.4 Performance Measurement**

#### **6.4.1 Key Performance Indicators**

The performance indicators are intended to assist Council to focus on the risks to the organization and within the practice of veterinary medicine.

Council is provided with a Dashboard on a quarterly basis.

### **6.5 Outcomes Focused Regulation**

#### **6.5.1 Update**

Work continues relating to the management of drugs by veterinary facilities, the role of facility directors, the evaluation of remedial undertakings, improving medical record keeping, both public and profession based understanding of the VCPR, supporting anti-microbial stewardship, promoting cultural humility, and culture of safety.

### **6.6 Veterinary Practice Community Reference Panel**

The College has had Community Reference Panels since 2018. One panel consists of the public voice, and the other the voice of the profession.

Each panel is offered a yearly opportunity to meet directly with Council. The public panel met with Council in September 2023.



Members from the Veterinary Practice Panel met with Council – some attended in person and others joined virtually.

Panel members were asked specific questions and Council had an opportunity to ask questions.

## **7. Finance**

### **7.1 Financial Statement – January 31, 2024**

Council reviewed the Variance Report, Balance Sheet, and Revenue and Expenses Statement ending January 31, 2024.

The documents are presented as information only.

## **Public Policy**

### **8.1 Legislative Reform**

Ms. Sarah Kirby, Executive Partner, Policy, provided a presentation to Council discussing the main features of the new legislation and the process the College has set in place to move the next discussions forward. An opportunity for asking questions and providing clarifications was provided.

### **8.2 Draft Position Statement – Embracing Innovation and the Digital Age in Veterinary Medicine**

Dr. Jessica Retterath, Chair of the Ontario Veterinary Regulatory Innovation Panel, introduced this agenda item.

The panel held its first meeting in January 2023. One particular aim of the Panel's work was to assist Council to position innovation in the veterinary community and assist with guidance on how to encourage forward movement while mitigating risk. To begin to further advance the College in this conversation, the Panel crafted a draft position statement to clearly state publicly the Council's interests. Once approved this statement will be followed by a guide to assist veterinarians on how to approach this unregulated space of data analytics, precision medicine, software and artificial intelligence, robotics and others.

The Panel members were supportive of the draft and the Executive Committee also reviewed the draft statement and made minor revisions.

Council considered and provided its feedback on a draft Position Statement – Embracing Innovation and the Digital Age in Veterinary Medicine.

**MOTION:** It was moved and seconded,

“That the Council of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario adopt the draft Position Statement – Embracing Innovation and the Digital Age in Veterinary Medicine as presented and post.”

CARRIED

### **8.3 Notice of Motion (Dr. Clayton MacKay)**

At its meeting held in December 2023, Dr. Clayton MacKay provided the following statement of intent to make a motion at the next regularly scheduled meeting date of Council.

That the Council of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario review the election procedure for the Executive Committee.

Dr. Clayton MacKay indicated that he was withdrawing his motion.

## **9. Organizational Policy**

### **9.1 By-Law Changes – Licence Application Fee, Jurisprudence Exam Fee, Outstanding Fees**

Ms. Shilo Tooze, Deputy Registrar, introduced this agenda item.

The College periodically reviews fees across the organization to ensure that the fees are adequately managing the necessary costs to conduct the specific activity. Aside from the licensure category fees, applicants to the College pay a licence application fee and the CVO Jurisprudence Exam fee. It was determined that these fees had not been adjusted in many years and no longer reflected the costs to conduct these functions.

The Council also reviewed a new proposed by-law change that would require licensed members who owe fees to the College to pay any outstanding fees owed to the College in order to renew their licence each year.

At its meeting in September 2023, Council supported the proposed fee revisions and the proposed by-law changes were circulated to licensees and posted on the College website for comment.

Council was provided with a brief summary of the proposed changes and the feedback that was received in the consultation relating to licence application fee, CVO jurisprudence exam fee, and outstanding costs.

Council considered the information provided and provided its feedback. Council acknowledged that breadth of the feedback and indicated an opportunity to consider this as fees are reviewed for legislative reform.

**MOTION:** It was moved and seconded,

“That the Council of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario approve the By-law changes as presented.”

CARRIED

### **9.2 By-Law Changes – Election of Council Members**

At its meeting in December 2023, Council robustly discussed its early thoughts on the direction to be taken. Council directed that the item be returned to staff for developing proposed By-law changes which would be forwarded to its meeting in March.

As per Council’s direction, a revised By-law was considered by Council that supports continuing with the current Council and committee elected and appointed members, excluding order in council appointments, until the transition period is complete. If approved, the draft By-law will be circulated for public consultation for 60 days.

**MOTION:** It was moved and seconded,

“That the Council of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario approve the By-law amendment as presented and circulate for public consultation.”

CARRIED

## 10. Council Roundtable

### Trends – Media, Regulatory, Legal, and Public

Councillors were provided by staff with the top trends relating to media, regulation, recent legal cases, and public.

Councillors reviewed the trends that were brought forward.

### General Trends

Councillors were given the opportunity to raise any matter that they believe is relevant to the College and its activities. Comments included:

- recent article “Family medicine access in Canada drops since 2016, survey suggests <https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/cihi-family-medicine-1.7150378>
- article in BBC news “How these Canadian cows are burping less methane” <https://bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-68602575>

## 12. Notice of Motion

No notice of motion was brought forward.

## 13. Confidentiality

Councillors were reminded that Council meetings are public meetings.

Information discussed in in-camera sessions must be kept confidential by all in attendance. All budget/financial/strategic alignment documents are not to be shared outside of the meeting as these documents are working documents of Council and not public material. Any inquiries regarding the package can be directed to the website where the public package is posted.

Minutes of the Council meeting are not approved until its next meeting.

## 14. Evaluation Form

The Council meeting evaluation form will be forwarded for completion electronically via Survey Monkey. Councillors are encouraged to complete the evaluation which is helpful in continually improving future Council meetings.

## 15. Date of Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of Council will be held on June 19, 2024.

## 17. Adjourn

**MOTION:** It was moved,

“That the meeting of Council be adjourned.”

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:08 pm.

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Dr. Wade Wright  
President

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Jan Robinson  
Registrar and CEO

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Beth Ready  
Recording Secretary

# Minutes



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## Special Council Meeting

April 19, 2024

Virtual Meeting

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Presiding Officer: Dr. Wade Wright

Members present: 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. Alana Parisi  
Dr. Sami Qureshi  
Dr. Jessica Retterath  
Mr. Douglas Reynolds  
Ms. Rena Spevack  
Dr. Yashvir Varma  
Dr. Michael Zigler

Appointed Officer: Jan Robinson, Registrar and CEO

Staff attending: Ms. Sarah Kirby, Executive Partner, Policy  
Ms. Kali Pieters, Policy & Projects Coordinator  
Ms. Beth Ready, Executive Partner, Governance, Culture & Operations  
Ms. Shilo Tooze, Deputy Registrar

### 1. Call to Order

Dr. Wright called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

### 2. Roll Call

A roll call was conducted.

### 3. Motion to go in camera

**MOTION:** It was moved and seconded,

“That the Council of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario move to go in camera to discuss the draft Council submission on Bill 171 to the Standing Committee and to receive direction on Clause 22 of the Proposed Bill 171.”

The following staff members were invited to join the in-camera session: Ms. Jan Robinson, Ms. Sarah Kirby, Ms. Kali Pieters, Ms. Shilo Tooze, and Ms. Beth Ready.

CARRIED

## 6. Move to come out of in camera

**MOTION:** It was moved and seconded,

“That the Council of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario move to go out of in camera.”

CARRIED

## 7. Adjourn

**MOTION:** It was moved,

“That the meeting of Council be adjourned.”

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 1:01 pm.

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Dr. Wade Wright  
President

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Jan Robinson  
Registrar and CEO

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Beth Ready  
Recording Secretary

COVER SHEET  
CVO Council Meeting  
June 19, 2024



**AGENDA ITEM 5.2**

**TOPIC:     President's Report**

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

Written report is attached.



**President**  
Dr. Wade Wright

## President's Report to Council

June 2024

- regular meetings were held with the Registrar
- participated, along with the Registrar, in preparing a video recording for the Townhall session
- attended the White Coat Ceremony at OVC
- attended a meeting relating to the Veterinary Assistance program in northern Ontario
- attended numerous meetings relating to Legislative Reform
- attended, along with the Registrar, at Queen's Park relating to Bill 171
- attended the College Town Hall Session – "Mythbusting: Straight talk from the College"
- attended a meeting with the Animal Rehabilitation Division of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association and the Registry of Allied Animal Health Professionals
- attended the Council Orientation for Dr. Sean Marshall
- prepared the President's Message
- engaged in conversations with numerous members after the President's message was circulated
- observed the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading of Bill 171
- attended the CVO/OVMA Liaison meeting

Vision

**Public confidence** in veterinary regulation.

Mission

Governing the practice of veterinary medicine.

[www.cvo.org](http://www.cvo.org)





**AGENDA ITEM 5.3**

**TOPIC: Registrar's Report**

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



Please see the attached report.

**AGENDA ITEM 5.4**

**TOPIC:     Committee Reports**

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



**5.4.1       Accreditation**

**5.4.2       Registration**

**5.4.3       Complaints**

**5.4.4       Discipline**

**5.4.5       Executive**

**5.4.6       Quality Assurance**

**5.4.7       Governance, Audit and Risk Committee**

# Report to Council

## Accreditation Committee June 2024

### Committee Meetings

#### There was 1 meeting held

- April 5

### Relevant Data

#### New Accreditation Standards for Veterinary Facilities

Number of inspections from January 1 to March 31, 2024

- In person inspections - 86
- Virtual inspection - 1

Inspection Types:

- Renewal - 69
- Opening a New Facility - 10
- Moving the Facility - 7
- Adding an Additional Scope of Practice Service – 1

Facility Inspection Compliance

- 17% of practices inspected were fully compliant with all requirements
- 57% of practices inspected had 5 or less non-compliant requirements
- 26% 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:

Note: #1-4 are new requirements

1. Essential Standards: Biosecurity and Biomedical Waste Management  
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.

### Committee Membership

Ms. Cathy Hecimovich, Chair  
Dr. Clayton MacKay  
Dr. Farrukh (Sami) Qureshi  
Dr. Barinder (Bick) Jassal  
Dr. Sean Marshall

### 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.

2. **Essential Standards: Pharmaceutical Management**  
Access to pharmaceuticals is restricted to authorized individuals. If controlled substances are used, reasonable or necessary steps are taken to keep controlled substances secure. Access is restricted in a manner that prevents theft or misuse.
3. **Essential Standards: Safety Management**  
The practice is expected to comply with federal, provincial and municipal legislation regarding workplace safety.
4. **Additional Scope of Practice Service: Ultrasound Imaging**  
Ultrasound imaging equipment is properly maintained and in good repair. The equipment is serviced according to manufacturers' requirements. Equipment is cleaned after each use. If ultrasonography is performed by a third-party service provider who attends the facility and uses their own equipment, then the facility director is responsible for obtaining this information from the third-party provider.
5. **Additional Scope of Practice Service: In-Facility Anesthesia**  
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. This rise is attributed to the new accreditation model and the flexibility of standards, which enable veterinarians to explore various scopes of practice.

## Other Information

### **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 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.

### 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.



### 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. A video for facility directors is being planned. The video will answer commonly asked questions about the new accreditation standards. Also, 3 short animations are being developed to assist with proper drug management in veterinary facilities. These initiatives will continue over the coming months for facility directors and their teams to support them with the information they need to prepare for their upcoming inspections and comply with the new standards.

# Report to Council

## Registration Committee June 2024

### Committee Meetings

3 Registration Committee meetings occurred during this reporting period.

- March 27, 2024
- May 1, 2024
- May 15, 2024

### Relevant Data

#### Applications Considered

The Committee reviewed 82 applications.

- 59 Restricted licences were approved for issuance
- 16 Restricted licences for the Limited Licensure Assessment Pilot were approved for issuance (additional information about the pilot project is attached) and
- 7 General licences were approved for issuance.

The Committee reviewed Dean's list/letters submitted on behalf of numerous 2024 graduands who have not yet received their undergraduate veterinary program diplomas due to a convocation ceremony taking place in May or June. The Committee decided to accept these submissions as proof of these applicants completing their DVM degree and directed the issuance of General Licences to those who have submitted complete applications to the College and meet all other licensure requirements. The Committee placed a condition on the licence that requires these applicants to supply the College with their original degree within 6 months of the licence dates.

The Committee reviewed 42 applications in the same time period in 2023.

#### Mobility Data

14 licences were issued by the Registrar to applicants under the *Ontario Labour Mobility Act* from March 2, 2024 to May 26, 2024.

### Committee Membership

Dr. Alana Parisi, Chair  
Dr. Kathleen Day Dunbar  
Dr. Chiemi Ogawa  
Mr. Douglas Reynolds  
Dr. Michael Zigler

### 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.

## Policy Issues Considered

### 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.

## Other Information

### Office of the Fairness Commissioner Risk Rating Letter

The Committee received an update 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

The Committee received an update about the Language Skills Evaluation Project. 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. Additional information about this project is attached.

