



Veterinary Practice Owners Association of Ontario

The Voice of the Veterinarian Owned Practice...For A Stronger Profession And Excellent Care.

Dr. Christine Coghlan

Ontario Veterinary Medical Association
420 Bronte Street South, Suite 205
Milton, ON, L9T 0H9

June 7, 2016

Dear Dr. Coghlan,

I am writing in response to your letter dated May 4th, 2016, which summarized OVMA board's decision about the concerns of veterinary practice owners.

We have now concluded the survey and tabulated 149 answers, which are attached to this writing. Our results were sent out to over 900 practice owners and, not surprisingly, were very well received.

The survey gave respondents the opportunity to enter comments and suggestions in free form. We find these comments very valuable as they reflect the raw opinions of our colleagues. I have attached these comments in unedited raw form to you as well. They were not sent out to the general public.

The comments show clearly that not all is well in our profession. People are hurting and it should not be surprising that our profession experiences burnout and compassion fatigue. It is very clear to us that the main instigating factor was the need for price advertising and the resulting polarization of practice quality. Our profession was caught without guard.

This is not the time for complacency. This is not the time to continue watching veterinary morale eroding. Our organization was revitalized from the grass roots with the purpose to help our colleagues and ourselves.

We strongly believe that your organization has now an opportunity to come along and revisit it's mandate based on the present situation. The historical mandate needs to be updated to the new reality.

We have arranged meetings with CVO and we will press them on the issue of inconsistent standards of medicine and the lack of clear unequivocal guidelines. CVO is certainly trying to understand the opinions of the practicing veterinarians but we doubt that they are aware, based on how far estranged they are from our profession.

We will also continue to lobby against rabies clinics, against low cost shelter medicine for the general public, and for the support of industry partners.

We are fully aware that this isn't an easy task and we appreciate that OVMA is working on many of the issues practice owners have expressed concern about. We are also fully aware that a large organization like OVMA has less flexibility and fervor than a smaller focused grass roots group. We also appreciate that the changes needed may alienate some individuals and cause inconvenience to others.

However, we would sincerely hope that OVMA will not shy away from the task of helping the large portion of practice owners who are hurting and who are suffering without a voice. We need to stay relevant and persistent to be of service to those who matter most, the veterinarians with the most skin in the game – the practice owners.

We are looking forward to continuing this dialogue. We fully expect a rebuke from CVO, but we also know that we will start changing their mind on the veterinary landscape in today's reality. We would welcome OVMA to join forces with us on issues, which affect the betterment of our profession, for both practice owners and associates.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ernst Marsig

For the Executive Board

Veterinary Practice Owner's Association

Attachments:

- 2016 Survey Summary
- Survey Important Comment Summary