

# BRIEF FOR FEBRUARY 22, 2024

FOR THE MEETING BETWEEN THE HONOURABLE MALAYA MARCELINO AND THE MANITOBA  
VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (MVMA)

February 22, 2024

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Room 156, Legislative Building, 450 Broadway

**MVMA Representatives:**

Dr. Mackenzie Marks, MVMA Past President

Dr. Morgan Wawyrk, MVMA Vice President

Dr. Chris Bell, CVMA Past President & WCVM Liaison

Corey Wilson, MVMA Executive Director/Registrar

Michelle Kusano, MVMA Staff

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## 1. OVERVIEW OF THE MVMA AND ITS ROLE

### BACKGROUND

The Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA) is a professional organization representing veterinarians and veterinary medicine in Manitoba. Established in 1881, the MVMA has been at the forefront of advocating for the profession, ensuring high standards of veterinary practice and animal care in the province.

### MVMA'S DUAL ROLE

#### **As a Regulatory Body:**

**Licensing and Regulation:** The MVMA is responsible for licensing veterinary professionals practicing in Manitoba. It sets and enforces standards of professional practice, ensuring that veterinary services provided to the public meet established guidelines for quality and safety.

**Ethical Standards and Discipline:** The organization maintains a code of ethics and conducts disciplinary actions when necessary. It addresses complaints against veterinary professionals and takes appropriate measures to uphold the integrity of the profession.

**Public Health and Safety:** The MVMA plays a crucial role in safeguarding public health by regulating veterinary practices that impact food safety, zoonotic diseases, and overall animal health, directly affecting human health.

#### **As a Professional Association:**

**Support and Advocacy:** The MVMA provides support to veterinary professionals in Manitoba, offering resources for continuing education, professional development, and networking opportunities. It advocates on behalf of its members on various issues impacting the veterinary profession.

**Community Outreach and Education:** The association engages in community outreach and public education campaigns, raising awareness about animal health and welfare, responsible pet ownership, and the role of veterinary professionals in society.

**Collaboration with Other Entities:** The MVMA collaborates with governmental bodies, educational institutions, and other organizations to promote animal health and welfare and to advance the field of veterinary medicine in Manitoba.

The MVMA's dual role as both a regulatory body and a professional association places it in a unique position to address challenges and opportunities within the veterinary field in Manitoba. Through its regulatory functions and professional support, the MVMA ensures the highest standards of veterinary care, upholds the profession's integrity, and contributes significantly to public and animal health and welfare.

## 2. THE ROLE OF VETERINARY PROFESSIONALS

### VETERINARIANS

Veterinarians play a crucial role in animal healthcare, public health, and environmental protection. Their responsibilities include examining animals, diagnosing and treating illnesses, performing surgeries, administering vaccines, and educating pet owners. Additionally, veterinarians are involved in environmental protection, research, food safety, and public health, and they work to address the health and welfare needs of all animal species. They also serve as leaders in food safety, epidemiology, and public health. Veterinarians can specialize in various areas, such as companion animal care, food safety, research, and public health, and they may work in private clinics, government agencies, research institutions, or academia.

MVMA Veterinarian Members as of February 14, 2024:

- 425 General Veterinarian Members (Practicing)
- 23 Non-Practicing/Retired Veterinarian Members
- 9 Lifetime Veterinarian Members (Non-Practicing)
- 7 Public Veterinarian Members (Practicing)
- 15 Restricted Veterinarian Members (Practicing)
- 66 Student Veterinarian Members

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### VETERINARY SPECIALISTS

Just as is the case in human medicine, there are practicing specialists in veterinary medicine. A veterinarian specialist has undertaken extra training (typically 3-4 years) to gain advanced competency in a specific area of veterinary medicine. Once the training is completed, comprehensive examinations and evaluation of proficiency are carried out by the specific specialty “colleges.” Upon satisfactory completion of this intensive evaluation, the veterinarian is granted their “board certification” in the specific specialty they are trained in.

The specializations available to veterinarians are as broad as the roles of animals in our lives and include:

- Animal welfare
- Dental care
- Laboratory animal medicine
- Poultry care
- Theriogenology
- Anesthesia and analgesia
- Behavioural study and conditioning
- Clinical pharmacology
- Veterinary dermatology
- Internal medicine
- Veterinary microbiology
- Nutrition
- Veterinary ophthalmology
- Pathology
- Preventative medicine
- Radiology
- Sports medicine and rehabilitation
- Surgery
- Zoological medicine
- Emergency and critical care

In Manitoba, we have 12 specialists from 10 different fields.

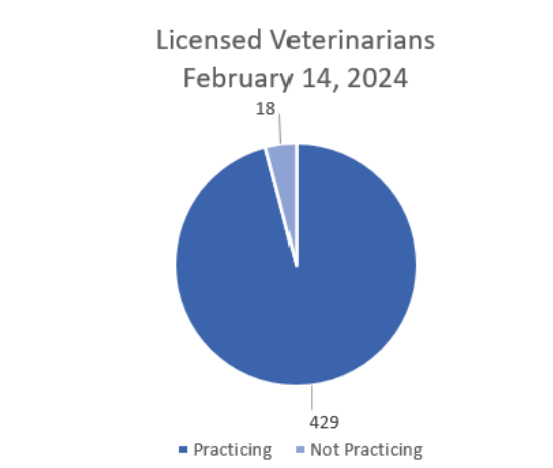
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### CURRENT DATA ON PRACTICING VETERINARIANS IN MANITOBA

To assess the current workforce of veterinarians in Manitoba, the MVMA provides the following data regarding the current workforce as of February 14, 2024.

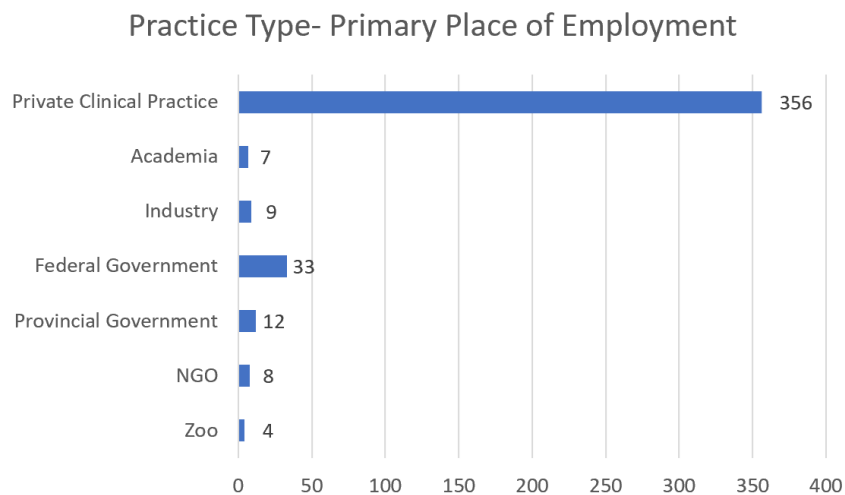
The MVMA currently has 447 veterinarians who are both registered and licensed to practice veterinary medicine in Manitoba.

96% of licensed veterinarians report that they are currently working in the veterinary field (Figure 1).



**Figure 1**

The majority of licensed veterinarians work in Private Clinic Practice (Figure 2). This data solely captures a licensed veterinarian's primary place of employment.



**Figure 2**

The average age of veterinarians in Manitoba is 45.79, with a standard deviation of 12.43 years (Figure 3).