### Supporting New Licensees

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.

## Status Update on the Limited Licensure Project – May 15, 2024

The Limited Licensure Project is intended to explore an alternative pathway for licensure for candidates who do not wish to pursue general licensure. All Canadian jurisdictions are in need of skilled veterinarians. Some of our applicants have focused their work in a specific area of practice and may no longer possess broad competence in all areas of practice. The Limited Licensure Project is intended to assess the competence of a veterinarian in one of three pathways – companion animal, production animal and equine.

There is a two-part competency assessment process – an online portfolio and a supervised practice clinical assessment. The candidates are assessed against the competencies defined in the North American Essential Competency Profile.

In the last few months, the following has been completed:

- The online tools have been set up for use by candidates and assessors
- A scoring rubric has been established
- Educational tools for candidates and assessors have been created
- We have recruited and onboarded candidates and assessors in Ontario (16 candidates and 8 assessors) and Alberta is in the process of recruiting candidates and assessors
- In the pilot, we are testing the candidate eligibility criteria to determine if additional or different eligibility criteria may be needed
- We are currently piloting the portfolio phase of this work – candidates are working on their portfolios and assessors are working with the criteria and scoring rubric

What's Next:

- We continue to recruit assessors, especially in the areas of equine and production animals.
- Candidates who successfully complete the portfolio will be able to move into the supervised clinical practice assessment; this will take place in late May/June. These candidates will receive temporary licences to allow for participation in the pilot project.
- Upon completion of the pilot, our consultants, Camprof, will put together a project evaluation report. We can expect to receive this report over the summer or into the fall dependent upon when the pilot finishes. This report will include information about the validity and reliability of the tools, recommendations, potential changes, and an appraisal of the candidate and assessor resources.
- CCVR will then need to decide whether the tools meet the level of rigor required for licensure decision making and whether to consider recommending issuing licences for those candidates that participated in the pilot.
- CCVR will also need to decide, if the tools do meet regulatory rigor, whether to proceed with asking the NEB to assume this process as an assessment pathway.



## Status Update on Language Skills Evaluation Project – May 2024

The College of Veterinarians of Ontario (the College) is one of the 13 non-health professions and 23 compulsory trades that are covered by the [Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006 \(FARPACTA\)](#). The purpose of this Act is to help ensure that regulated professions and individuals applying for registration by regulated professions are governed by registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and fair. [Ontario Regulation 261/22](#), was filed under FARPACTA and this regulation establishes requirements for regulators related to: language proficiency testing, Canadian experience, decision-making timelines for processing of licensure applications and emergency registration plans. This regulation now requires Ontario regulators to accept the language tests that are approved under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada).

The College has reviewed the language proficiency testing requirements in the regulation and it was recognized that there is not a current evaluation of the English and French language skills required by the veterinary profession in Canada to easily adopt new language tests and set acceptable scores.

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 requirements related to language proficiency testing. The College has contracted the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks/Centre des niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens (CCLB) to undertake a rigorous evaluation of the English and French language skills required by the veterinary profession in Ontario that will lead to a valid, reliable, and fair occupational language analysis which will inform the appropriate level of English and French language required to enter the veterinary profession.

The project began in late January 2024 and is expected to take one year to complete. An Advisory Committee has been established and this committee will provide input into the process for data collection, review draft and final reports and share their strong understanding of the practice of veterinary medicine in Ontario. The Advisory Committee is comprised of 8 veterinarians and includes 2 bilingual veterinarians. In addition to the veterinarians, the College will be represented on the panel as will CCLB and a representative from the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association – National Examining Board. The CCLB benchmarking team will collect qualitative and quantitative data through research, job shadowing and on-site workplace observations of authentic language use. The benchmark findings arising from the analysis of this data will be validated through focus group sessions with practitioners and experts. The final report, expected to be issued in December 2024, will describe the benchmarks of the speaking, listening, reading, and writing tasks required of veterinarians in Ontario. It will provide a clear blueprint of the language requirements needed to work safely as a veterinarian in Ontario, based on Canada's national language standards: Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) and Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens (NCLC). The project includes mapping of the benchmarks to the College's currently accepted language proficiency tests and the language proficiency tests outlined in Regulation 261/22.

# Report to Council

## Complaints Committee June 2024

### Committee Panel Meetings

- March 26 and 27 2023, May 14 and 15 2024
- Anti-racism virtual workshop April 15, 2024

### Relevant Data

**Number of open cases:** 608

#### Since October 1, 2023:

- Number of new cases reviewed: 116
- Number of cases closed: 124
- Number of inquiries about the complaints process: 539
- Number of individuals provided information: 362\*
- Number of complaints filed: 102\*

\*Subset of the number of inquiries about the complaints process.

#### Cases Reviewed and Decisions Made in Quarter

- Total # of new cases reviewed: 55
- Total # of cases with final decisions made: 49\*

\*Decisions reflect cases that may involve more than one member as well as decisions made on cases that were deferred from previous meetings.

### Committee Membership

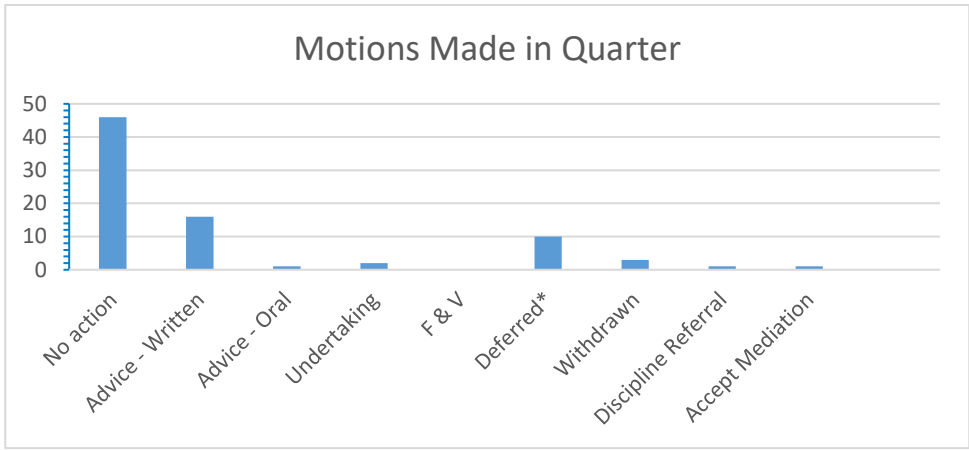
Ms. Rena Spevack, Chair  
Dr. Roselyn Allen  
Dr. Ehab Hanna  
Dr. Lisa Jones  
Dr. Lesley Ralston  
Dr. Anne Watson  
Dr. Tyrrel de Langley  
Dr. Aaron Shackelton  
Dr. Helen Waters  
Dr. Sami Qureshi

### Staff

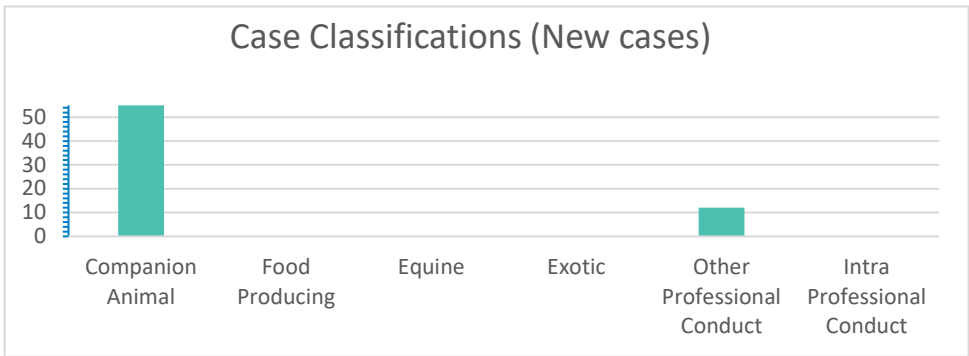
Dr. Colette Larocque  
Dr. Kim Lambert  
Mr. Phillip Evanitski  
Ms. Alyssa Fries  
Ms. Fatima Barrow  
Ms. Kristina Mulak

### Committee Responsibilities

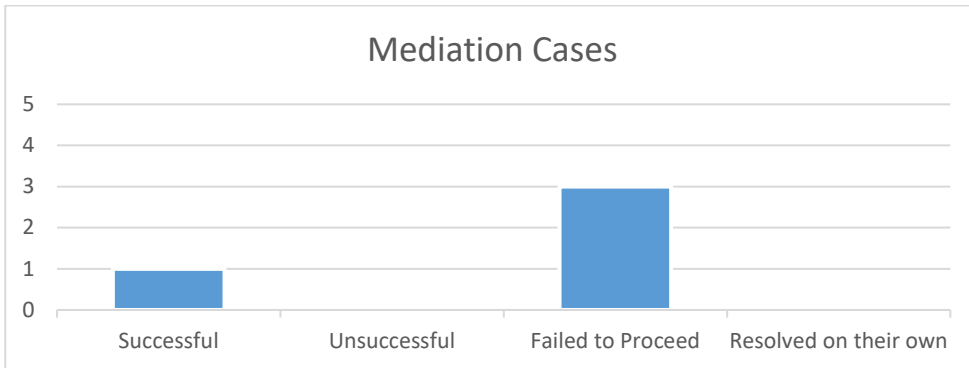
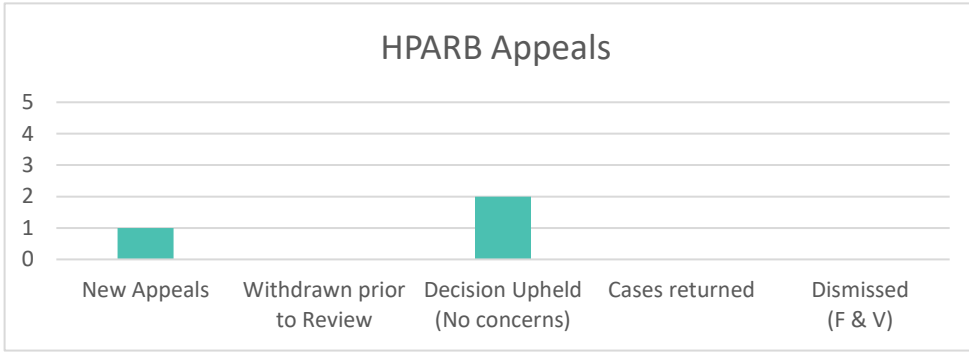
*The Complaints Committee shall consider and investigate complaints made by members of the public or members of the College regarding the conduct of a member or former member of the College.*



\*Deferred for Information, F&V notice, draft Undertaking, Allegations or Independent Opinion



Note: Some cases involved more than one category.



## Trends

### Related to the Member

- Comments from members regarding the length of the complaints process, but with acknowledgement that this is an area of focus that will improve with legislative reform.

### General

- Several cases involved a breakdown in the veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) with notations in the medical record about abusive client behaviour.
- There were complaints that related to pet owners' ability to access veterinary care, particularly in northern Ontario – for example, concerns with after-hours care services and finding a veterinarian taking new clients.
- Complaints made by individuals who were not the primary person involved in the animal's care and/or the person who attended the veterinary visits.

## Other Information

### Updates:

- After the anti-racism training staff considered where we can address sources of potential bias in the complaints process. The past proceedings (prior history) for our licensed members has been updated so it no longer includes the year of graduation, school of graduation and number of years licensed with the College.
- The Investigations Associates now contact veterinarians who were recently named in a complaint to provide information about the complaints process. Data will be reported starting next quarter.

### Topics of Advice delivered to members:

- Medical Records (6)
- Informed Client Consent (5)
- Medical/Case Management (5)
- Communication (3)
- Maintaining and Ending the VCPR (2)
- Extra-label Drug Use (1)
- Humane Animal Restraint and Handling (1)
- Professionalism (1)
- Rabies Vaccine Certificates (1)

### Areas of Remediation in Undertakings:

- Medical/Case management (2)
- Medical Records (2)
- Communication (1)

Note: Some cases included more than one topic of advice or more than one area of remediation.

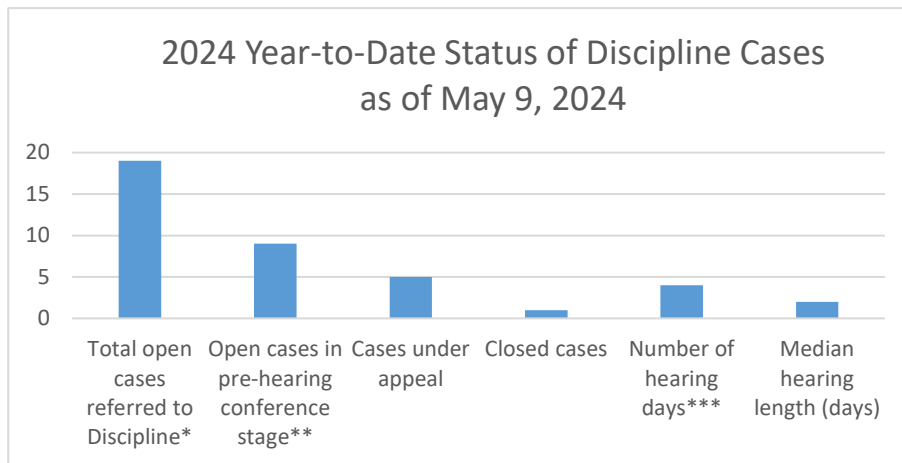
# Report to Council

## Discipline Committee June 2024

### Committee Meetings

- None

### Relevant Data



\* Some cases involve more than one member; and some members are involved in more than one case.

