

March 27, 2025

Limited Licensure Competency Assessment Pathway Pilot Executive Summary

The Limited Licensure Competency Assessment Pathway (LLCAP) Pilot was initiated by the Canadian Council of Veterinary Registrars (CCVR) with generous funding support from the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association's Workforce Shortage Project. The LLCAP was developed to address the growing shortage of veterinarians across Canada. Traditional licensure pathways require broad competency across multiple species, which presents challenges for internationally educated veterinarians who are beyond entry level practitioners and have more focused experience.

The LLCAP was designed as an alternative pathway to assess internationally educated veterinarians with expertise in production animal, small companion animal, or equine practice and to provide them with an opportunity to apply for limited licensure based on demonstrated competence rather than through standardized national examinations.

The primary objective of the LLCAP pilot was to create and evaluate a competency-based assessment model that could be a sustainable and defensible alternative to existing licensing processes. The pathway consists of two key assessment components: a portfolio submission, where candidates provide evidence of their competencies, and a supervised practice assessment, in which candidates demonstrate their skills in a real-world veterinary setting under the guidance of a supervisor/assessor. The assessment framework was designed to be performance-based and aligned with the North American Essential Competency Profile for Veterinary Medicine (2022).

Over the course of the pilot, 22 candidates participated, with 17 successfully progressing to the supervised practice assessment phase. The portfolio submission process played a crucial role in identifying competency gaps and helping candidates understand the expectations of supervised practice. The supervised practice assessment phase provided valuable insights, most notably regarding candidates' clinical decision-making and adaptability within practice environments. Twelve candidates successfully completed the supervised practice assessment.

To enhance the pathway's effectiveness and feasibility for long-term implementation, the report outlines several recommendations. To maximize the psychometric defensibility of this assessment, specific design elements and decisions were incorporated. As a result of these decisions and as an outcome of the pilot, the pathway has been designed to be fit for purpose, fit for experienced professionals, fit for a non-standardized assessment, and fit to use the gathered evidence to make defensible inferences about the competence of candidates applying to the LLCAP.

Overall, the LLCAP pilot demonstrated the viability of a competency-based assessment model for limited veterinary licensure. The findings reinforce the appropriateness of performance-based evaluations in real-world settings while also identifying key areas for process refinement. Addressing identified challenges related to assessor objectivity, candidate preparedness, and assessment standardization will be critical to ensuring the pathway's success as it moves toward full-scale implementation.

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