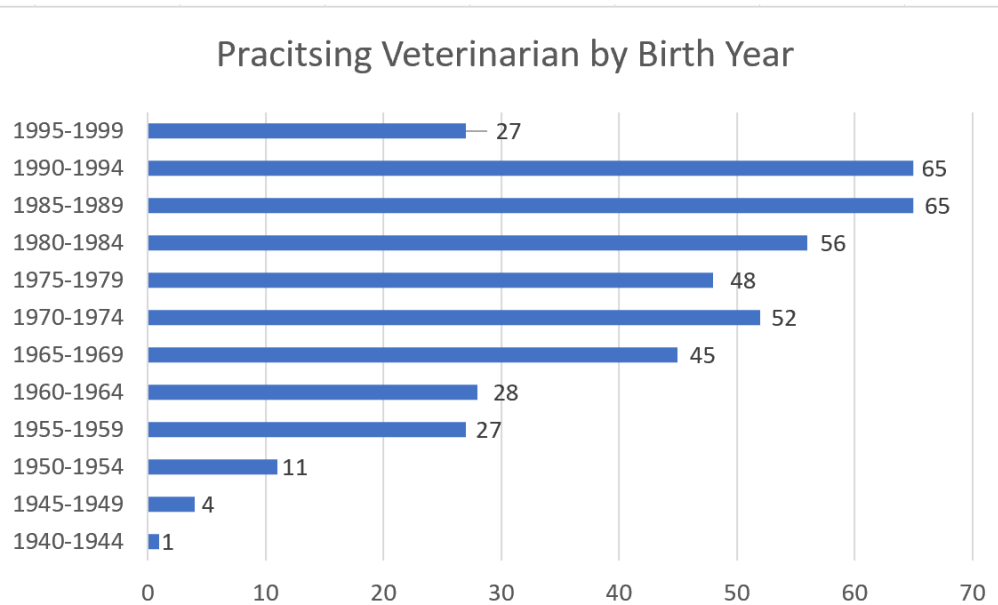


Figure 3

Assuming retirement at 65 years of age, 36 licensed veterinarians are at risk of retiring immediately, and 68 in the next five years. Assuming retirement at 60 years of age, 68 licensed veterinarians are at risk of retiring immediately, 102 in the next five years.

Of the 447 practicing veterinarians in Manitoba, 70% are graduates of the WCVM, 8% are graduates of other Canadian veterinary colleges, and 22% are graduates of programs outside Canada (Figure 4).

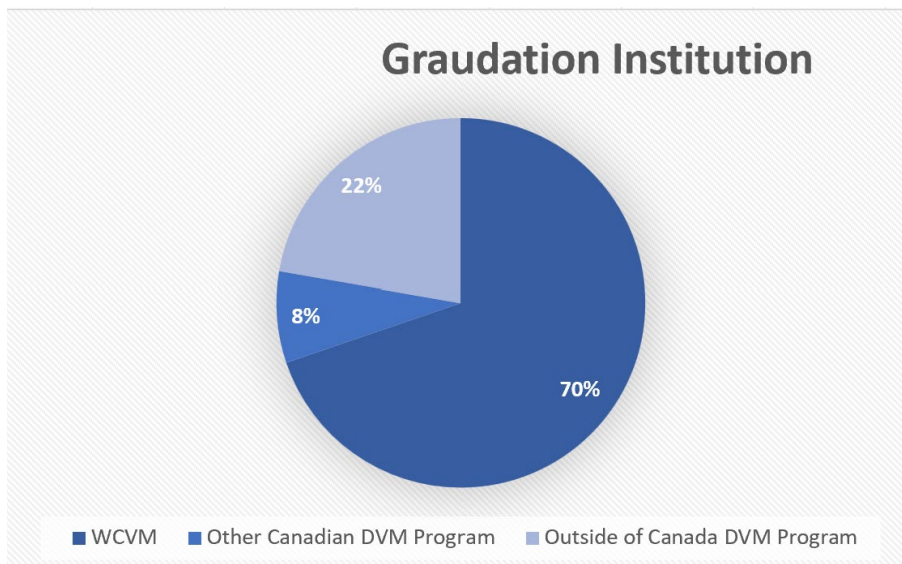


Figure 4

Since 2020, the MVMA has seen an average of 30 veterinarians cancel or fail to renew their licence to practice each year (Figure 5). This occurs for many reasons, from temporary leave from the profession to care for family, career changes, and retirement.

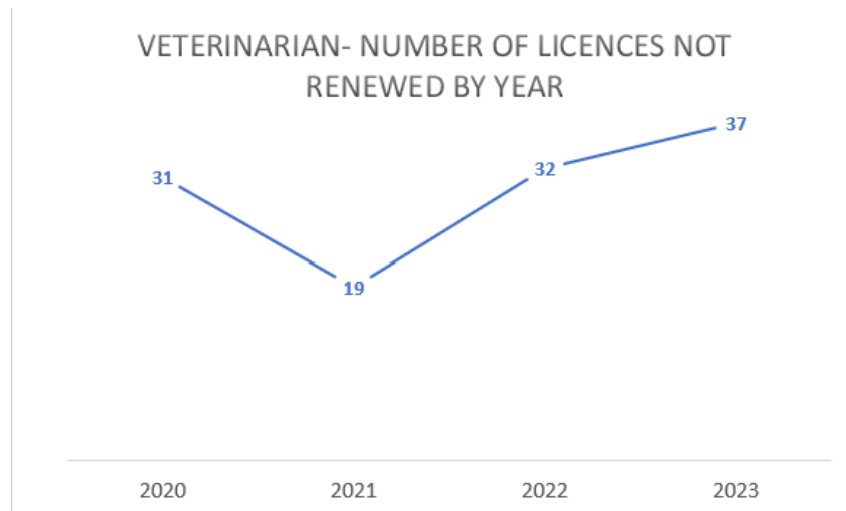


Figure 5

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#### VETERINARIAN COMPENSATION IN MANITOBA

As per the Labour Market Report updated by the Government of Canada on January 23, 2024, veterinarians in Manitoba receive compensation based on an hourly wage structure. The prevailing wages for veterinarians are as follows:

- Low: \$27.40 per hour (approximately \$56,992 per year)
- Median: \$50.67 per hour (approximately \$105,393 per year)
- High: \$58.97 per hour (approximately \$122,657 per year)<sup>1</sup>

These figures suggest a significant range in veterinarian wages, reflective of factors such as experience, specialization, and the type of veterinary practice (e.g., small animal, large animal, government).

#### Comparison with General Practitioners in Human Health

General Practitioners in Manitoba are compensated on an annual salary basis, with their earnings significantly surpassing those of veterinarians:

- Low: \$100,341 per year
- Median: \$258,906 per year
- High: \$497,843 per year<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/wages-occupation/4127/MB>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/wages-occupation/24433/MB>



## Comparison with Dentists

The annual earnings of dentists in Manitoba also provide a valuable benchmark for evaluating veterinarian compensation:

- Low: \$30,847 per year
- Median: \$110,000 per year
- High: \$228,000 per year<sup>3</sup>

The data from the Labour Market Report highlights the varied compensation landscape for health professionals in Manitoba. While playing a crucial role in public health and animal welfare, veterinarians have a lower earning potential than their counterparts in human health care, such as general practitioners and dentists.

## THE ROLE OF REGISTERED VETERINARY TECHNOLOGISTS

The role of a Registered Veterinary Technologist (RVT) is multifaceted and vital to animal healthcare. RVTs are front-line healthcare workers who have completed rigorous training. Their responsibilities include performing initial examinations of animals, taking vital signs, collecting specimens, administering medications and vaccines prescribed by a veterinarian, assisting in research, performing laboratory procedures, preparing animals and equipment for surgical procedures, and educating animal owners. They are also involved in critical care nursing, administering medications to patients, applying bandages and splints, collecting and analyzing laboratory samples, producing radiographs, inducing and monitoring anesthesia, providing dental care, and assisting in surgery. RVTs can work in various settings, including private veterinary practices, research facilities, animal control agencies, and educational institutions. Their formal education and training enable them to provide essential support to veterinarians and contribute to the overall well-being of animals.

MVMA RVT Members as of February 14, 2024:

- 446 General Veterinary Technologists Members (Practicing)
- 36 Non-Practicing/Retired Veterinary Technologist Members
- 5 Restricted Veterinary Technologist Members (Practicing)
- 71 Student Veterinary Technologist Members
- 7 Animal Health Assistants

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/wages-occupation/4092/ca;jsessionid=D866BD435221623F42CF575CBFCD31C6.jobsearch76>

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## RVT COMPENSATION IN MANITOBA

Figure 6 presents the compensation data from the *2022 Manitoba Summary Based From The 2022 RVT Compensation Review Report* completed on January 8, 2023, by CC Consulting.<sup>4</sup>

<b>RVT Hourly Rate Data</b>	
Average Hourly Rate	\$24.78
Urban Average Hourly Rate	\$25.07
Rural Averal Hourly Rate	\$23.73
Lowest Hourly Rate	\$15.50
Highest Hourly Rate	\$48.00

**Figure 6**

Figure 7 provides the average hourly rate for RVTs by years of practice.