\*\* These cases are a sub-set of the first column.

\*\*\*Includes full and half days.

### Trends

Contested Hearings are taking more days than originally anticipated. There has also been an increased difficulty in finding mutually agreeable dates for parties involved in a hearing leading to delays in scheduling.

### Other Information

Welcome to our new Council member, Dr. Sean Marshall.

One case that was in the Courts has reached a conclusion, and the Discipline Order is being enforced.

An Anti-Racism Virtual Workshop was held on April 15, 2024 for all Committee members.

### 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

# Report to Council

## Executive Committee June 2024

### Committee Meetings

#### There were 4 meetings held:

- March 21, 2024
- April 17, 2024
- April 23, 2024
- May 22, 2024

### Relevant Data

#### The Committee reviewed and acted on the following investigation related issues:

- 2 Registrar's Investigations were approved
- 4 advice/caution/no further action letters were forwarded to licensees
- provided suggested penalty recommendations for a discipline case

### Policy Issues Considered

#### Draft Governance Policy – Operations Reserve

- to be forwarded to Council in June

### Other Information

#### Complaints Committee Appointment

- Ms. Catherine Knipe was appointed to the Complaints Committee for one day – May 15, 2024

#### Draft Submission to Standing Committee

- a draft submission was reviewed prior to finalizing a draft for Council's consideration at its April meeting
- at its April 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting a copy of the proposed additional section to the College's submission was reviewed – the Committee accepted the additional items, as amended

### Committee Membership

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

### Staff

Jan Robinson  
Shilo Tooze  
Beth Ready  
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.

### **Council Representative at AAVSB**

- the Committee determined that it was not the right time to add additional Councillor participation at the AAVSB conference – this will be something for the new Council of the next College to consider

### **Appointment of New Councillor**

- Dr. Sean Marshall was appointed to the Accreditation and Discipline Committees for the remainder of this year's term

### **Continuance of Important Groups with Shifting Roles**

- the Committee discussed the need to consider the continued work of sub-groups of the current Council (Governance, Audit and Risk Committee and the Community Reference panels)
- further discussions will be held at the Governance, Audit and Risk Committee relating to its role

### **Council Meeting – September 2024**

- the date of the 2-day Council meeting in September was changed to September 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> due to the AAVSB conference being held during the same week

### **PUPS Act Update**

- written update was provided – to be included in the June Council package under the Registrar's operations report

### **Draft Year-2 Tactics**

- to be forwarded to Council in June

### **Draft Public Interest Document**

- to be provided to both the legacy and transition Council for reference

# Report to Council

## Quality Assurance Committee June 2024

### Committee Meetings

There was one meeting held this reporting period:

- May 29, 2024

### Relevant Data

#### Peer Review of Medical Records (PRMR)

The Committee received an update on the Peer Review of Medical Records Program.

- **218 randomly selected PRMRs** have been assessed with the following results: 67% Successful, 28% Partially Successful, 5% Not Successful.
- **34 reassessments** have been completed with 74% achieving an improvement to the next scoring category.

#### Learning Modules and Videos

- **330 individuals** accessed one or more of the College's communication learning modules adapted from the Institute for Healthcare Communication (IHC) Veterinary Communication Project.
- The Institute for Healthcare Communication (IHC) has recently closed, and Texas A&M have acquired the intellectual property rights to the IHC veterinary content.
- \*Tracking for the Ethics e-learning module was unavailable for this quarter.
- Gated access to all learning modules was developed and allows for greater accuracy in tracking learning module usage. Gated access and tracking became active March 3, 2021, however it was temporarily unavailable during the development of the new website. Tracking was unavailable from August 2023 to February 2024, with a full quarter of data now being reported:

### Committee Membership

Dr. Patricia Alderson, Chair  
Dr. Claire Beauchamp  
Dr. Jessica Peatling  
Dr. Kristen Reynolds

### Staff

Dr. Kim Lambert  
Ms. Emily Ewles

### 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.



Learning Modules	Number of Requests for Access	New Requests last quarter	New Requests this quarter
<b>Medical Record Learning Modules - Companion Animal</b>			
Introduction to Medical Record Keeping	42	12	30
Components of a Complete Medical Record	27	5	22
Medical Record Maintenance and Security	14	4	10
<b>Medical Record Learning Modules - Food Producing Animal, Equine and Poultry</b>			
Introduction to Medical Record Keeping	3	1	2
Components of a Complete Medical Record	3	1	2
Medical Record Maintenance and Security	2	1	1
<b>Communication Learning Modules</b>			
Building Trust with Clients	259	4	3
Breaking the Silence: Discussing Medical Errors with Clients	146	3	5
Compassion Fatigue in Veterinary Practice	121	2	1
Euthanasia: Guiding Clients Through Difficult Decisions	104	2	1
Eye of the Beholder: Addressing Difficult Client Interactions	149	2	3
Strangers in Crisis: Skills for Sharing Bad News	97	1	2
Elephant in the Room: Money Talk with Clients	102	1	1
Enhancing Client Adherence	8	1	0
<b>Other Modules</b>			
Informed Client Consent	165	2	19
Ethics E-Learning Module*	138	0	0

## Trends

### Quality Assurance and Improvement

The following trends were identified and discussed:

- Veterinary medicine needs to embrace patient safety culture with early education and improved psychological safety.
  - H Hofmeister, E. H., & Love, L. (2023). Patient safety culture is needed in veterinary medicine. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 261(12), 1908-1912. Retrieved Apr 29, 2024, from <https://doi.org/10.2460/javma.23.07.0370>
- Article highlighting the importance of patient safety culture and communication with clients.
  - F Fortnum, T. (2024, April 9). *Family upset after dog dies at VET's office*. CTV News Windsor. <https://windsor.ctvnews.ca/family-upset-after-dog-dies-at-vet-s-office-1.6839193#:~:text=A%20LaSalle%20family%20is%20grieving,loved%20him%2C%E2%80%9D%20Michelle%20recalled>

## Other Information

### Policy Issues Considered

Veterinary Wellbeing – The Committee received an update on veterinary wellbeing. The Ontario Collaborative for Wellbeing in Veterinary Medicine (OCWVM) formed a working group focusing on a campaign to raise the awareness and importance of mental health in veterinary workplaces. The awareness campaign is expected to launch in the fall of 2024.

Cultural Humility – The Committee considered staff’s progress on cultural humility, a key priority for the development of resources and supports on professionalism. Staff consulted with the Community Engagement Strategist, the Communications team, and the Impact Strategy Unit (ISU) to discuss a strategy and timeline for awareness and knowledge building of cultural humility for the profession. Work on the strategy has begun with a poll in e-Update, and an upcoming article to introduce the topic to the profession in the summer College Connection.

Culture of Safety – The Committee received an update on culture of safety, a year 2 tactic for Strategy 2023. Staff began work on a strategy to build awareness within the profession of the concept of a culture of safety and the shift from a blame culture to a learning culture. Staff brought this proposed strategy to the Impact Strategy Unit (ISU) for further analysis and will develop a timeframe with the Communications team.

Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries – The Committee considered staff’s progress on maintaining appropriate boundaries, a key priority for the development of resources and supports on professionalism. The Committee reviewed a briefing note and provided input. This briefing note will be presented to Council at its June meeting.

### **Quality Assurance Program**

Peer Advisory Conversation (PAC) – The Committee received an update on the Peer Advisory Conversation (PAC). Staff launched a recruitment campaign, and it has resulted in six new PAC participants so far. Staff are currently working with a research partner to finalize the project scope and budget for the research project looking at newly licensed veterinarians in Ontario and their participation in the College’s Peer Advisory Conversation.

Peer Review of Medical Records (PRMR) – The Committee received an update on Peer Review of Medical Records (PRMR). Work has begun on the second aggregate report for the program and the Committee received an update on the the proposed strategy to promote the report. Staff met with ACER Consulting to discuss an evaluation of the first two cycles of the program, including randomly selected practices and subsequent reassessments. This evaluation will take place in spring of 2025.

### **Quality Improvement Program**

Learning Module Feedback - An update was provided on the feedback surveys for the communication, medical record, informed client consent, and ethics learning modules. Feedback has continued to be positive for all learning modules and no new trends were identified.

# Report to Council

## Governance, Audit and Risk Committee June 2024

### Committee Meetings

There was 1 meeting held:

- April 11, 2024

### Relevant Data

Not applicable

### Policy Issues Considered

No policies were 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
- to be forwarded to Council in June

#### 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 transitional 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

#### 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.

### 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  
Beth Ready

### 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.



**AGENDA ITEM 6. Strategic Alignment**

**TOPIC: 6.1 Evaluation  
(March 2024)**

The evaluation summary is attached for review.

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




**TOPIC: 6.2 Strategic Plan**

**6.2.1 Summary of Outcomes from Year 1 Tactics**

Please find attached a final report of the accomplishments and outcomes of Year 1 of Strategy 2026. This report is intended for public posting. It is very exciting to see all that we have achieved in the last year.

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



**Public confidence**  
in veterinary regulation

# **Strategy 2026**

## Year 1 Outcomes Report

## Vision

Instilling public confidence in veterinary regulation

## Mission

Governing the practice of veterinary medicine

## Principles

In collaboration, we strive to be:

- **TRANSPARENT:** Ethical, fair, clear and direct
- **RELIABLE:** Competent, well-informed, evidence-based and adequately resourced
- **RELEVANT:** Risk-aware, current, responsive and nimble
- **INDEPENDENT:** Mandate-focused and objective
- **COMPASSIONATE:** Approachable, supportive and adaptable to context
- **INCLUSIVE:** Respectful of all voices, conscious of personal bias, open-minded and committed to learning
- **ACCOUNTABLE:** Performance driven, impact oriented and publicly responsible

This report on Strategy 2026, Year 1 concludes the first year of the College's strategic plan focused on five objectives over the period of June 2023 to June 2024. This report demonstrates Council's attention on making progress in all areas and its focus on continuous quality improvement.

The report provides a summary of the work completed on each strategic objective.

## **Objective 1**

Championing legislative reform to affirm an agile future

Achievements include:

- Provided support to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) in their introduction of Bill 171, including attendance at focus groups, liaising with OMAFRA team members weekly to answer questions, reviewed proposed legislation, attended at the Committee of the Interior to support the Bill and provided a submission to the Committee
- Bill 171 Passed Third Reading on May 27, 2024!
- Ongoing collaboration with the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians (OAVT) related to scope of practice and licensure of veterinary technicians
- Continued collaboration with the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA) related to strategic considerations of the proposed legislation
- Liaised with varied stakeholders to answer questions, primarily related to authorized activities



## Objective 2

### Partnering for improved access to veterinary services

Achievements include:

- A national project to produce competency assessment tools for limited licensure is nearly complete. The tools have been developed and are currently being piloted by candidates and assessors in Ontario and Alberta. A project evaluation report is expected this summer. Discussion related to potential implementation with the National Examining Board continues.
- Work continues on the increased focus on team-based care under our new legislative model. The College has hired a consultant to assist us with this work, including development of persona work to better understand how to support team-based care.
- Focused communications related to the Council's position on balancing access to veterinary care with options, including e-update, inclusion in a College webinar, and web-based materials
- Ontario Veterinary College (OVC), OVMA and the College held a series of conversations aimed at providing vision for the future delivery of veterinary medicine in Ontario. Deloitte assisted in providing a summary report with recommendations. A decision to hold a broader symposium was not supported by the lead team. Instead plans are in development to release a series of podcast case studies focused on the evolution of teams.
- At its December meeting, Council directed that the Registration Committee oversee development of additional tools to support the integration of newly licensed members into practice. A new [webpage](#) has been launched and Council has approved a research project to study how the Peer Advisory Conversation might be used to build confidence in new graduates.

## **Objective 3**

Creating Space for innovation and technology

Achievements include:

- The Ontario Veterinary Regulatory Innovation Panel has met four times and assisted in developing a list of initiatives for Council consideration.
- A position statement on Embracing Innovation and the Digital Age was approved at the March 2024 Council meeting and a guide is under development. A guide on the use of thought partnership tools such as AI is in development with expected completion this fall.
- Council has approved its first two sandbox proposals in the last year related to innovative approaches to veterinary care delivery in Northern Ontario. Three others have had early discussion and feedback.

## Objective 4

### Promoting the importance of One Health

Achievements include:

- A provincial interagency dialogue on One Health opportunities has been supported this year – this is the third and final year of this initiative.
- A One Health communications and education strategy has been launched: a risk sheet has been developed for farm families with an anticipated release this summer, and a One Health Kit was promoted at the OVMA and OAVT conferences and through postcards to companion animal facilities. A coordinated social media promotion continues in cooperation with OVMA and OAVT.
- The Lock Label Locate campaign continued to focus attention on separation of expired drugs, proper disposal of drugs, and management of controlled drugs. There has been great interest in the toolkits. Data from facility inspections continues to demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach in reducing related deficiencies.
- The College wrote a letter to Emergency Management Ontario to express our interest in supporting the work in this area. Initial discussions have been had with the Director of this office. Follow up will continue to determine opportunities for involvement and support for animal care during disaster relief efforts.
- Exploration of work being completed related to community vaccinator programs has taken place. In particular, Manitoba has implemented a full-scale program run through the Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association that is interesting to consider. A national guide on this topic is to be released by the Chief Veterinary Officers prior to yearend. Once this document is distributed, opportunity to consider next steps at both the national and provincial level will be clearer.

## Objective 5

Focusing regulation on people and context

Achievements include:

- Communications work has focused on communicating compassionately and explaining why and how the College intends to implement its decisions.
- A new website was launched to better reflect our brand. Interestingly, this year the College has received many unsolicited positive comments on our interactions with the public and with licenced members.
- The College's action plan on inclusivity, diversity, equity and accessibility is in Year 2. Tactical progress this year included anti-racism training for Council, Committee and staff, and a refresh of our commitment statement.
- Relationship building with equity seeking veterinary groups remains a priority.
- Staff training on tone and voice related to compassion supports our ongoing attention to this work.
- The Ontario Collaborative for Wellbeing in Veterinary Medicine has formed a working group focusing on a campaign to raise awareness and importance of mental health in veterinary workplaces and reduce stigma that is a barrier to help-seeking behaviours. A project scope with deliverables has been developed. Campaign messages have been developed, and materials will be available to distribute when the campaign is launched in the fall of 2024.
- Programmatic changes focused on people have been implemented, including successful strategies in the Investigations team related to the Navigator role, and grief webinars to support those struggling with pet loss

**TOPIC:     6.2     Strategic Plan**

**6.2.2            Draft Year-2 Tactics**

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



**Background**

The Council is approaching Year Two of Strategy 2026. A report on progress for Year One will be provided at the June Council meeting. In order to assure continued progress on Strategy 2026, a set of tactics have been developed for consideration.

What is most challenging in maintaining momentum on the five identified objectives, is that the introduction of Bill 171, and movement toward the transition to a new Act, is the most important strategic focus and requires the majority of resources, both at Council and at the staff level. Further, it is unlikely that Strategy 2026 will be fully realized as the College of Veterinarians of Ontario transitions to the College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario within the next 2 years.

**Discussion**

The tactics proposed for Year Two of Strategy 2026 have been scaled back. The intent is not to lose momentum on key areas of progress, but to balance this with the need for major attention on Objective One – Championing Legislative Reform and supporting the work of the Transition Council.

**Options**

After discussion, Council may elect to:

- accept the draft Year-2 Tactics as presented
- accept the draft Year-2 Tactics as amended
- do not accept the draft Year-2 Tactics
- other

**Attachment**

- draft Year-2 Tactics

Objective	Tactics	Accomplishments
<p><b>Championing Legislative Reform to Affirm an Agile Future</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support the Transitional Council in assuming its role and oversight of the regulation agenda</li> <li>• To support the legacy Council under the existing Act to manage completion of member matters and any outstanding policy decisions.</li> <li>• To work with OMAFRA to complete the promulgation of new regulations under the new Act by end of 2025.</li> <li>• To support staff in work plan management and achievement throughout the transition period.</li> <li>• To assist various audiences, where appropriate, in their understanding of the new Act and its implications for the profession and the public.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Partnering for Improved Access to Veterinary Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To complete the pilot phase of the competency assessment tools which support a limited licensure process and determine next steps for adoption of this pathway at both the provincial and national level.</li> <li>• To consider continued leadership opportunities to partner and influence discussions and actions on new models of veterinary care delivery, team-based care, and spectrum of care options to improve access.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Creating Space for Innovation and Technology</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To complete and publish a guidance document for the profession that supports innovation in practice and complements the Council’s position on Embracing Innovation and the Digital Age in Veterinary Medicine.</li> <li>• To monitor innovation opportunities for consideration by the new Council under the new Act, inclusive of potential regulatory sandboxes, and promote their development as appropriate.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Promoting the Importance of One Health</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To continue to forge a relationship with the Emergency Management Office of the Ontario government to increasingly understand the role of the profession in declared emergencies, in particular, those related to climate change.</li> <li>• To develop a potential model for the role of community vaccinators in Ontario and their intersection with veterinary oversight.</li> <li>• To regularly promote and educate regarding antimicrobial stewardship and the role of veterinary teams.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Focusing Regulation on People and Context</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To continue initiatives that support well-being in the profession, including leadership of a coordinated provincial approach to veterinary team well-being.</li> <li>• To continue to embed the College brand with the stated principles of the College, in particular, inclusivity, equity, compassion and collaboration.</li> </ul>	



**TOPIC: 6.3 Policy and Project Tracking Chart**

**Area of Focus**

- Governance
- Legislation
- Public Policy
- Stakeholders
- Strategy

**Background**

For many years, the Policy and Project Tracking Chart has provided timely background and information related to the status of each topic before Council. The Chart’s main objective was to assist Council with keeping track of the policy and project work that was currently under its direction and served as an overview upon which additional questions can be asked.

As the College shifts towards its new normal, the Policy and Project Tracking Chart will also adapt to reflect the separate work of the two Councils (Legacy and Transition). Most notably, as the Legacy Council’s policy work concludes, the information contained in the Policy and Project Tracking Chart located in each Council package will decrease.

College Staff remain committed to providing timely updates and context to both the Legacy Council and the Transition Council once it is formed. The way that this information is presented may alter in approach, but the overall commitment will be to ensure that applicable background and information is shared for mutual understanding.

**Discussion**

Council is encouraged to ask any questions related to the College’s ongoing policy and project work, especially related to those topics that are not otherwise addressed within this agenda.

**Attachments**

- Policy and Project Tracking Chart





# Report to Council

## Policy and Project Tracking Chart

Legislative Reform Work	Status	Notes
<b>General</b>	Concluding work – Legacy Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Council reviewed and approved the College’s submission to the Standing Committee on the Interior, which was presented and submitted to the Committee on April 22, 2024.</li><li>• Bill 171 began Third Reading on May 16, 2024 and the motion to approve the Bill was carried by the House on May 27, 2024.</li><li>• Council awaits Royal Assent of the Bill with an expected timeline of 7-10 days after the conclusion of Third Reading.</li><li>• Once Royal Assent is achieved, the College will begin to fully shift into the next stage of legislative reform, beginning with the formation of the Transition Council.</li></ul>
	Ongoing work – Staff Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• With the Act now complete, Staff have shifted focus to working with the College’s legal team and Ministry staff to prepare for regulation development and support Transition Council work.</li></ul>

<b>Regulation-Making</b>	Concluding work – Legacy Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council has previously reviewed proposed regulation language (2019-2020).</li> <li>• Proposed language will be provided to the Transition Council for the development of regulations.</li> </ul>
	Ongoing work – Staff level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff continue to prepare for the presentation of regulation development to the Transition Council, inclusive of ongoing conversations with known interested parties.</li> <li>• Staff is also actively engaging with the College’s Legal Team to develop proposed language for presentation to the Transition Council.</li> <li>• Preliminary regulation work includes backgrounder development related to Authorized Activities, Quality Assurance, Professional Misconduct, and Licensure, as well as a variety of sundry items.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy Work</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>After-Hours Care/Access to Care</b>	Ongoing work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing discussions both at the College and at the CCVR.</li> <li>• A national position statement was presented to and accepted by the CCVR in December 2022.</li> <li>• Topic presented to Council at its March 2023 meeting.</li> <li>• Council approved the formation of an After-Hours Veterinary Care Taskforce and several meetings have occurred.</li> <li>• Update on Progress of Taskforce provided at December 2023 meeting.</li> <li>• Work to continue at the Taskforce level throughout 2024.</li> <li>• Recommendations to Council are targeted for Fall 2024.</li> </ul>

<b>One Health</b>	Ongoing Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A One Health Working Group was established in February 2021, to coordinate and facilitate the continued momentum of a multi-stakeholder collaborative approach to achieving goals related to One Health and veterinary medicine in Ontario.</li> <li>• Final meeting of this group to occur in June 2024.</li> <li>• Client forms have been developed to facilitate conversation and connection between farm families, veterinarians and physicians on regular animal contact and health.</li> <li>• A One Health promotional kit has been launched on the College website to help veterinarians engage in One Health conversations with companion animal clients.</li> <li>• The College is, along with OAVT and OVMA, actively promoting these outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy Parking Lot –</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b><i>Professional Practice Standard: Delegation</i></b>	On hold	For consideration post-regulation development.
<b><i>Professional Practice Standard: Informed Client Consent</i></b>	On hold	For consideration post-regulation development. Requires consideration of delegation work.
<b><i>Professional Practice Standard: Diagnostic Laboratory Testing</i></b>	On hold	For consideration post-regulation development.

## Recently Completed Topics

- *Position Statement: Embracing Innovation and the Digital Age in Veterinary Medicine* (Published in March 2024)
- *Informed Client Consent (Professional Practice Standard: Informed Client Consent* revised and published in October 2023)
- *Position Statement: Veterinary Acupuncture* (Published in September 2023)
- *Veterinary Dentistry (Professional Practice Standard: Veterinary Dentistry* revised and published in June 2023)



**AGENDA ITEM 8. Public Policy**

**TOPIC: 8.1 Legislative Reform**

College Staff will provide an update on the progress of Bill 171 – *Enhancing Professional Care to Animals Act*.

**Attachment**

1. Slide Deck – Legislative Reform Update – Entering the New Normal

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



# Legislative Reform Update

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Entering the New Normal

A Presentation by Sarah Kirby to College Council – June 2024

# Congratulations!



# Transition

- Current College Council will continue to exist as Legacy Council but with a significantly narrowed policy scope.
- Legacy work
  - Member matters; and
  - Operations of the College.
- Transition Council will be formed in Summer 2024 consisting of:
  - All members of the current Council; and
  - Three new appointed RVT members.
- Transition Council will be responsible for:
  - Review of and consultation on proposed regulation language;
  - Development of by-laws; and
  - Governance.



# Regulation Development

- College staff actively working with legal team and OMAFRA staff to develop a working plan for regulation development.
- Focus on developing strong background work for presentation to Transition Council.
- Steady stream of work starting in Fall 2024 – multiple topics with multiple factors.
- Increased meeting dates.
- Public consultation.

# Communications

- Royal Assent Celebration (June 2024)
- Updatable Infographic (June 2024)
- History Project (Summer 2024 onwards)
- Welcome to the College video
- Team-based care – podcasts, articles.
- College Connection and E-Update
- [cvo.org/modernization](http://cvo.org/modernization)
- OAVT conference exhibit
- OVMA conference exhibit
- Townhalls



**Modernization**  
TEAMS ▶ ACCOUNTABILITY ▶ QUALITY

# Going Forward

- Leaning into the work ahead.
- Transition Council leading the way.
- Big Discussions
- Leadership on all levels to achieve success.

## AGENDA ITEM 8. Public Policy

**TOPIC: 8.2 Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries**

**TOPIC: Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries**

### Background

At its meeting on February 22, 2018, the Quality Assurance Committee approved a multi-year strategy for the introduction of resources and supports related to professionalism. In year two of the strategy, the College set a list of priorities/key areas to develop resources and supports based on current College data.

On June 13, 2018, Council confirmed the list of key areas to develop resources and supports related to professionalism. Priority four is 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. Dr. Tricia Alderson confirmed that the Quality Assurance Committee has made this topic a priority in its work on professionalism.

Since June 2023, staff have provided the Committee with updates on the work in this key area of focus and the Committee has provided input. The work includes:

- A review of complaints data at the College,
- An environmental scan of Ontario regulators and associations,
- A stakeholder reach out to deepen the understanding of the current environment related to boundaries,
- A literature review.

Public confidence in the profession is at risk if the animal health care decision-making of a veterinarian is influenced by a relationship that crosses the boundary from a professional one to a personal one. Maintaining the public trust is a paramount consideration.

This topic was last presented to Council in March 2018 at which time, Council decided to take no further action. This issue is now returning to Council for further consideration.

### Discussion

The attached Briefing Note has been developed to assist Council with further discussion related to next steps.

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



### Options

Following discussion, Council may elect to:

1. Direct that a policy on maintaining appropriate boundaries be developed; or
2. Direct that no further work be completed related to boundaries. Specific concerns about veterinarians will continue to be addressed through the existing professional misconduct regulations; or
3. Any other option that Council thinks is appropriate.

### Attachments

1. Briefing Note: Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries



## **BRIEFING NOTE**

### Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries

#### **PART A: Introduction**

##### **Issue Definition**

At a previous College Council meeting in March 2018, the issue of professional boundaries in veterinary medicine was discussed to determine if the College should create more explicit rules for veterinarians in this area. Council's decision at the time was to not pursue any additional work related to professional boundaries and a veterinarian having a sexual relationship with a client. The rationale being that the issue could be managed through the existing professional misconduct regulations and through the professionalism program.