<b>RVT Average Hourly Rate by Years of Practice</b>	
Less Than 3 Years	\$21.33
3-5 Years	\$23.24
6-10 Years	\$25.11
11-15 Years	\$25.54
16-20 Years	\$26.37
21-25 Years	\$26.37
26-30 Years	\$34.68
>31 Years	**
** data set not large enough to report on	

**Figure 7**

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<sup>4</sup> Manitoba Summary: 2022 RVT Compensation Review Report, page 5

### 3. PROFILE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE IN MANITOBA

In addition to licensing individual veterinarians, the MVMA permits and inspects private veterinary practices in Manitoba. These practices provide services to both industry and families in Manitoba. As of February 14, 2024, there are 151 private practices in Manitoba (Figure 8).

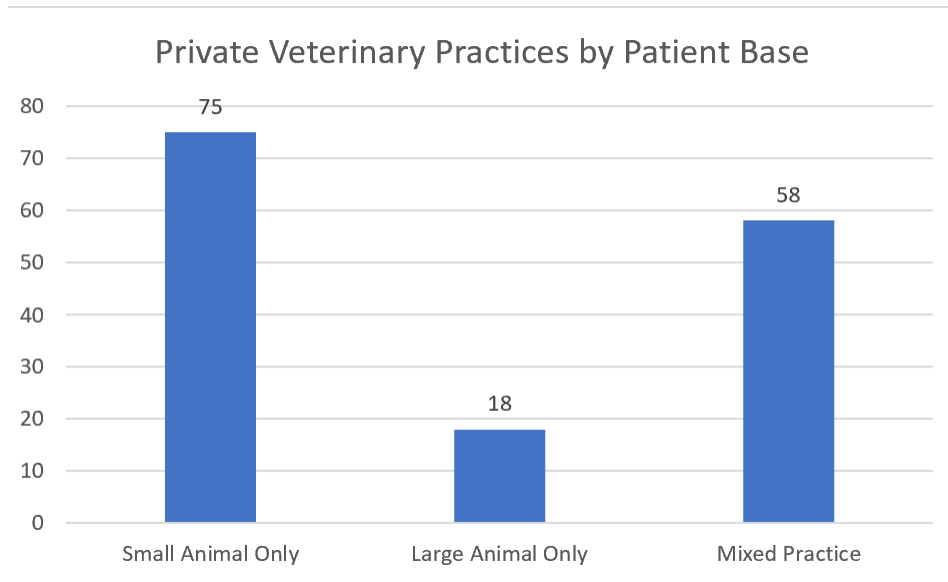


Figure 8

Veterinary practices exist throughout Manitoba, with 48% of veterinary practices located outside Winnipeg (Figure 9).

### PRIVATE PRACTICE BY LOCATION

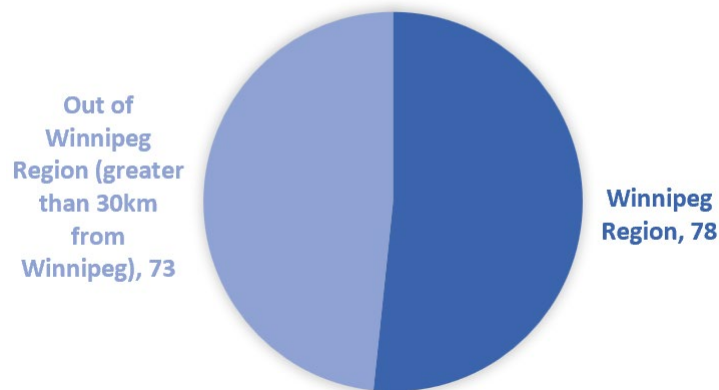


Figure 9

## 4. BECOMING A VETERINARIAN IN MANITOBA

The MVMA licences people from across the globe to practice veterinary medicine in Manitoba. Pathways for licensure are numerous and most easily break down into two categories:

- Veterinarian graduates of programs accredited by the CVMA/AVMA
- Veterinarian graduates of programs **not** accredited by the CVMA/AVMA

### VETERINARIAN GRADUATES OF PROGRAMS ACCREDITED BY THE CMVA/AVMA

The CVMA, in collaboration with the American Veterinary Medical Association-Council on Education (AVMA-CoE), grants accreditation to university programs designed to educate students to become veterinarians.

Globally, there are 55 veterinary schools accredited. Five are in Canada, and the other 50 are in the United States, United Kingdom, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, France, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Korea, and the West Indies. A complete list of programs can be located [here](#).

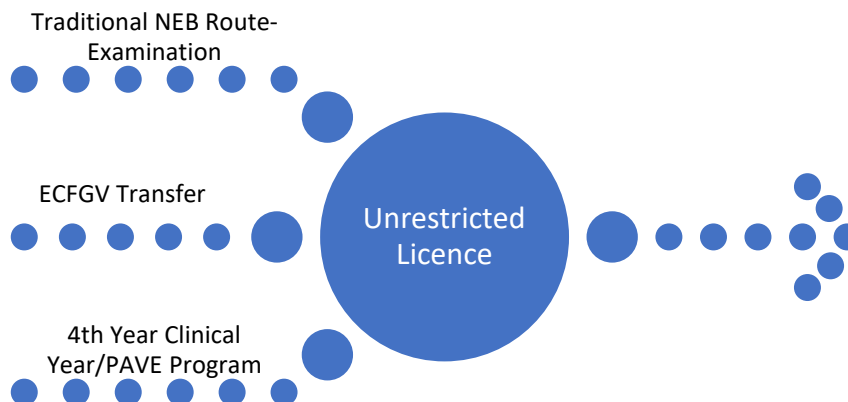
CVMA/AVMA accredited veterinarian programs are four-year programs.

Once a student has completed four years of an accredited program, they must pass the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE) within their first three attempts to obtain an Unrestricted License to practice as a veterinarian.

If a student who has completed four years of an accredited program fails the NAVLE three times, the MVMA provides a Limited Licence – CVMA/AVMA Accredited Program Graduate without Certification of Qualification. Through this pathway, accredited graduates who have failed the NAVLE three times can obtain an Unrestricted License to Practice by passing the Presurgical Assessment (PSA) and all sections of the Clinical Proficiency Exam (CPE).

### VETERINARIAN GRADUATES OF PROGRAMS NOT ACCREDITED BY THE CMVA/AVMA - UNRESTRICTED LICENCE

There are currently three pathways to be eligible for an unrestricted licence in Manitoba:



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## TRADITIONAL NEB ROUTE - EXAMINATION

This longstanding pathway requires that applicants successfully complete the following four examinations/assessments:

### 1) The Basic and Clinical Sciences Examinations (BCSE)

The BCSE is designed to assess basic and clinical veterinary sciences knowledge. The knowledge level expected to receive a passing score on the BCSE is that of an entry-level veterinarian (i.e., a new graduate of an accredited veterinary school). The computer-based BCSE consists of 225 multiple-choice questions, many with graphics, which must be completed within a 220-minute test session.

### 2) The North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE)

The NAVLE comprises 360 multiple-choice questions designed to measure one's general knowledge base in the various scientific disciplines required in veterinary medicine. The NAVLE requires one full day to complete.

### 3) The Preliminary Surgical Assessment (PSA)

This Qualifying Examination will assess the candidate's ability to:

- Prepare a cadaver for a sterile abdominal surgical procedure;
- Prepare himself/herself for a sterile surgical procedure;
- Perform a ventral midline celiotomy (approximately 10 cm in length) and close the ventral midline celiotomy, subcutaneous tissue and skin on a cadaver.

### 4) The Clinical Proficiency Examination

The CPE is a practical examination of the candidate's medical and surgical skills. It is designed to assess the candidate's ability to handle actual medical, surgical and diagnostic problems in a clinical or hospital setting. The CPE involves the examination and treatment of live animals and the performance of routine laboratory procedures.

Following the successful completion of the NAVLE and registration for the PSA, the applicant is eligible for a restricted licence in which they must practice under the supervision of a Practising Veterinarian Member.

As of February 13, 2024, the examination fees are as follows:

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BCSE	\$495
NAVLE	\$1155
PSA	\$1150
CPE	\$8,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,100</b>

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All fee information can be located [here](#).

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#### ECFVG TRANSFER

The AVMA administers the Education Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG), which offers parallel examinations as the Traditional NEB Route. Those who complete examinations through the ECFVG are able to transfer scores to be accepted for licensure in Manitoba.