Dr. Alana Parisi, President, College Council, noted at the June 2023 Council meeting that concerns about serious boundary issues, against colleagues, staff and/or clients, have come to the College related to veterinarians. These include sexual boundary violations by veterinarians that have resulted in harm and criminal charges. Dr. Tricia Alderson, Chair, Quality Assurance Committee, confirmed that this topic was a priority for the Committee's work on professionalism.

To date, the College has been silent on the importance of boundaries and their connection to the relationships that veterinarians have with their clients, their colleagues, and their staff. Professional relationships form the basis for the provision of safe, quality veterinary care. Maintaining appropriate relationships and acknowledging the vulnerability of these relationships is important. Lines can be crossed, with the most extreme boundary crossings involving sexual impropriety.

This issue is now returning to Council with additional data for further discussion and decision.

##### **Public Interest Rationale**

Public confidence in the profession is at risk if the animal health care decision-making of a veterinarian is influenced by a relationship that crosses the boundary from a professional one to a personal one.

It is in the public interest that patient care and the advice that a client receives from a veterinarian is not impacted by a personal or sexual relationship with the veterinarian.

Boundary violations with staff members can have significant negative impacts, including a negative effect on patient care outcomes. The public may negatively perceive the professionalism of all veterinarians when the boundary lines of these relationships are crossed.

Public interest is grounded in the provision of safe, competent, and informed veterinary care and society holds veterinarians to a high standard of ethics and professionalism to maintain public trust. The public has a reasonable expectation that the College ensures that members are maintaining appropriate professional boundaries with clients and staff and provides clear expectations that protect the public from potential harm to them or their animals.

*Are there other elements that Council should consider regarding its mandate relative to the issue?*

### **Analysis of Risk**

The primary practice-based risk question before Council for consideration is whether a professional practice standard or position statement be developed on the topic of maintaining appropriate boundaries in relationships with clients, colleagues, and staff. Given this, it is important to consider risk through several different lenses.

Some examples of boundary crossings include giving or receiving inappropriate or elaborate gifts, coaxing a client to be added to a will, asking clients directly, or searching other sources, for private information that has no relevance to the practice of veterinary medicine, and/or asking clients to join faith communities or personal causes.

There is a spectrum of risk when it comes to boundary crossings with clients and staff members. Risks may include a conflict of interest within a VCPR, betrayal of trust and distress for the client, a negative effect on work performance for staff and colleagues which could impact patient care, and the most extreme risk being sexual impropriety.

A conflict of interest could restrict the veterinarian's ability to act in the best interest of the client and animal(s) and has the ability to undermine their impartiality because of the convergence of self-interest, professional interests and potentially the public interest.

Professions with the ability to prescribe and dispense drugs are at an increased risk of boundary violations. The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario cites prescribing medications for social acquaintances as an example of a boundary violation which may lead to obscured judgment and moves the relationship outside a professional one.

The risks and harms associated with boundary crossings may not be well understood in the profession. Having a written policy on boundary crossings would set clear expectations of the profession.

The Executive Committee has received multiple concerns involving different veterinarians where a sexual relationship with a veterinarian appears to have impacted the veterinarian's ability to remain objective or to maintain the standards of practice.

Currently, when a veterinarian's behaviour crosses a boundary, like prescribing inappropriately or abusing a client, the public can be protected through the existing professional misconduct regulations.

Regulation 1093 considers the following acts to be professional misconduct:

17. (1) 24. *Abusing a client verbally or physically or permitting or counselling an associate or auxiliary to abuse a client verbally or physically.*

17. (1) 25. *Having a conflict of interest.*

17. (1) 45. *Conduct unbecoming a veterinarian.*

When an issue regarding sexually abusing/harassing a staff member arises, it most commonly falls under Regulation 1093:

17. (1) 44. *An act or omission relevant to the practice of veterinary medicine that, having regard to the circumstances, would be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.*

17. (1) 45. *Conduct unbecoming a veterinarian.*

17. (1) 46. *Contravening a law if,*

*i. the purpose of the law is to protect or promote the health or welfare of animals or to protect or promote public health, or*

*ii. the contravention is relevant to the member's suitability to practise veterinary medicine. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 1093, s. 17 (1); O. Reg. 513/94, s. 1; O. Reg. 510/95, s. 4; O. Reg. 431/00, s. 5 (1, 2); O. Reg. 24/02, s. 1 (1-4); O. Reg. 161/04, s. 11 (1-5); O. Reg. 398/07, s. 10; O. Reg. 233/15, s. 11 (1-7).*

## **Strategic Focus**

Ensuring that veterinarians conduct themselves ethically and professionally with clients, colleagues and staff members aligns with the College's main legislative objective of regulating the practice of veterinary medicine and governing its members in order that the public interest may be served and protected.

## **PART B: Background**

### **Relevant Background**

The Complaints Committee and Executive Committee occasionally receive complaints or review investigations related to professional boundaries that involve a veterinarian and their relationship with a client, colleague, or staff member. It was one of these cases that originally led the Executive Committee to direct staff to explore this issue further and prepare the initial briefing note in 2018.

The discussion at Council in 2018 suggested that these personal relationships with clients were not seen as problematic. It was further suggested that close, personal relationships with clients had long been a norm in the veterinary profession, whether these were sexual relationships or



other relationships where the veterinarian is a close, personal friend. What was discussed as problematic was when the behaviour crosses the line from a consensual relationship to abuse or when the veterinarian's judgment becomes impaired. One example that was felt to be unacceptable involves the veterinarian inappropriately prescribing medication to the client or their animal.

Since 2018, several new cases have been brought forth to the Executive Committee highlighting sexual boundary violations involving clients, colleagues and staff. Using a right touch regulation analysis, an approach to boundary violations that recognizes and mitigates the risks and harm that exists is necessary.

The College's Code of Ethics cites *Professionalism* as a core value for veterinarians practising in Ontario. The Code of Ethics indicates that:

*Veterinarians act professionally and demonstrate continuing competence when they maintain appropriate and dignified boundaries in the client relationship and all professional interactions.*

Council demonstrated the importance of professionalism when it became one of the College's strategic objectives for the Strategic Framework 2020. The Guidance on Professionalism for Veterinarians document was developed, and boundaries are described in the guiding principles and professional duties as such:

### **Responsibilities to Clients**

- Recognizes the power imbalance inherent in the veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) and assumes responsibility for maintaining appropriate professional boundaries always
- Respects the personal boundaries of clients and their rights to privacy and confidentiality

### **Responsibilities to Themselves & Colleagues**

- Respects the personal boundaries of colleagues and co-workers and their rights to privacy and confidentiality

### **Responsibilities to Profession & Society**

- Does not ask for or accept gifts, inducements or referrals that may affect or be perceived to affect their professional judgment

## **Stakeholder Needs and Preferences**

### **General Comments**

The issue of a veterinarian crossing boundaries in their relationship with a client impacts not only individual veterinarians and clients, but also the veterinary profession as a whole.

There is also the issue of boundaries being crossed by a veterinarian with colleagues and/or members of staff. Many of the cases brought forth to the Executive Committee over the past

several years have been related to the sexual assault or harassment of staff members, some of which also resulted in criminal investigations.

Veterinarians have vast medical expertise and information about animals and their health that clients do not have. This knowledge and the fact that a veterinarian is a respected professional, creates a power imbalance in the relationship, even if it isn't always obvious. When a power imbalance exists, the vulnerable parties need to be protected from harm.

Given the strength of the bond between clients and their companion animals many clients are in a vulnerable emotional state when a pet is injured or ill. In the food animal sector, this vulnerability may be related to the risk of financial harm as a client's livelihood is affected by the illness or death of an animal(s). This vulnerability enhances the potential power imbalance that may exist. A veterinarian who pursues a personal relationship with a client, especially during times when an animal is in crisis, may be perceived as taking advantage of the client and lacking in professionalism.

The public expects that veterinarians are held to the same standard as other regulated professions with respect to maintaining appropriate boundaries with their clients and staff.

As regulated professionals, veterinarians look to Council and the College to provide clear, realistic, and enforceable expectations to guide veterinary practice consistent with legislative and regulatory requirements.

The College does not currently know where larger stakeholders, such as the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association, will stand on this topic.

## Data

The Executive Committee data from 2015 – 2023 has been reviewed to determine the frequency of concerns related to professional boundary crossings and/or a veterinarian engaging in a sexual relationship with a client or staff member.

Year	Number of Cases Identified	Issues involved
2023	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Charged with historical sexual exploitation of a staff member</li> <li>2. Charged with sexual assault of a staff member</li> <li>3. Watching pornography in the veterinary facility and making staff uncomfortable</li> <li>4. Long-term sexual relationship with client; client felt it was an exchange of sex for veterinary services</li> </ol>
2022	1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inappropriate sexual comments to a staff person</li> </ol>
2021	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sexually assaulting an underage employee of a veterinary facility</li> <li>2. Inappropriate touching of a client</li> </ol>

2020	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Uses status as a veterinarian to lure young women (students, technicians, etc.) to work with him and then leverages that into sexual relationships</li> <li>2. Inappropriate touching of a client; tried to hug, kiss them</li> </ol>
2019	0	
2018	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inappropriate touching of a staff member</li> <li>2. Inappropriate comments and touching of a staff member</li> </ol>
2017	1	Inappropriate touching of 2 individuals (no sexual relationship existed)
2016	3	A sexual relationship with a client which led to inappropriate prescribing in 2 of these cases.
2015	1	Sexual abuse of a client.

**Environment**

College staff conducted several jurisdictional scans related to this area. Little to no information on this topic was available from both Canadian and international veterinary regulators. This is not a topic that veterinary regulators have addressed through any formal standards. Canadian veterinary associations also did not provide guidance on this topic.

**Ontario – Human Healthcare**

In human healthcare, practice standards and policies on patient relationships and sexual boundaries are very common. In addition to written standards and policies, most human health regulators also provide resources on defining and maintaining boundaries such as learning modules, case studies, infographics, and decision trees.

Close, personal relationships with patients are deemed to be inappropriate in human health and will lead to a discipline referral for those professionals who do not maintain appropriate boundaries with patients. The key issues that have driven this position are conflict of interest, trust, and the power imbalance inherent in these relationships. The power imbalance between the professional and the patient can persist even after the professional relationship has ended. For the purposes of sexual abuse, the *Regulated Health Professionals Act* (RHPA) treats that relationship as continuing for one year past the last healthcare provider/patient encounter. During this one-year period from the date the healthcare provider/patient relationship is formally terminated, a sexual relationship with the former patient is prohibited. The RHPA defines sexual abuse which includes sexual comments, touching and more intimate relationships with a patient.

A request for information from human health regulators in Ontario garnered the following responses:

Regulator	Standards
College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO)	<p><a href="#"><u>Policy – Boundary Violation</u></a></p> <p>Written policy with clear guidelines and an accompanying guide with advice to the profession. Sexual boundary violations between the physician and the patient result in a revocation of certificate of registration, and reapplication can occur no earlier than 5 years from the date of revocation.</p> <p>Ontario Regulation 260/18 under the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA), the Health Professions Procedure Code (HPPC) and Medicine Act supply the provisions and definitions of what constitutes appropriate boundaries, sexual abuse, and what would reasonably be regarded as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional and/or conduct unbecoming for a physician.</p> <p>Approximately 5% of all investigations are related to boundaries/sexual abuse.</p>
College of Nurses or Ontario (CNO)	<p><a href="#"><u>Practice Standard – Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship</u></a></p> <p>Written practice standard with clear guidelines on what constitutes abusive behaviours and indicators for maintaining boundaries. The term “client” in the nurse-client relationship may include an individual, family, group, or community.</p> <p>Code of Conduct launched in 2023 speaks to sexual harassment and abuse of a client. “Client” is used broadly and can include individuals, substitute decision-makers, families, caregivers, groups, communities and populations who receive nursing care.</p> <p>There is nothing specific in the Nursing Act on boundaries. The Regulations point to the standard to define boundary violations.</p>
Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW)	<p><a href="#"><u>Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice - Principle I: Relationship with Clients</u></a>  <a href="#"><u>Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice – Principle VIII: Sexual Misconduct</u></a></p> <p>Principle I in the Code of Ethics speaks to the relationships with clients and what is expected. It states that College registrants shall distinguish their own needs and interests from those of their clients to ensure that, within professional relationships, clients’ needs and interests remain paramount.</p> <p>Principle VIII in the Code of Ethics speaks to sexual misconduct with clear guidelines. This principle also states that College registrants shall not engage in a non-professional relationship (sexual, romantic, or otherwise) with a client’s relative or other individuals with whom the client has a close personal relationship when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client or</p>

	<p>when such activities would compromise the appropriate professional boundaries between the College registrant and the client.</p> <p>The Social Work and Social Service Work Act defines “sexual abuse” and also speaks to it under the Professional Misconduct Regulation.</p> <p>The top two issues regarding cases before the Discipline Committee in 2023 are, in order of most common issue, 1. Boundaries 2. Sexual misconduct.</p>
<p>Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP)</p>	<p><a href="#"><u>Policy – Boundary Violations and Sexual Abuse</u></a></p> <p>Written policy with clear guidelines that also points to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. The Boundaries Violations and Sexual Abuse Policy articulates the legislative provisions forbidding sexual abuse of a patient as seen in the Health Professions Procedural Code.</p> <p>Boundary Violations cases (this includes Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment) have made up an average of 1% of the total cases for the year over the past 5 years.</p>

While there are inherent differences between the healthcare provider-patient relationship in human health and the veterinarian-client relationship in veterinary medicine, it should be noted that both the College of Nurses of Ontario and the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers comment on the relationship of the College registrant and key third parties (e.g. the patient’s family). A key third party that may have decision making capabilities for the patient is similar to the client in the VCPR. It is considered that boundary crossings and violations with these key third parties could pose a risk to the patient’s care due to the influence they may have in care decisions for the patient, and the conflict of interest that a relationship with the healthcare provider would cause.