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#### 4TH YEAR CLINICAL PROGRAM/PAVE

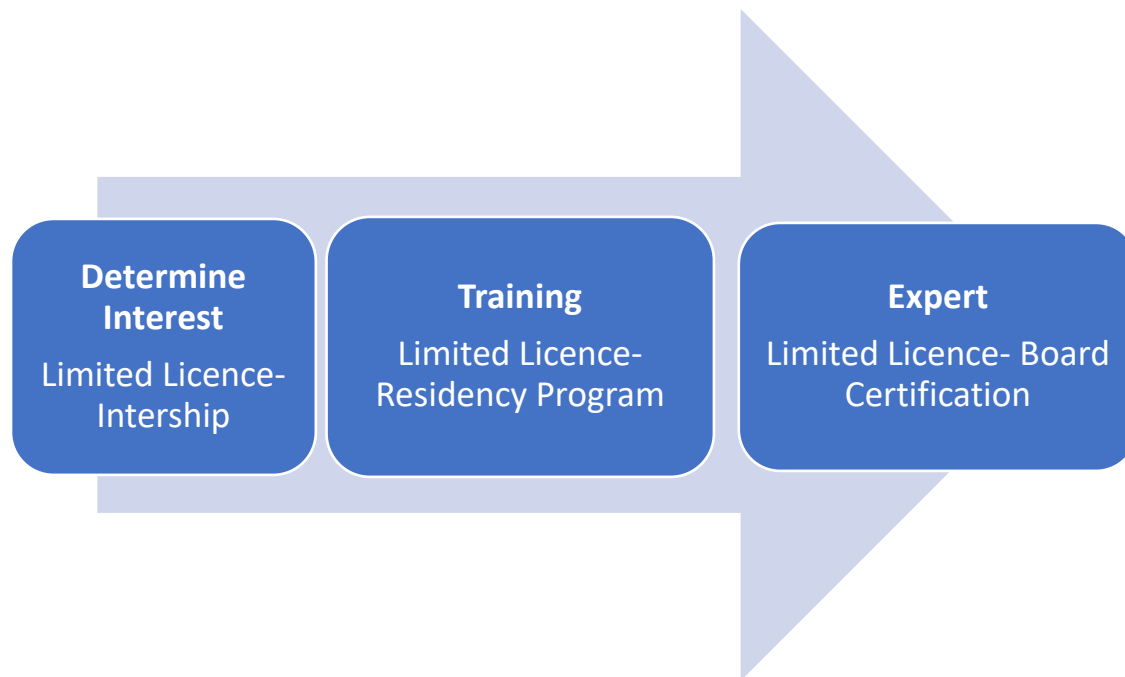
This pathway allows applicants to obtain an unrestricted license following:

- 1) Successful completion of the BCSE
- 2) Successful completion of a clinical 4<sup>th</sup> year of study at a CVMA/AVMA accredited program
- 3) Successful completion of the NAVLE

Those completing the clinical 4<sup>th</sup> year at a CVMA/AVMA accredited program are eligible for a student membership with MVMA, allowing them to practice under the supervision of a Practising Veterinarian Member.

#### VETERINARIAN GRADUATES OF PROGRAMS NOT ACCREDITED BY THE CMVA/AVMA - LIMITED LICENCE

In addition to pathways for full licences, the MVMA is also committed to exploring limited licensure, ensuring that the MVMA can safely licence veterinarians in limited areas of practice. The MVMA has adopted three limited licences related to the Board Certification through the American Board of Veterinary Specialties ([ABVS](#)).



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#### EXPERT: LIMITED LICENCE - BOARD CERTIFICATION

In this pathway, a veterinarian who is a graduate of a program not accredited by the CVMA or AVMA that is board certified by, or a diplomate of, a veterinary specialty organization that the ABVS recognizes, or equivalent, is eligible to obtain a limited licence in Manitoba.

**Scope of Practice:** limited to the board certification

**Supervision Requirement:** none

**Time Limitation:** none

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#### TRAINING: LIMITED LICENCE - RESIDENCY PROGRAM

In this pathway, a veterinarian who is a graduate of a program not accredited by the CVMA or AVMA that is enrolled in a residency program of a veterinary specialty organization that is recognized by the ABVS or equivalent is eligible to obtain a limited licence in Manitoba. Once the veterinarian obtains board certification, they are eligible for a Board Certification Limited Licence.

**Scope of Practice:** limited to the board certification program

**Supervision Requirement:** Supervision of a Practicing Veterinarian Member

**Time Limitation:** duration of the board-certification program plus an additional 12 months to allow for completion of board examinations

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#### DETERMINE INTEREST: LIMITED LICENCE - INTERNSHIP

Internships are opportunities for non-board-certified veterinarians to get experience and less formal training from a board-certified veterinarian. Internships can allow general practitioners to better understand specialist practice before undertaking a formal residency program (required for board certification). It is also an opportunity for those foreign to Canada to understand the Canadian practice of veterinary medicine better.

**Scope of Practice:** limited to board certification of supervising veterinarian

**Supervision Requirement:** Supervision by Board Certified veterinarian

**Time Limitation:** 12 month maximum

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#### MANITOBA RESIDENTS PURSUING VETERINARIAN TRAINING

Manitoba residents have two pathways to pursue veterinarian training:

##### 1) Attend the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM)

Under the Interprovincial Agreement (IPA), Manitoba residents attend the WCVM, where there are 20 seats available to Manitoba residents; five seats are allocated explicitly for those planning their careers in agriculture/food production and veterinary medicine.

Under the IPA, students pay \$15,242 per year in tuition and fees.

## 2) Attend an educational program outside of Canada

There are no other seats in Canada at universities other than the WCVM for Manitoban students.

For a Manitoban to go to the nearest school outside of Canada, they would need to attend the University of Minnesota. As a non-resident, they would pay \$62,122 USD per year in tuition and fees.

There are no student loans or bursaries through the government for students wanting to pursue veterinary school outside of Canada.

## 5. BECOMING A REGISTERED VETERINARY TECHNOLOGIST IN MANITOBA

Becoming a Registered Veterinary Technologist (RVT) in Manitoba is a direct process for those who complete an accredited program, offering a rewarding career in veterinary medicine. Graduates from unaccredited programs have a pathway to qualification through PAVE, ensuring all competent professionals can achieve registration.

### ACCREDITED PROGRAMS

In Manitoba, we have two options for RVT educational programs accredited by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) or the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

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#### OPTION 1: RED RIVER COLLEGE POLYTECHNIC (RRCP)

**Prerequisite:** High school diploma

**Program Length:** 2 years

**Program Fees:** \$6,140 per year

As the MVMA understands, RCCP currently enrolls 30 students annually and typically graduates 20-25 students annually. RCCP is not concerned about the attrition rate and cannot expand the program. The waitlist has continued to have a steady wait time as this is the only program in Manitoba. Some clinics, desperate for RVT staff, have opted to enroll clinical staff in online programs. There are reported delays with these programs as well.

Recent Enrollment Statistics as Of January 2, 2024:

- **Class of 2023:** 17 students graduated.
- **Class of 2024:** 24 students progressed to their second year.

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#### OPTION 2: DISTANCE RVT PROGRAMS

**Ideal For:** Those in rural areas or individuals working in veterinary practices who wish to pursue their education while continuing employment.

**Program Length and Fees:** Varies by program, with an average total cost of around \$18,915.



## Key Features:

There are ten programs offered in the [United States](#) and three in [Canada](#). Employment at a supportive clinic is required, as it must provide mentorship and hands-on technical training.

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### ADDITIONAL VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS

A private educational institution has expressed interest in introducing a Veterinary Technology program. The MVMA is steadfast in its support for an additional program and has offered help to advertise for sessional instructors as well as make connections between the institution and clinics that would need to provide clinical experience. While we have supported the institution to the best of our ability in this endeavour, it does not appear it will come to fruition.

### PATHWAY FOR GRADUATES FROM UNACCREDITED PROGRAMS

For those who have graduated from international, non-accredited veterinary technology programs, there is a pathway to practice in Manitoba through the Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE) for Veterinary Technicians. This program evaluates the equivalency of international education against the standards required in Manitoba. Any identified gaps in the educational background of the applicant can be addressed by taking specific courses at a [CVMA/AVMA accredited program](#).

## 6. THE VETERINARY SECTOR'S ECONOMIC IMPACT IN MANITOBA

According to [The Economic Impacts of Veterinary Medicine in Canada](#) report, the veterinary sector in Manitoba is expected to output \$478.6 million, create 2,120 FTE positions, and pay over \$26.9 million in provincial tax per year.<sup>5</sup>

Across Canada, including Manitoba, there's an increasing demand for veterinary services, but the supply isn't rising to meet this demand. This shortage can be attributed to several factors, such as challenges in training, recruitment, retention, and retirement. Specifically, the report highlights a significant gap in veterinary care access, particularly affecting rural and remote areas. This shortage impacts the quality of care for companion animals, the services available to livestock producers in rural areas, and the ability of veterinarians to provide emergency care.

The report discusses the challenges in recruiting and retaining veterinarians in rural settings, which is particularly relevant for Manitoba's vast rural areas. These challenges include long travel distances for veterinarians, increased on-call duties, and unsustainable workloads due to the limited number of professionals available. This situation hampers preventative work and early diagnosis among large animals and could negatively impact the agricultural economy.

The report indicates that Manitoba could earn additional GDP by expanding its veterinary sector, particularly in the context of large animal veterinary care. It highlights the economic impact of increasing

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<sup>5</sup> The Economic Impacts of Veterinary Medicine in Canada, page 21

access to large animal veterinary care due to the current shortage of veterinary supply to meet demand, especially in rural and remote areas. This shortage can hinder the growth of producers' operations, affecting the economy.

To illustrate the potential economic benefits of expanding large animal veterinary care, the report estimates the economic impact for an average-sized herd/flock by type of animal. For instance:

- An additional 500 dairy cows could contribute \$5.8 million in total output, \$2.6 million in total GDP, and \$0.6 million in total tax revenues annually.
- An additional 250 beef cows could contribute \$0.68 million in total output, \$0.30 million in total GDP, and \$0.07 million in total tax revenues annually.
- An additional 50000 head of poultry could contribute \$3.6 million in total output, \$1.6 million in total GDP, and \$0.38 million in total tax revenues annually.
- An additional 250 pigs could contribute \$0.22 million in total output, \$0.1 million in total GDP, and \$0.02 million in total tax revenues annually.
- An additional 150 sheep and lambs could contribute \$0.075 million in total output, \$0.033 million in total GDP, and \$0.008 million in total tax revenues annually.<sup>6</sup>

## 7. CURRENT CHALLENGES IN VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL AVAILABILITY IN MANITOBA

Manitoba currently faces a significant shortage of veterinarians and Registered Veterinary Technologists (RVTs) in the province. As of December 31, 2023, there are 432 veterinarians presently practicing in Manitoba and 447 veterinary technologists. Based on a recent workforce survey, at least 68.2 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) veterinarian positions and 79.75 FTE RVT positions remain unfilled and are needed to meet the current demand in the private clinic practice sector alone. The MVMA asserts that the shortage of veterinary professionals is at crisis levels and that immediate action is required to ensure that Manitobans and their animals have reasonable access to veterinary care.

Veterinary professionals are involved in livestock health, animal population control, detection and education regarding zoonotic disease, companion animal health, prudent antibiotic use, detection of emerging diseases, animal welfare, One Health initiatives, government services, laboratory research and diagnostic services. The shortages in veterinary care pose risks to animals, the economy, and the public at large.

### RECENT DATA ON VETERINARY PROFESSIONALS' SHORTAGE

#### 2020 CVMA WORKFORCE STUDY

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) published the [2020 CVMA Workforce Study](#) just prior to the current pandemic (Appendix B). The 2020 CVMA Workforce Study speaks to the shortage from largely a national level and provides Manitoba-specific data as well. While this data is now a few

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<sup>6</sup> The Economic Impacts of Veterinary Medicine in Canada, page 35

years old, both the national and province-specific data help quantify expected shortages in the long term and help identify issues surrounding shortages generally.

The 2020 CVMA Workforce Study identified the following three forces as the main contributors to the shortage of veterinarians throughout Canada (with the exception of PEI).

- *Population growth has exceeded the rate at which new veterinarians join the workforce*
- *Increased willingness to medicalize and spend on pets, creates additional demand*
- *Historically high retirement rates amongst large baby boomer cohort, accelerated by the opportunity to sell clinics to corporates<sup>7</sup>*

Indeed, the 2020 CVMA Workforce Study found that while 4.5 million dogs were medicalized (see a veterinarian at least annually) in 2007, by 2020, this number had jumped to 7.1 million dogs.<sup>8</sup>

In terms of projecting the future demand for veterinary services, the 2020 CVMA Workforce Study found that household formation, disposable income, and the cost of veterinary services are the main factors.<sup>9</sup> Household formation in Canada is growing at a higher rate than all other G7 countries.<sup>10</sup> Further, the growth in disposable income is also the highest among G7 countries.<sup>11</sup> In terms of the cost of veterinary services, normal market principles are problematic. Services provided by veterinarians are largely focused on animal welfare; reducing demand for veterinary services by increasing cost would have the effect of reducing access to care for animals in need.

Acknowledging the current and ongoing shortage of veterinarians, the Government of Alberta has drastically increased its funding of the University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM). The Government of Alberta has committed an additional \$8.4 million annually to increase enrollment at UCVM and an additional \$58.5 million capital investment to the UCVM to double its annual enrollment.<sup>12</sup> Further, the government of British Columbia has committed to investing an additional \$1.7 million to add 20 subsidized seats at the WCVU.<sup>13</sup>

The MVMA submits that additional investments are required in Manitoba to reduce the shortage of veterinarians in the province.

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<sup>7</sup> 2020 CVMA Workforce Study, page 24

<sup>8</sup> 2020 CVMA Workforce Study, page 40

<sup>9</sup> 2020 CVMA Workforce Study, page 17

<sup>10</sup> 2020 CVMA Workforce Study, page 38

<sup>11</sup> 2020 CVMA Workforce Study, page 39

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.ucalgary.ca/news/vet-med-ucalgary-receive-nearly-67m-double-its-enrolment> accessed May 26, 2022

<sup>13</sup> <https://news.usask.ca/articles/colleges/2022/province-of-b.c.-doubles-student-seats-in-veterinary-medicine-program-at-usask.php> accessed May 26, 2022

2021/2022 MVMA WORKFORCE STUDY

The MVMA administered a workforce survey from November 29, 2021- to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. In the survey, each registered private practice in Manitoba was asked about the practice’s current staffing levels and the extent of any staffing shortages in the practice (if any).

Specifically, registered private practices were asked how many Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) veterinarians are currently at the practice as well as how many additional FTEs veterinarians are needed (if any) to meet the current demand at the practice. FTE was defined as 40 hours of work per week.

At the time the workforce survey was launched, there were 144 private practices in the study (two closed during the reporting period and were removed from the data). Of the 142 private practices currently in Manitoba, 99 private practices reported data.

The data obtained in the workforce survey is found in Figure 10 and Figure 11.

		Number of Private Practices	Current FTE Positions	Reported FTE Positions Needed	Current FTE Average per Practice	Average FTE Need per Practice	Standard Deviation FTE Need per Practice
Winnipeg	Small Animal Only	41	112.7	29.2	2.8	0.7	1
	Mixed/ Large Practice	7	21.95	4	2.9	0.57	0.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>134.65</b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>1</b>
Rural*	Small Animal Only	15	30	11.5	2.1	0.8	0.9
	Mixed/ Large Practice	36	51.6	23.5	1.4	0.7	0.76
	<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>81.6</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>216.25</b>	<b>68.2</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.89</b>	

Figure 10

\*Rural indicates that the practice is not located within 30km of Winnipeg.

SHORTAGE OF VETERINARIANS IN MANITOBA

When looking at Manitoba as a whole, the average practice has a workforce of 2.2 FTE veterinarians and currently needs .7 FTE veterinarians to meet the current demand at the practice. When looking at the bigger picture, there are at least 68 FTE veterinarian positions that need to be filled in Manitoba to meet current demand in private practice alone. Further extrapolating the shortage to include the 43 practices that did not participate in the survey is somewhat moot. However, it emphasizes that the 68 FTE veterinarian positions are the minimum additional workforce of veterinarians needed to meet the current demand for private practice veterinary medicine in Manitoba.

To gain a better understanding of how shortage is felt across Manitoba and across patient bases, the data has been segregated by practice location (Winnipeg vs rural) and by practice type (small animal only vs mixed/large animal practice).

Generally speaking, both Winnipeg and rural practices report experiencing a drastic shortage in the veterinarian workforce—an average of .7 FTE veterinarians per practice. When looking at the average size of each practice, though, rural practices experience a higher degree of shortage; rural practices report an average need of .7 FTE veterinarian workforce per 1.4 current FTE veterinarian workforce (50% workforce increase), whereas Winnipeg practices report an average need of .7 FTE veterinarian workforce per 2.8 current FTE veterinarian workforce (25% workforce increase).