**Literature Review**

The College conducted a literature review related to professional boundaries. Due to the lack of information on this topic in veterinary medicine, literature pertaining to human health were reviewed. A theme highlighted among the literature was the importance of maintaining clear professional boundaries in patient care, especially in the context of the medical profession where there is a power imbalance. There is a shift towards less formal interactions between doctors and patients, focusing on developing just and respectful relationships. However, this more informal approach may lead to an increased risk of professional boundary crossings, which, if not handled carefully, can escalate into harmful boundary violations. Professional boundaries are not always well defined and can get increasingly complicated when a patient starts to be seen as a friend; some actions are obvious violations (e.g. sexual involvement), whereas others are less clear-cut, such as having a dual relationship (social and professional) with a patient, acceptance of gifts, some forms of physical contact, and use of informal language. The literature notes that due to the power imbalance, there is no such thing as a

consensual sexual relationship between a healthcare provider and a patient. The consequences to the patient when there is a sexual boundary violation can include shame, guilt, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicidal thoughts, increased drug and alcohol use, or break-up of relationships and loss of employment. Preventing these violations from occurring through guidelines, codes of conduct, and self-assessments is suggested. The literature also suggests that public pressure for more punitive responses is likely to increase if the profession's response is seen as inadequate.

While the College does not speak to employment laws, the Ontario Human Rights Commission states that women and men have the right to be free from sexual and gender-based harassment and that the workplace can become hostile or unwelcoming due to sexual harassment from another employee or an employer. The Government of Canada conducted a public consultation on harassment and sexual violence in the workplace and noted that stakeholders stressed the importance of prevention measures and highlighted the need to raise awareness among employers and employees about issues of harassment and violence.

*What else does Council know/need to know about current realities and future trends relative to the decision?*

### **Broad Legal Advice**

Council's decision on this topic is a policy matter and does not require legal advice.

## **PART C: Analysis**

### **Analysis**

There are several factors to be considered and weighed by Council in determining what, if any, next steps should be taken related to this topic.

Council has two main questions to consider:

1. Is the current approach of managing boundary violations through the existing professional misconduct regulations and through the professionalism program aligned with right touch regulation; and
2. Should a policy be developed to set clear expectations around maintaining appropriate boundaries with clients, colleagues, and staff?

Practice standards and policies on sexual boundaries and maintaining appropriate relationships are common in human healthcare. Close, personal relationships with patients are deemed to be inappropriate in human health. The key issues that have driven this position are conflict of interest, trust, and the power imbalance inherent in these relationships. These same issues exist in veterinary medicine. Financial factors also play a role due to the fee-for-service business model.

Clients place a great deal of trust in their veterinarians. Veterinarians pursuing personal relationships with clients may be perceived as endangering this trust, especially if the client is in

a vulnerable state at the time the relationship begins. The choices of one veterinarian can impact the perception of the professionalism of all veterinarians.

A boundary violation between a veterinarian and a staff member could risk the continued employment of the staff member, negatively affect their work performance which could impact patient care, and cause them physical and emotional distress.

Relationships between a veterinarian and their clients and staff members must be maintained according to what is considered appropriate by society for a professional with a licence. Providing clear expectations for veterinarians on maintaining appropriate boundaries in relationships with both clients and staff will help to prevent the slippery slope from a harmless boundary crossing to a serious boundary violation and assure public confidence in animal health-care decision making and delivery.

### **Capacity**

This work will be managed as part of the College's regular policy work and will not require additional staffing or budget allocations.

*Are there any other resource issues that need consideration?*

### **Communication/Education Plan**

The nature of the communication plan is dependent on Council's decision.

### **Opportunity for Collaboration**

If Council directs that a policy be developed, there may be an opportunity to circulate for public consultation where feedback received will offer several opportunities for further discussion.

### **Measurement of Impact**

Measurement of impact will be dependent on Council's decision.

### **Unintended Consequences**

The development of a policy in relation to boundaries may impact access to care in remote areas or rural communities when a VCPR is discontinued. There may also be an increase in investigations of boundary violations.

### **Options**

Following discussion, Council may wish to:

- a) Direct that a policy on maintaining appropriate boundaries be developed; or
- b) Direct that no further work be completed related to boundaries. Specific concerns about veterinarians will continue to be addressed through the existing professional misconduct regulations; or
- c) Any other option that Council thinks is appropriate.





## AGENDA ITEM 9. Organizational Policy

### **TOPIC: 9.1 By-law – Council Election**

#### Background:

At its last meeting in March 2024, Council continued its discussion related to ensuring that the College has a strong governance model during the transition towards proclamation of a new Act to govern veterinary medicine in Ontario.

While the College itself will continue under the new Act and receive a name change, the Council under the existing Act and By-laws will cease to be and a new Council composition will be formed. Prior to the full proclamation of the new Act, however, a Transition Council will be charged with working with government to develop new regulations, to create new By-laws, and to hold a first election of the new Council. This Transition Council will consist of existing councillors, appointed veterinary technicians and perhaps an additional public member.

During this transitional period, it is important to note that the existing Council and Committees will continue to oversee the work of the current College under the existing Act. This effectively means there will be 2 Councils functioning for a period of time, perhaps a year or two – one dealing with the existing fiduciary requirements and member matters under the existing Act, and one developing new processes under the new Act.

The GAR Committee brought forward a background paper and Council held strategic discussions about whether or not election to open positions on the existing Council should occur in 2024 and in 2025 in order to best support sound governance during this transition period. Council proposed that elections to the existing Council should not occur during this transition period; and only in exceptional circumstances where the seat of an elected member of Council becomes vacant prior to the new legislation coming into effect and if Council is in danger of falling below quorum will a new member be sought to fill the seat either through election or appointment. The By-Law language is attached for Council's review.

#### Discussion:

Proposed By-Law changes require circulation for member and stakeholder feedback for consideration. The proposed change was circulated for 60 days to enable individuals to provide feedback. The feedback is now being provided back to Council to determine how it wishes to proceed.

The Ontario Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA) provided feedback on the proposed amendments and they did not express any concerns with the proposed direction. The letter from the OVMA is attached.

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



Eighteen responses were received on the public consultation tool – seventeen from veterinarians and one from a member of the public. The feedback was generally supportive of the proposed By-Law amendments. Three veterinarians were not supportive of the proposed changes.

### Options

Following discussion, Council may elect to:

- a) approve the By-law changes as presented
- b) approve the By-law changes as amended
- c) any other option Council would like to select.

### Attachment

- Applicable sections of the Current By-Law with proposed changes marked in Red.
- Letter from the OVMA
- Consultation Feedback

## By-Laws

### 10. ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

#### 10.01 – Electoral Districts

(1) The following electoral districts are established for the purposes of the election of Elected Members (with necessary modifications by the Registrar to ensure that the entire province is covered and that there is no overlap of districts).

- (a) Number 1, composed of the Licensed Members residing in the counties of Essex, Kent, Lambton and Middlesex;
- (b) Number 2, composed of the Licensed Members residing in the counties of Brant, Elgin, Haldimand and Norfolk, the regional municipality of , Niagara and the city of Hamilton;
- (c) Number 3, composed of the Licensed Members residing in the counties of Oxford and Perth and the regional municipality of Waterloo;
- (d) Number 4, composed of the Licensed Members employed by the University of Guelph;
- (e) Number 5, composed of the Licensed Members residing in the counties of Bruce, Dufferin, Grey, Huron and Simcoe;
- (f) Number 6, composed of the Licensed Members residing in the county of Wellington;
- (g) Number 7, composed of the Licensed Members residing in the county of Haliburton and the districts of Algoma, Cochrane, Kenora, Manitoulin, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Rainy River, Sudbury, Temiskaming and Thunder Bay and the district municipality of Muskoka;
- (h) Number 8, composed of the Licensed Members residing in the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, the United Counties of Prescott and Russell, the counties of Frontenac, Lanark, Lennox Addington, and Renfrew, and the city of Ottawa;
- (i) Number 9, composed of the Licensed Members employed by the Crown in right of Canada or an agency of the Crown in right of Canada;
- (j) Number 10, composed of the Licensed Members residing in the city of Toronto and the regional municipality of York;
- (k) Number 11, composed of the Licensed Members residing in the counties of Hastings, Northumberland, Peterborough and Prince Edward, the city of Kawartha Lakes and the regional municipality of Durham; and
- (l) Number 12, composed of the Licensed Members residing in the regional municipalities of Halton and Peel.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), the place where a Licensed Member resides for the purposes of an election is the Licensed Member's principal place of practice or residence under the By-laws on the 90th day before an election.

(3) Where, on the 90th day before an election, a Licensed Member is employed full-time by the University of Guelph or by the Crown in right of Canada or an agency of the Crown in right of Canada, the Licensed Member shall be deemed for all electoral purposes to reside in electoral district number 4 or 9, whichever is the case, and not in the electoral district where the Licensed Member resides under subsection (2).

(4) One Licensed Member shall be elected for each electoral district except for electoral district number 10.

(5) Two Licensed Members shall be elected for electoral district number 10.

#### 10.001 - Transition Period Election Provisions

- (1) Council members elected as of [date of Council meeting at which this By-law would be passed], 2024 shall remain in office until such time as new enabling legislation is passed and new Council members are elected under that successor statute. And all other provisions in these By-laws pertaining to Council Member elections are inapplicable in the meantime.
- (2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), in exceptional circumstances, where the seat of an Elected Member becomes vacant prior to the new enabling legislation passing and Council is in danger of falling below quorum, Council may:
  - i. Appoint a Licensed Member who meets the criteria for eligibility for election to fill the vacant seat; or
  - ii. Direct the Registrar to hold a by-election in accordance with these By-laws.



May 1, 2024

Dr. Wade Wright, DVM  
President  
College of Veterinarians of Ontario  
2-71 Hanlon Creek Blvd  
Guelph, ON N1C 0B1

Dear Dr. Wright,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to review CVO's consultation on the *By-Laws Amendments of Election to Council Members*.

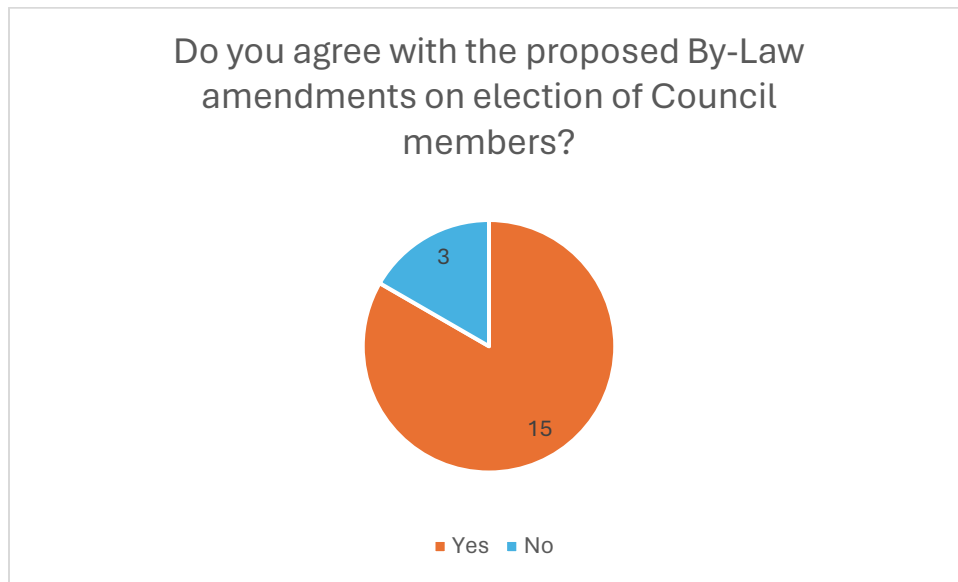
OVMA's Board of Directors has reviewed the proposed changes and is comfortable with the direction that it outlines. Given the critical time in the process of the *Veterinary Professionals Act*, and the responsibility of the College to develop regulations and new policies, having Council members that have both historical context and recent knowledge of the new changes will help facilitate the work that needs to be done prior to proclamation of the new College.

Thank you very much for your consideration of the recommendations. Should you have any questions or concerns about OVMA's position on this issue, please do not hesitate to reach out to Brandi Deimling, Manager of Government and External Relations at 905-875-0756 x224 or via email at [bdeimling@ovma.org](mailto:bdeimling@ovma.org).

Sincerely,

Dr. Bendon Laing  
President

## **By-Law Consultation Feedback Report**



18 responses were received on the public consultation tool – 17 from veterinarians and 1 from a member of the public. 3 veterinarians were not supportive of the proposed By-Law amendments.

### **All Comments Received**

#### **Anonymous Comments**

1. There should be more or split representation in eastern Ontario. The area of "United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, the United Counties of Prescott and Russell, the counties of Frontenac, Lanark, Lennox Addington, and Renfrew, and the city of Ottawa" is too large.
2. Keeping current council through transition vs electing and training new council seems to make the most sense both fiscally and practically
3. Updating is a good decision
4. Will technicians get to vote on everything? Will they be able to hold position too? How many members of CVO vs OAVT? I would think there should be twice as many OAVT. I have concerns about this
5. Having read the document several times; I still have no idea what it means. As usual, the CVO operates within it's own bubble of complicated legal speak in an attempt to legitimize it's existence. The constant layering of bureaucracy and unnecessary regulation will be the downfall of our once respected profession. Congratulations.
6. I do not think there should be an open ended period for the current council especially since we have no firm timeline on the new Act actually being confirmed. I think the by-law amendment should offer that these council members can be revoted in for another term BUT there should still be a vote.
7. It makes sense to have continuity of council during this pivotal period.
8. This seems like a reasonable plan, and I support it.

9. I think for the purpose of continuity through a huge change this is the right approach to ensure that the College can maintain it's mandate.  
Thanks!
10. With the inclusion of technicians into the act , I wonder what roles non registered assistants can perform. The shortage of techs. results in more technical jobs being allotted to non registered staff. I expect it will be a problem that shows up with the complaints process. I know the Kingston tech school has a 3rd classification ... kennel helper type role. I also expect that some techs may have dropped registration annual payments. If they have been regularly working at a clinic, they should be able to re-register (but don't know). They may or may not have been doing enough registered c/e; however, working with vets adds to their knowledge daily.

### **Public Comments**

The College also received publicly posted comments about the proposed changes.

1. Dr. Karen Ward - Veterinarian:  
My comment does not pertain to the current and transitional council, but rather when the review of the council electoral process occurs. Along with modernizing the Act, I strongly encourage council to move away from geographic council representation, and instead develop a council skills and competency matrix. In addition to specific skills, this provision should include representation from different sectors, such as large animal, rural practice, Northern practice and shelter medicine etc.
2. Dr. Doug Hoover - Veterinarian:  
I certainly endorse the addition of veterinarians to Council for the reasons as described. Of paramount importance is that these new Members are simply the " most informed and knowledgeable ", and that they are committed to the process. Thus I do not believe it is the best decision to simply add "new veterinary voices through regular election" at this most important time. I question if there should be some criteria established to learn what appropriate strengths these individuals can bring to the table, (if any) through experience or education for example, to foster this process moving forward in a most efficient manner. I am uncertain if "regular election" will fulfil this need.
3. Dr. Tim Arthur - Veterinarian:  
I would be more comfortable with the date of effect of the new By-Law being linked to when we expect the new Act and Regs being close to being proclaimed and not to when the By-Law is passed. The speed of government is sometimes very sluggish and there might be a lengthy passage of time between when we pass the By-Law and when the Act is proclaimed.
4. Dr. Jessica Peatling - Veterinarian:  
The interest of consistency and easing the transition to the new council composition, these amendments are prudent and reasonable. I have no objections.

## **AGENDA ITEM 9. Organizational Policy**

### **TOPIC: 9.2 Draft Governance Policy – Operations Reserve**

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



#### Background

At the March Council meeting, a councilor raised the question of whether the Council's approach to its financial reserves should be in a governance policy. While our choice of investment instruments is outlined in an existing governance policy, the decision on the appropriate reserve target for the College, in relation to managing financial risk exposure, has only ever been articulated within annual budget documents. Given the increasing pressure on not-for-profit organizations to only maintain reserves suitable to their projected actual needs, it may be timely to place our regular good practice into policy in the event of external review.

At Council's direction, staff developed a draft policy for consideration. The Executive Committee had the opportunity to review the draft policy and directed that it be sent to Council for decision.

#### Discussion

A draft policy is attached for Council review and discussion. It is important to note that the costs attached to the projected areas of financial risk exposure will vary annually and will continue to remain a discussion in the budget planning cycle.

#### Options

Following discussion, Council may elect to:

- approve the draft governance policy Operations Reserve as presented
- approve the draft governance policy Operations Reserve as amended
- not approve the draft governance policy Operations Reserve
- other

#### Attachment

- draft governance policy – Operations Reserve

## **Operations Reserve**

### **POLICY**

The Council annually confirms, at the time of budget approval, a reserve projection to assure sufficient funds are maintained to manage potential College financial risk exposure. Reserve funds may also be allocated for special projects\* as approved by Council.

### **PROCEDURE**

1. The College seeks to maintain reserve capital that manages both its identified areas of financial risk and special project allocations approved by Council.
2. Areas of financial risk are annually reviewed with both the College insurance firm(s) and the College auditor.
3. Areas of financial risk (see appendix A) are assessed annually and are presented to Council during the budget approval process.

#### **\*Special Project**

A special project is an initiative or activity that is not part of day-to-day operations and has a defined timeline for completion.



**Areas of Uninsured Financial Risk**

- Uninsured contested hearings
- Lawsuit related to conflict of interest/privacy breach
- Dissolution of the College
- Displacement of the College premises

DRAFT

**TOPIC: 10. Council Roundtable**

**10.1 Media Trends**

**Top General Trends found in Media – Spring**

**Avian Influenza:** The spread of the H5N1 bird flu, in particular transmission across species, is a prominent news item across North America.

Global News: Bird flu risks: What to know as the ‘versatile’ virus continues to spread  
<https://globalnews.ca/news/10396737/bird-flu-cows-milk-canada-risk/>

CBC: Is milk safe to drink? <https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/bird-flu-cattle-outbreak-questions-1.7163839>

**Access to veterinary care:** Articles across the country look at the challenges of the veterinarian shortage.

CBC: Local non-profit facing brunt of 'severe' veterinarian shortage  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/local-non-profit-facing-brunt-of-severe-veterinarian-shortage-1.7149695>

CTV: Ottawa veterinarian shortage putting pressure on pet care  
<https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/ottawa-veterinarian-shortage-putting-pressure-on-pet-care-1.6817327>

**Cost of pet ownership/Surrendered pets:** Articles have looked at the costs of pet ownership and the impact of corporate ownership of veterinary clinics. Also, pets adopted during the pandemic continue to be surrendered in large numbers, making news across Canada.

Ottawa Citizen: Paws for concern: Why has pet ownership become so expensive?  
[https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/why-has-pet-ownership-become-so-expensive?taid=662cdabefd4f330001680e68&utm\\_campaign=trueanthem&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter](https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/why-has-pet-ownership-become-so-expensive?taid=662cdabefd4f330001680e68&utm_campaign=trueanthem&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter)

CBC: Corporations are buying local vet clinics — raising questions about price, choice and quality of care <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/veterinarians-corporate-consolidation-1.7207186>

CTV: Pandemic pets still being surrendered, animal care officials say  
<https://london.ctvnews.ca/pandemic-pets-still-being-surrendered-animal-care-officials-say-1.6900919>

CityNews: Struggling with rising veterinary costs, more Winnipeggers surrendering their pets  
<https://winnipeg.citynews.ca/2024/03/19/rising-veterinary-costs-pet-surrender-shelter/>

**College in the news:** The College has been quoted and referenced in news articles this spring.

CTV: Woodstock, Ont. dog boarding facility given 'order' after engaging in veterinary medicine:  
CVO <https://london.ctvnews.ca/woodstock-ont-dog-boarding-facility-charged-after-engaging-in-veterinary-medicine-cvo-1.6824410>

Orillia Matters: Could Ontario enact a ban on 'inhumane' cosmetic work for pets?  
<https://www.orilliamatters.com/local-news/could-ontario-enact-a-ban-on-inhumane-cosmetic-work-for-pets-8580673>

CTV: Family upset after dog dies at vet's office <https://windsor.ctvnews.ca/family-upset-after-dog-dies-at-vet-s-office-1.6839193>

**One Health/Rabies:** One Health topics are prominent in the media touching on ticks, rabies transmission and the connection between human health, animal health and the planet.

VIN News: One Health clinics that treat pets, people together catch on  
[https://news.vin.com/default.aspx?pid=210&ld=12050357&f5=1&fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR1oXGxGuASA3QznJejeCNaYvNJa9E5dxJwxA0kpXg5zXAX4iZ77PqMutqM\\_aem\\_AdX9FbSrAcWn\\_hzUI5-aeGtXMxWgcvehJ3cQD-DVQjmhZxU1XnhL0T4nujPc5Ub1RAiCIHDx2dxZ-DCv28f4XXJv](https://news.vin.com/default.aspx?pid=210&ld=12050357&f5=1&fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR1oXGxGuASA3QznJejeCNaYvNJa9E5dxJwxA0kpXg5zXAX4iZ77PqMutqM_aem_AdX9FbSrAcWn_hzUI5-aeGtXMxWgcvehJ3cQD-DVQjmhZxU1XnhL0T4nujPc5Ub1RAiCIHDx2dxZ-DCv28f4XXJv)

CityNews: Dogs entering US must be six months old and microchipped to prevent spread of rabies, new rules say <https://montreal.citynews.ca/2024/05/14/dogs-entering-us-new-rules/>

Global: Ticks are 'better, stronger, faster' <https://globalnews.ca/video/10345810/ticks-are-better-stronger-faster-national-veterinary-association>

**TOPIC: 10. Council Roundtable**

**10.2 Regulatory Trends**

College staff monitor regulatory trends for reporting to Council. In addition, our trends report from Julie Maciura also highlights regulatory trends that may be of interest to Council.

**1. Bill 159, Preventing Unethical Puppy Sales Act, 2024** – (Government Bill – passed second reading and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy) Bill 159 would amend the Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act, 2019, “Among the changes are the following:

1. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations governing record-keeping with respect to dogs.
2. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations prohibiting the sale or transfer of dogs under certain circumstances.
3. The operation of puppy mills is prohibited.

**2. Muted Modernization for the Regulation of BC Legal Practitioners**

The move in British Columbia to modernize the regulation of legal practitioners has run into significant opposition by advocates for the independence of legal professionals, without interference from government, as a fundamental tenet of the justice system. As a result, the government has conceded that some of the regulatory reforms imposed on other professions will not be fully applied to legal practitioners.

In its [most recent update](#) on the reform initiative, the government has stated the following muted intentions:

1. The majority of the Board will be lawyers, even as notaries and paralegals are brought within a single regulator.
2. The majority of the Board will be elected from the profession. However, the Board will be able to appoint a minority of licensees to its Board through a competency-based process.
3. The Board will be larger than for most other professions, with 17 persons.
4. Only three of the 17 Board members will be publicly appointed non-licensees, who will also be appointed through a competency-based process and who will act independently of the government once appointed.
5. The government will not retain the right to veto rules made by the Board.
6. There will not be an independent supervisor of the regulator. However, there will be future independent reviews of the effectiveness of the regulator, especially about facilitating access to legal services and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

However, significant reforms will still occur including, in addition to a single regulator, the following:

- The core responsibilities of the regulator will be set out in statute. These will include the regulation of the practice of the profession and establishing standards of practice in the public interest. In addition, the regulator will have a mandate to facilitate access to legal services and to advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.
- There must be a minimum of two Indigenous members of the Board. In addition, there will be an Indigenous Council as part of the regulator's governance structure.
- The mandate of the Board will be strategic oversight.
- Regulated individuals will be referred to as licensees, not members. There will be no requirement to hold annual meetings of licensees, licensees will not be able to forward resolutions purporting to direct the actions of the Board, and licensees will not have the authority to approve or reject rules developed by the Board.

Regulators across the country will monitor these reforms with interest.

### **3. Disciplinary Agreements without Independent Public Hearing Approval.**

The UK's regulatory oversight body, the Professional Standards Authority (PSA), is conducting a [public consultation](#) on the new accepted outcomes model. Under that model, Examiners (who are representatives of the regulator and not independent adjudicative bodies) can approve a disciplinary outcome where there is agreement by the registrant (or the registrant refuses to participate in the process). Outcomes include suspension or revocation. Where the registrant disagrees, the allegations will proceed to the usual discipline hearing. The PSA supports the model as creating an expeditious process for disposing of concerns without the delays, trauma, and uncertainty associated with the traditional discipline process. However, the PSA is concerned about certain disadvantages to the new model including:

- The perception of matters being resolved behind closed doors.
- The possible encroachment of other regulatory priorities (e.g., reducing backlogs) that might not result in a disposition that best protects the public.
- The possibility that complainants may have a reduced role in, or even be excluded from, the process.
- That diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) concerns may be amplified (e.g., that UK trained registrants with language proficiency and legal representation may have disproportionate favourable outcomes compared to others without those factors).
- The reduction of public representatives in the decision-making process.