In addition to the workforce survey, the 2020 CVMA Workforce Study identified that the growth of veterinarians in Manitoba is slower than in other Canadian jurisdictions.<sup>14</sup>

#### SHORTAGE OF REGISTERED VETERINARY TECHNOLOGISTS IN MANITOBA

		Number of Private Practices	Current FTE Positions	Reported FTE Positions Needed
Winnipeg	Small Animal Only	41	158.35	37.75
	Mixed/Large Animal	7	27.9	3.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>186.25</b>	<b>41</b>
Rural*	Small Animal Only	15	31.85	13.25
	Mixed/Large Animal	36	37.4	25.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>69.25</b>	<b>38.75</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>99</b>	<b>255.5</b>	<b>79.75</b>

Figure 11

*\*Rural indicates that the practice is not located within 30km of Winnipeg*

The 79.75 current reported FTE RVT positions that need to be filled to meet the current demand only encapsulate the needs of the reporting 99 private practices. In addition to the 48 private practices that did not provide shortage data, RVTs are also engaged in work in other sectors, including government (federal and provincial), industry, academia, etc., all of which have reported shortages.

#### IMPACT OF VETERINARY SHORTAGE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, ANIMAL WELFARE, AND MANITOBA'S ECONOMY

The MVMA submits that the current and projected long-term shortage of veterinary care in Manitoba poses many risks to the public.

First and foremost, a shortage of veterinarians and RVTs leads to delayed and reduced access to care for Manitobans and their animals. This is already evident in Manitoba through the increase in practices that

<sup>14</sup> 2020 CVMA Workforce Study, page 22

are not able to accommodate new clients and the increase in wait times for those looking to access veterinary care.

The MVMA is also concerned as shortages of veterinary professionals tend to disproportionately affect rural and other under-served areas. This is already evident as there are Veterinary Service District veterinary clinics that are sitting vacant due to a lack of ability to recruit and retain veterinarians and RVTs to provide service through these clinics. Each Veterinary Service District veterinary clinic that sits unoccupied represents a district that has reduced access to care. This is detrimental to both large and small animal owners in the area.

The risks associated with the shortage are vast and include the effects of the shortage on government veterinarian positions, industry positions, and educational and research positions. Risks can range from failure to monitor and control contagious and infectious diseases, to failure to address animal welfare concerns, to impacts on industries' ability to ensure healthy, sustainable herds.<sup>15</sup>

One of the focuses that CVMA has leaned on at the federal level is the economic impact of veterinarians on Canadian (and, in this case, Manitoba) GDP. The health of the food stock herd is critically reliant on veterinarians as the keystone in the arch between farm and table. For a province like Manitoba with a large food stock herd (cattle, pork, dairy, poultry), the CVMA studies have shown that Manitoba is not meeting the industry needs, and thus, Manitoba is losing GDP and missing out on potential growth in trade opportunities.

Lastly, the MVMA submits that there is a risk to veterinarians and RVTs as the shortage in Manitoba continues. These risks include increased stress on veterinary professionals as they try to meet the demand for services by the public, the risk of burnout for those who are overworked for extended periods of time, and the risk that veterinarians and RVTs will leave the profession early due to the additional stress. These risks would all lead to a reduction of the work output of veterinary care providers and further exacerbate the workforce shortage.

## 8. PAST AND CURRENT MVMA PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE IN MANITOBA

### REGULATORY REFORM

The MVMA has continued to make strides in regulatory reform to better attract veterinarians from outside of Canada. Of note, at the 2023 AGM, the membership voted to create three new limited licence categories for graduates of unaccredited programs. These new pathways are in addition to the multiple pathways available to international graduates through the National Examining Board. The following year, at the 2024 AGM, the membership voted to expand the RVT Scope of Practice and implement the Limited Access Vaccinator Program.

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<sup>15</sup> The Economic Impacts of Veterinary Medicine in Canada, page 22

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## LIMITED LICENCE- BOARD CERTIFICATION

This licence is available for those who are board-certified through the AVMA American Board of Veterinary Specialties (ABVS) or equivalent. These persons are eligible for a limited licence where they are able to practice in an unsupervised capacity. Their licence is limited to their area of Board Certification and does not have a time limit.

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## LIMITED LICENCE- BOARD CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

This licence is available for those *who are in a residency program recognized by the AVMA American Board of Veterinary Specialties (ABVS) or equivalent*. These persons are eligible for a limited licence where they are able to practice under the supervision of a licensed member. Their licence is limited to their area of Board Certification program and lasts for the duration of their program.

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## LIMITED LICENCE- INTERNSHIP

This licence is available for those *who are in an internship and supervised by a board-certified veterinarian*. These persons are eligible for a limited licence where they are able to practice under the supervision of a licensed member. Their licence is limited to *the* area of Board Certification of their supervisor. This limited licence is *time-limited* to one year.

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## EXPANSION OF RVT SCOPE OF PRACTICE

The MVMA has expanded the RVT scope of practice to allow RVTs to provide care in areas previously restricted to veterinarians. This includes practices like administering rabies vaccine under indirect supervision. This allows RVTs to be better utilized to provide services in line with their training and expertise while allowing veterinarians to focus on service that requires their level of expertise and training. The RVT Scope of Practice, Retention and Career Advancement Committee has been investigating areas for further scope expansion, with movement expected at the 2024 AGM.

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## LIMITED ACCESS VACCINATOR PROGRAM

The MVMA has been working diligently with the Department of Agriculture and the Winnipeg Humane Society to develop a Limited Access Vaccinator Program. This program allows veterinarians to train and supervise community members in First Nations and remote areas to administer rabies and other vaccines to companion animals. This program was approved at the 2024 AGM, and deployment is scheduled for June 1, 2024. This program will provide access to basic veterinary care in areas where access is limited or non-existent.

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## WCVM STUDENT RELATIONS

Since 2019, the MVMA has invested heavily in its relationships with WCVM students. While ultimately, the MVMA cannot control whether a Manitoba-funded WCVM graduate chooses to practice in Manitoba, the MVMA believes it plays a vital role in ensuring that WCVM students remain connected to the veterinary community in Manitoba.

The actions taken by the MVMA to improve connections between WCVM students and the veterinary community in Manitoba include:

- Funding student participation at MVMA events, including the annual Membership Engagement Day (previously the CenCan Veterinary Conference), annual WCVM Student and MVMA Council Meet and Greet, annual summer student get-together, and annual WCVM student information sessions. The goal of these initiatives is to introduce and engage veterinary students to the careers and lifestyles offered to them in Manitoba. These events provide an opportunity for the MVMA, Manitoba government, CFIA and practicing veterinarians in Manitoba to showcase the province and opportunities for students following graduation, as well as provide students with professional connections to the province.
- Maintaining the MVMA-developed [DVM Student Practice and Job Opportunities](#) online resource. This resource provides an easy-to-use map of all practices in Manitoba that are offering students practice opportunities. The practices provide detailed information about their practice, the opportunities they offer, and clear contact information for follow-up.
- Maintaining the MVMA-developed Student Advertising online resource. This resource allows WCVM students to provide information to the MVMA membership about what types of practice and/or job opportunities they are looking for, as well as personal contact information.
- Supporting the WCVM Manitoba Student Group. This initiative was started in 2021 and provides the WCVM Manitoba Student Group with funding to meet to discuss Manitoba issues.
- Helping to increase the number of externships and rotations being hosted in Manitoba. This includes continuing to provide information to Manitoba veterinarians about the opportunity to host externships and rotations in Manitoba and serving as a liaison between Manitoba veterinarians and the WCVM. The MVMA will discuss developing an externship program collaboratively with the Manitoba government, WCVM and practicing veterinarians in Manitoba.
- Developing alternative strategies to address the shortage of veterinarians in Manitoba, including continuing to support the Veterinary Technologist Scope of Practice, Retention, and Career Advancement Committee.
- Collaborating with other Canadian veterinary associations to develop alternative strategies to address the shortage of veterinarians in Canada.
- Adopting an alternative pathway for graduates of programs not accredited by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association or American Veterinary Medical Association to obtain registration and licensure in Manitoba.
- Working with the WCVM and Manitoba government to improve the recruitment and retention of veterinarians in Manitoba.