The consultation proposes several measures to address these concerns, including: publishing detailed, accessible and transparent decisions, involving complainants, including in seeking their comments on possible dispositions, implementing measures to mitigate DEI concerns, and involving public and diverse representatives in the process.

**TOPIC: 10. Council Roundtable**

**10.3 Legal Trends**

Each quarter the College's legal counsel, Julie Maciura, prepares a summary of legal cases for our review. These cases have been selected to update Council on the latest legal trends.

**1. Sanctioning Sparseness**

It is, unfortunately, not uncommon for some applicants to use the protected title and begin practising before the application for registration is completed. Regulators struggle with how to address such behaviour. In [\*Eloufy v The Association of Professional Engineers And Geoscientists of Saskatchewan\*](#), 2024 SKKB 45 (CanLII), a court upheld a regulator's refusal to register the applicant on the basis that they were not of good character, and to ban their ability to re-apply for three years.

The applicant was found to have made several written and verbal representations about being registered in Saskatchewan while applying for an engineering position in British Columbia. The applicant was hired on that basis. However, their employment was terminated when they could not provide proof of registration. The employer notified the Saskatchewan regulator, who was processing the application. The regulator treated the conduct as evidence of bad character. The applicant appealed the refusal of registration to court.

The Court upheld the finding of bad character: "Once might be a mistake. Twice could be coincidence or bad luck. But three or four times strains credulity. There was no palpable and overriding error in Council finding that Mr. Eloufy had falsely claimed to be a professional engineer."

The Court also rejected the argument that bad faith could only apply to conduct in Saskatchewan, finding that any other approach to the character of the applicant would result in an "absurd" outcome.

However, the Court was concerned that the regulator had not provided any reasons explaining the basis for its finding. The refusal of registration for an applicant was sufficiently serious as to require meaningful reasons for the decision. The reasons need not be lengthy:

In saying that better reasons were required, what is required is not difficult. The usual guidance to decision-makers is to explain why they decided as they did. The explanation need not be lengthy. Sometimes it simply requires adding the word "because" at the end of the sentence stating the decision and then carrying on to complete the sentence.

The Court said that "While a finding of inadequate reasons will usually result in the appeal being allowed," in this case the Court was willing to make an exception. The basis for the

decision was apparent from the record and the outcome, if the matter was returned to the regulator, was inevitable. The Court was willing to reassess the record and render the decision on its own, with reasons. However, the Court refused to order the applicant to pay the regulator's costs for the appeal, which would have ordinarily flowed from its decision.

Interestingly, the Court did not address the possibility, which some regulators accept, of registering the applicant with restrictions. Perhaps that was because the applicant in this matter did not acknowledge their behaviour and offered no evidence to demonstrate the possibility of rehabilitation.

The Court concluded: "In proceeding in this manner, I do not condone the inadequacy of reasons.... I hope that APEGS [the regulator] will treat this decision as a caution to provide better reasons in future decisions."

## **2. *Stays Just Got Harder to Obtain***

Once a final regulatory decision has been made, a registrant can usually appeal or seek judicial review. Such challenges take time. At least months. An important consideration for the registrant is whether the regulatory decision takes effect immediately or whether it is stayed (postponed) pending the court decision. Even where the enabling legislation addresses the issue, either party can bring a motion to the court to alter the pending status of the regulatory decision. While the courts look at each case individually, the decision usually boils down to whether the registrant's personal interest outweighs the public interest in having the measures in place.

In [\*Platinum Cars Inc. v. Registrar, Motor Vehicle Dealers Act, 2002\*](#), 2024 ONSC 2077 (CanLII), the registration of both a motor vehicle dealer and its controlling salesperson were revoked after a hearing before the Licence Appeal Tribunal (LAT). LAT had found that the registrants had engaged in a course of non-compliance with their ethical and regulatory obligations. These included failing to comply with previous conditions agreed to by the registrants related to remediation for past conduct concerns and material non-disclosure to both consumers and the regulator. Consumers were purchasing vehicles with defects. LAT, in effect, found the registrants to be ungovernable.

The registrants appealed the decision and sought a stay of the revocation order until the appeal could be heard. The registrants argued that temporary restrictions could satisfactorily address the public interest goals and that shutting down the registrants' rather large business for months would be draconian, especially if the appeal succeeded.

The Court concluded that, despite the impact of the revocation order on the registrants, a stay was not warranted. In doing so, the Court applied the usual three-part test with some rigour.

The first part of the test, whether there is a serious issue to be tried on the appeal, is usually met with little effort. However, in this case, the Court was concerned that the grounds of appeal were quite general. Even at this stage, a preliminary assessment of the merits is required. The registrants provided no details of what might arguably be a palpable and overriding error in LAT's decision.



The second part of the test relates to evidence of irreparable harm to the registrants if no stay is granted. The Court framed the test in terms of “disastrous consequences”. While there would obviously be financial implications for the registrants in closing their business and maintaining expenses, including for a 40-person sales staff and payment on a \$30 million bank loan, the Court found that insufficient evidence was tendered as to the registrants’ full financial position in order to make a firm conclusion of irreparable harm.

The third part of the test was the balance of convenience between the impact on the registrants compared to the public interest. The Court concluded that the public interest took priority because of the registrants’ history of ungovernability, evidence that the registrants had continued to advertise their business after the revocation took effect, and the failure of the individual registrant to address even the minimal consent conditions that had been in place for four years, such as completing approved dispute resolution and anger management programs.

This decision indicates that courts will not routinely grant stays to registrants during an appeal of tribunal decisions. Registrants need to provide meaningful evidence to support the necessity for such an order, at least where the tribunal findings are significant.

### **3. *Playing Chicken with Adjournments***

For regulators, one of the more frustrating aspects of the discipline process is when a registrant asks for repeated and extended deferrals of discipline hearings while providing only a limited basis to support the request. Refusing an adjournment where it compromises a registrant’s ability to have a fair hearing can result in the entire proceeding being set aside. The regulator can also be perceived as heavy handed by pressing forward too aggressively. However, public confidence and protection can be placed at risk by failing to complete discipline proceedings on a timely basis. Sometimes, the process resembles a game of “playing chicken”.

That is what appears to have occurred in [\*Korzeniowski v Alberta \(Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists\)\*](#), 2024 ABCA 91 (CanLII). A professional engineer faced a discipline hearing for allegations related to [quality of practice concerns](#). The engineer repeatedly requested an adjournment of the proceedings because of his treatment for cancer. The regulator sought additional information about the engineer’s health and whether he was continuing to practice. Despite not providing the information, the regulator still provided a lengthy adjournment of eleven months. When the hearing was scheduled to resume, the engineer again requested an adjournment and provided a physician’s document indicating that treatment was ongoing and would be for some time. The regulator insisted that both the engineer and the physician attend, remotely, at the beginning of the hearing to provide a full basis for the adjournment request. Neither attended. The hearing panel proceeded with the hearing.

On appeal, the primary issue was whether the engineer had been denied procedural fairness by the adjournment refusal. The engineer argued that, if the regulator was truly concerned about the public interest, it could have imposed an adjournment with conditions related to the engineer not practising in the meantime.

The Court dismissed the appeal. The engineer had failed to provide sufficient information to justify an additional lengthy adjournment.



In the present case, the Discipline Committee faced a stark choice: grant a second, lengthy adjournment for an undefined period during which Mr Korzeniowski could continue to practice, or proceed in his absence. The mandate of a professional disciplinary body is “to protect the public, to regulate the profession and to preserve public confidence in the profession”: *Law Society of Saskatchewan v Abrametz*, 2022 SCC 29 at para 53. The professional disciplinary hearing involved more than Mr Korzeniowski’s interests; lengthy delay in disciplinary proceedings can impact the complainants and the public in general by undermining confidence in the profession.

In the absence of a statutory provision enabling the hearing panel to impose restrictions on the practice of the engineer, it was reasonable for the hearing panel not to grant an adjournment on the condition the engineer would not practice. The engineer was not present to indicate whether he would agree to such a condition.

On these facts, the regulator’s choice to proceed with the hearing was justified.

#### **4. Reviewing Reinstatement Requests**

Revoked registrants can usually apply for reinstatement after a specified period of time. While the criteria for reinstatement vary, usually one issue is whether the applicant is currently of good character such that the previous concerns are unlikely to reoccur. A recent Ontario Divisional Court decision provides guidance on the application of the criteria that would likely apply to several regulators.

In [\*Mundulai v. Law Society of Ontario\*](#), 2024 ONSC 959 (CanLII), the applicant had “a lengthy discipline history, which resulted in the revocation of his licence to practice law following a finding of ungovernability in 2012.” Although the lapse of time favoured the applicant, numerous factors did not. The applicant: owed the regulator and professional liability insurer tens of thousands of dollars among other unpaid debts; had several criminal convictions including for intimate partner violence; failed to disclose information such as the criminal conviction on the application for reinstatement; allegedly was disrespectful to the regulator’s investigator during the reinstatement process; and had taken few rehabilitative steps. Both the regulator’s hearing tribunal and its internal appeal tribunal refused to reinstate the applicant.

In upholding the refusal, the Court made the following points:

- The regulator has a duty to ensure that only applicants of good character are granted reinstatement.
- The test for the internal appellate tribunal is the usual appellate standard of review, not the reasonableness standard. The appellate standard is correctness for questions of law and palpable and overriding error for most other issues. Procedural fairness is required throughout.
- Under the legislation, making a false or misleading representation on the application is sufficient grounds, on its own, to refuse reinstatement.
- When assessing the current good character of the applicant, several non-exhaustive factors should be considered “including the nature and duration of the misconduct, whether the applicant is remorseful, what rehabilitative efforts, if any, the applicant has taken and the success of such efforts, the applicant’s conduct since the proven misconduct, and the passage of time since the misconduct.”



- Assertions that the regulator had treated the applicant unfairly, both in the past and during the investigation of the current application, are irrelevant to whether the applicant is currently of good character.
- In this particular case, the evidentiary and procedural rulings made by the hearing and appeal tribunals were appropriate.

Generally, courts will show deference to a tribunal's assessment of the current good character of for reinstatement.

**TOPIC: 10. Council Roundtable**

**10.4 Public Trends**

College staff collect information about the types of contacts that we receive from members of the public. This report is intended to share these themes with Council. You will notice that the first four themes are consistent with those reported previously.

**1. Access to Care**

Members of the public continue to report challenges accessing the veterinary care they need. This concern is often related to the inability to access after-hours, emergency care.

**2. The Need for a Physical Exam**

The College continues to receive questions about why a physical examination, or a diagnostic test, may be required to obtain a prescription or a refill of a medication or to give a vaccine. There is a lack of understanding about why a physical exam is important and some members of the public believe this to be a financially motivated decision by the veterinarian.

**3. Communication Concerns**

Members of the public have indicated that they have encountered challenges communicating directly with their veterinarian. Support staff are sometimes seen as a barrier to the public accessing the information that is needed from the veterinarian.

**4. Cost of Veterinary Care**

Members of the public continue to express concerns related to the high costs of veterinary care impacting the ability for clients to access the needed care for their animals. There are more animals that may be surrendered or need to be euthanized due to the fact that clients are not accessing earlier care due to costs.

**5. Non-competition Clauses**

A member of the public mentioned that they tried to seek veterinary care from a veterinarian that they had previously seen, however this veterinarian said due to her non-compete agreement with another business, she was unable to service clients in this specific area. This member of the public was concerned about the shortage of large animal veterinary services in the area. Non-compete clauses in employment contracts are not allowed in Ontario since October 2021, however the specific details of this scenario are not known.



**6. Microchip Scanning**

A member of the public who has lost their cat, felt that all veterinary facilities should check new patients for microchips to confirm ownership. It was felt that clients pay for microchips and expect that veterinarians should be scanning all new animals seen at the clinic to ensure that lost animals are re-united with their owners. It was proposed that the College should put rules in place requiring all new animals seen at veterinary facilities to be scanned for microchips.

**7. Complaints Timelines**

Two members of the public expressed concerns about the length of time it takes the College to complete the investigation of a complaint. One concern came from an individual who has not filed a complaint but is very supportive of their veterinarian and wanted to raise this concern.



**TOPIC: 10. Council Roundtable**

**10.5 General Trends**

Every Councillor is encouraged to raise any matter they believe is relevant to the College and to which it should pay attention.

**AGENDA ITEM 12. Notice of Motion**

Background

A Notice of Motion is the way in which a Councillor can request Council take action on an issue, as per Robert's Rules and CVO's By-laws. The Registrar introduced the formal protocol for a Councillor to bring an issue forward to Council for consideration as a future policy debate.

At the appropriate time a Councillor who so wishes, may state an intent to make a motion at the next meeting on a matter. The matter will then be included on the next meeting's agenda. The Councillor making the original notice of intent will speak to the matter and a majority vote will be needed to proceed with adding the item to Council's regular order of business and directing next steps to staff.

**Area of Focus**

- Governance
- Legislation
- Public Policy
- Stakeholders
- Strategy