While the MVMA has made improvements since 2019, it is committed to engaging in further retention efforts. The MVMA has finalized a DVM Student Engagement plan, which formalizes and expands the ongoing communication and engagement commitments that the MVMA has made to WCVM DVM students. The MVMA is hoping that ongoing retention plans can include the Manitoba government to create a stronger relationship between WCVM students, the MVMA and the Manitoba government.



## 9. MVMA PROPOSALS

### PROPOSAL FOR INCENTIVES TO RETAIN DVM GRADUATES IN MANITOBA

#### Obstacle: Low Retention Rate of Manitoba Veterinary Students

Manitoba currently faces a significant challenge in retaining Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) graduates. Unlike neighbouring jurisdictions such as Saskatchewan, Alberta, Ontario, and certain areas in the USA, Manitoba does not offer incentives for veterinary graduates to practice within the province after graduation. This lack of incentives is leading to a brain drain, with graduates opting for regions that provide financial and professional support.

#### Comparative Analysis

Location	Amount	Program Details
<b>Saskatchewan</b> <a href="#">The Saskatchewan Student Loan Forgiveness Program for Veterinarians and Veterinary Technologists</a>	20% of Saskatchewan Student Loan debt (up to \$4,000 annually, for up to five years, to a maximum of \$20,000)	Offers loan forgiveness for veterinarians and RVTs who work in rural or remote areas.
<b>Alberta</b> <a href="#">Northern Alberta Development Bursary program – Veterinary Student Bursary</a>	Option 1: \$7,000 per year Option 2: \$14,000 per year (half paid by bursary, half by sponsor)	Offers a bursary to incentivize Alberta DVM students to work in northern Alberta post-graduation.
<b>Ontario</b> <a href="#">Veterinary Incentive Program</a>	\$50,000 over five years	New veterinarian graduates will be eligible to receive grants for working in underserved areas and treating large animals.
<b>United States of America</b> <a href="#">The Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program</a>	\$25,000 (USD) per year, up to three years	A federal veterinary medicine loan repayment program, targeting veterinarians who serve in high-need areas.

#### Proposed Solution: Provide Incentives to Retain DVM Graduates in Manitoba

To address this issue, the following incentive programs are proposed:

- Retention Grant Program
- Return for Service Grant
- Loan Repayment Assistance/Forgiveness Program

Implementing these incentive programs in Manitoba will not only encourage DVM graduates to return and practice within the province but will also help address the shortage of veterinary professionals,

especially in rural and remote areas. This initiative will align Manitoba competitively with neighbouring jurisdictions and make it a more attractive option for veterinary professionals.

## PROPOSAL FOR INCREASING RVT GRADUATES IN MANITOBA

### **Obstacle: RVT Shortage in Manitoba**

As previously mentioned, there are at least 79.75 FTE RVT positions that remain vacant and are needed to meet the current demand in the private clinic sector alone. However, the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association commissioned a [Veterinary Professional Workforce Project](#), published in April 2021. In their study, they found that most practices had a 1:1 ratio of veterinarians to RVTs, while the optimum ratio is one veterinarian to every two RVTs (1:2).<sup>16</sup> We believe that practice conditions in Manitoba are materially the same and would work best with a 1:2 ratio. The MVMA currently has 447 licensed veterinarians, meaning that we believe we would need a substantial increase in RVTs to operate efficiently. While this number may seem high, it is somewhat clear that funding for veterinarian training will not meet current or projected demand, and thus, reliance on RVTs will increase over time.

As we attempt to fill the almost 80 FTE RVT positions, with the long-term goal of reaching a 2:1 RVT to veterinarian ratio, we propose the following solutions for consideration:

### **Proposed Solution #1: Create A Second RVT Program in Manitoba**

Historically, there have been discussions about establishing an RVT program at Assiniboine Community College in Brandon. This would directly impact the shortage of RVTs in rural areas.

### **Proposed Solution #2: Provide Funding for Manitobans Who Pursue Online RVT Programs**

These individuals often are already employed within the veterinary medicine community and continue to work in clinics as they complete their studies. This is often a large undertaking for the practices as they assume the responsibility for hands-on learning. Funding for these seats should be considered with a benefit for these clinics as well.

### **Proposed Solution #3: Increase RVT Graduates Of RRCP**

This proposal is two-fold: first, increase the number of seats at the college; second, improve the RVT graduation rate.

The MVMA is happy to explore these options further with the Manitoba Government by providing supporting data and insights on the most impactful, sustainable way forward.

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<sup>16</sup> 2021 ABVMA Veterinary Professional Workforce Study, page 3

**Obstacle: Limitations on Testing Foreign-Trained Veterinarians**

The Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM) at the University of Saskatchewan plays a pivotal role in addressing Canada's national shortage of veterinarians, a situation exacerbated by increased pet ownership during the COVID-19 pandemic and a growing need in areas such as food animal practice and regulatory veterinary medicine.

However, a significant number of internationally trained veterinarians are awaiting licensure to practice in Canada. To qualify, they must pass a Clinical Proficiency Examination (CPE) assessing their clinical skills across various veterinary competencies. In 2023, as of October 13, Canada has had 1180 new applicants who will need to complete the CPE in the next three to five years to attain their licence. This is up from 498 in 2022 and 266 in 2020. This is a massive opportunity to address our veterinary shortage.

Currently, the WCVM is Canada's only English-language site for this four-day CPE but faces limitations in space and resources, restricting exam enrollment and frequency.

**Update on BCSE, NAVLE, PSA & CPE (as of October 13, 2023)**

**New Applicants**

New Applicants	International Non-accredited	International Accredited (includes US)	US (also included in previous column)	TOTAL	Variation % to previous year
2023	1180	198	30	1,378	
2022	498	194	17	692	+1.3%
2021	488	195	30	683	+44%
2020	266	208	25	474	+17%
2019	254	135	27	406	+7%
2018	211	168	28	379	+22%
2017	155	155	28	310	+20%
2016	137	121	NA	258	
2015	165	114	15	279	
2014	171	76	17	247	

**Proposed Solution: Support The Establishment of a National CPE Testing Site**

The MVMA strongly supports the WCVM proposal for the establishment of a dedicated national CPE testing center. This center aims to significantly increase the number of qualified veterinarians entering the profession each year by tripling the current capacity of 55. The center will include multiple stations for medical examination assessment, a multi-user surgical suite, a veterinary pathology suite, medical imaging facilities, anesthesia induction and recovery areas, and live animal housing. By expanding the testing capacity, the center will expedite the licensing of internationally trained veterinarians, thereby addressing the immediate need for more professionals in the field.

The MVMA views this expansion as a strategic solution for the province. Manitoba can leverage the existing relationship and infrastructure synergy of the WCVM to support the veterinary medicine community. Partnering with the federal government and western provinces could be an opportunity for Manitoba to see an influx of foreign-trained veterinarians without solely shouldering the costs associated with implementing this beneficial program.

## PROPOSAL FOR REDUCING BARRIERS FOR FOREIGN-TRAINED VETERINARIANS

### **Obstacle: Lengthy, Complicated, and Costly Barriers for Foreign-Trained Veterinarians**

Manitoba faces an acute shortage of veterinarians, which negatively impacts animal healthcare and the agricultural sector. Foreign-trained veterinarians could significantly mitigate this shortage, yet they encounter formidable barriers, including the complex and prohibitive LMIA process required for work permit approval. The LMIA process is time-consuming and costly, deterring employers from hiring foreign-trained professionals.

### **Proposed Solution #1: Engagement with the Federal Government on LMIA Requirement**

Advocate to the federal government for the removal of the LMIA requirement for veterinarians. This step recognizes the critical need for veterinarians in Manitoba and the specialized nature of their profession, which should not be hindered by the standard LMIA process. The removal of the LMIA requirement would expedite the hiring process for foreign-trained veterinarians, making it easier for Manitoba to address its veterinary shortage.

### **Proposed Solution #2: Streamlined Work Permit Pathway**

Develop a more straightforward process for foreign-trained veterinarians to obtain work permits, including simplified credential recognition and visa application processes. This initiative should be pursued in tandem with LMIA removal efforts to ensure a holistic approach to facilitating the employment of foreign-trained veterinarians in Manitoba.

### **Proposal #3: Financial Support for Employers**

Implement grants or tax incentives for businesses that want to sponsor foreign-trained veterinarians. This financial support would help mitigate the costs associated with the immigration process, encouraging more employers to take advantage of this pathway.

Facilitating the immigration of foreign-trained veterinarians directly addresses Manitoba's veterinary shortage, improving animal healthcare and supporting the agricultural sector. Simplifying the immigration process promotes economic growth within the veterinary sector and contributes to Manitoba's overall prosperity. Encouraging the integration of veterinarians from diverse backgrounds fosters innovation in veterinary practices and enhances the quality of animal healthcare in Manitoba.

By advocating for the removal of the LMIA requirement and implementing supportive measures for employers, Manitoba can significantly enhance its veterinary sector and overall economic health. These

steps will facilitate the province's ability to attract and retain highly skilled veterinary professionals, ultimately benefiting Manitoba's agricultural industry, pet owners, and animal welfare.

## PROPOSAL FOR MANITOBA WORKFORCE STUDY

### **Obstacle: Lack of Manitoba-Specific Workforce Data**

One of the primary challenges we are facing is the absence of Manitoba-specific data regarding our workforce shortage, both current and future projections. While we have access to national studies, such as the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) workforce study, and regional studies from other provinces like the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association (ABVMA) workforce study ([https://www.abvma.ca/document/5523/ABVMA\\_ABVTA\\_Vet\\_Professional\\_Workforce\\_Study\\_Final\\_2021r.pdf](https://www.abvma.ca/document/5523/ABVMA_ABVTA_Vet_Professional_Workforce_Study_Final_2021r.pdf)), we lack detailed, province-specific insights. This gap in data prevents us from understanding the specific needs of our veterinary workforce in Manitoba, including areas where support is most critically needed.

Solely as an example, and not a fulsome list of how Manitoba differs from other studied jurisdictions, is bovine herd populations. As we understand from our membership, most Manitoba veterinarians see cattle from much smaller herds than Alberta's. This simple difference drastically changes how service delivery can be optimized.

### **Proposed Solution: Manitoba-Specific Workforce Study**

To address this, we propose conducting a comprehensive workforce study similar to the one undertaken by ABVMA. This study would provide clear, actionable data on where our veterinary workforce requires support, enabling targeted interventions to address these needs. This type of study would also provide all stakeholders with a better sense of future veterinary service needs and how many professionals we would need to train/internationally recruit to meet this need. The estimated cost for undertaking such a study ranges from \$70,000 to \$100,000. This investment would lay the foundation for informed decision-making and strategic planning to bolster the veterinary profession in our province.

We respectfully request government funding to support this initiative. The total funding needed ranges from \$80,000 to \$110,000 for the workforce study. We believe with this investment we can obtain a report similar in quality and depth as the Alberta study referenced above.

## PROPOSAL FOR MANITOBA VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### **Obstacle: Challenges in Workforce Transformation**

As a small organization, the MVMA faces significant hurdles in driving the workforce transformation needed to address current and future challenges. The complexity of implementing strategic changes in workforce planning, recruitment, retention, and professional development requires additional human resources.

**Proposed Solution: Hiring Expert Consultant(s)**

To overcome this obstacle, we propose hiring expert consultants to support the study, consultation, and implementation of workforce transformation special projects. These experts would bring the necessary knowledge and experience to guide our organization through the process of making meaningful, impactful changes. Their work would include the following special projects that make up the workforce transformation:

1. **RVT Retention** - Development of a pathway for RVTs to obtain additional training to expand the scope of practice.
2. **Veterinarian Client Patient Relationship (VCPR) Review** - Review of the VCPR requirements in Manitoba, including how VCPRs are created and maintained, the obligations of veterinarians in a VCPR and the role of RVTs in a VCPR. This includes a review of the use of telemedicine.
3. **Rural Access to Care** - Review of access to care in rural Manitoba with a focus on ensuring that Manitobans and their animals have access to appropriate veterinary services.

We respectfully request government funding to support the human resources needed to push forward the proposed workforce transformation projects in a timely and efficient manner. The MVMA estimates that the skill set required to successfully execute these projects would cost roughly \$150/hr. The MVMA will seek to set out an RFP if funding is extended. The prospective scope of each project is as follows:

<b>Project 1- RVT Retention</b>		
Development of a pathway for RVTs to obtain additional training to expand the scope of practice	Hrs	Cost
Research of current educational and scope models	60 hrs	\$9,000
Consultation with membership and other stakeholders on proposed models	15 hrs	\$2, 250
Draft report	30 hrs	\$4,500
Submit to Committee	5 hrs	\$750
Final Report including draft by-law	5 hrs	\$750
Education to membership	10 hrs	\$1,050
Total		\$18,750

<b>Project 2 - VCPR Review</b>	Hrs	Cost
Environmental scan of VCPR, telemedicine, after-hours care, emergency care, and obligations to clients	60 hrs	\$9,000
Consultation with membership and other stakeholders	15 hrs	\$2,250
Draft report	30 hrs	\$4,500
Submit to Committee	5 hrs	\$750
Final Report including draft by-law	5 hrs	\$750
Education to membership	10 hrs	\$1,050
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$18,750</b>

<b>Project 3 - Rural Access to Care</b>	Hrs	Cost
Research current Manitoba geography specific to food animals, companion animals, and veterinary clinics/veterinary professionals practice models that increase access to care in rural areas	60 hrs	\$9,000
Focus groups re: rural access to care (public and professionals)	30 hrs	\$4,500
Draft report	30 hrs	\$4,500
Submit to Committee	5 hrs	\$750
Final Report	5 hrs	\$750
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$19,500</b>

The MVMA requests that the government cover the consultant fees in their entirety, while the MVMA would cover the costs in kind related to project management, communications to membership, etc.

## 10. COLLABORATION WITH THE MANITOBA GOVERNMENT

The Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA) recognizes the critical importance of collaboration with government entities to address the ongoing challenges in Manitoba's veterinary sector. Effective collaboration will enhance the veterinary profession and significantly contribute to public and animal health in the province. The MVMA reiterates its primary requests to the government, which are essential for the sustainability and advancement of veterinary services in Manitoba.

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#### CREATE A VETERINARY INCENTIVE OR RETENTION PROGRAM FOR DVMS

- The MVMA proposes the establishment of a veterinary incentive or retention program for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) graduates.
- This program would provide financial and professional incentives for DVM graduates to practice in Manitoba, particularly in regions facing acute shortages.
- Such a program would align Manitoba with other provinces and regions that offer similar benefits, aiding in the retention of skilled veterinarians within the province.

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#### SUPPORT FOR EXPANDING THE RVT PROGRAM IN MANITOBA

- The MVMA requests government support for additional resources to increase the annual number of RVT graduates.
- Given the current demand for RVTs and the limitations of existing educational infrastructure, an increase in programming is essential to meet the growing needs of the veterinary sector.
- Government support in this area could include funding, resource allocation, and endorsement, enhancing the capacity to train more RVTs efficiently.

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#### PROVIDE FUNDING FOR THE WCVM EXPANSION

- The MVMA appeals for government funding to support the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM) expansion.
- This expansion includes the proposed national CPE Testing Center, which is critical for increasing the number of licensed veterinarians.
- Government funding would enable WCVM to enhance its educational and clinical capacities, directly benefiting Manitoba's veterinary community and animal health services.

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#### REDUCE BARRIERS FOR FOREIGN-TRAINED VETERINARIANS

- Advocate to the federal government for the removal of the LMIA.
- Develop a straightforward process for foreign-trained veterinarians to obtain work permits.
- Provide financial incentives for businesses that want to sponsor foreign-trained veterinarians.

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#### PROVIDE FUNDING FOR A MANITOBA WORKFORCE STUDY

- The MVMA appeals for government funding to conduct a Manitoba-specific workforce study.
- Given the lack of Manitoba-specific data on the veterinary workforce shortage, Manitoba requires a comprehensive study to understand the specific needs of the province's veterinary workforce.
- Such a study would provide precise, actionable data for targeted support and interventions and assist in strategic planning for future veterinary service needs and workforce training and development.



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#### PROVIDE FUNDING FOR WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION.

- The MVMA requests support in developing a workforce transformation that impacts RVT retention, VCPR requirements, and rural access to care.
- Due to limited resources available at the MVMA, expert consultants are needed to assist in the study, consultation, and implementation of special projects.
- The MVMA will issue a Request for Proposal if funding is secured to find the appropriate consultancy support for these initiatives.

Collaboration between the MVMA and Manitoba Government is indispensable for addressing the current challenges in Manitoba's veterinary sector. By supporting the initiatives above, the government can significantly contribute to the sustainability and growth of veterinary care, ensuring the well-being of animals and the public in Manitoba.