

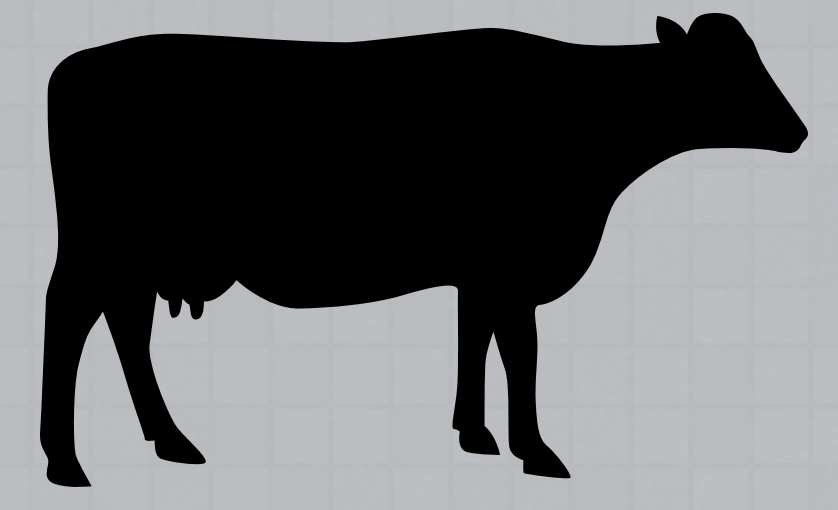
# Getting the Best Care for Your Animals

## What is the issue?

Across Canada, rural and remote communities have historically experienced challenges accessing veterinary services. Recently, these same challenges are occurring in more populated regions due to a significant veterinary workforce shortage, while the demand for veterinary services continues to grow. This has created challenges for some animal owners when seeking veterinary care. Providing veterinary services including after hours and emergency care requires veterinarians to find a balance between legislative requirements, professional ethics, client expectations and patient needs while also supporting the veterinary teams own health.

While the veterinary profession works to address the workforce shortage, this complex problem requires both short and long-term solutions and a coordinated approach involving many stakeholders.

## What can pet/livestock owners do?



Animal owners partner with their veterinarians to safeguard the health and welfare of their animal(s). Your role as an animal owner is an important one and makes a difference in preventing animal disease and illness.

During these challenging times when access to veterinary care may be delayed, the list below provides ways that you can help.

## Be Prepared

Talk to your veterinary healthcare team about how to keep your animal healthy to avoid emergency visits.

Thinking of getting a new pet or animal? Find a veterinarian by searching locally for veterinarians that will treat that species.

Understand the scope of services your veterinarian provides and how to access emergency care outside of regular business hours

## Plan Ahead

Routine wellness appointments like vaccines may take time to schedule, so book these appointments well in advance.

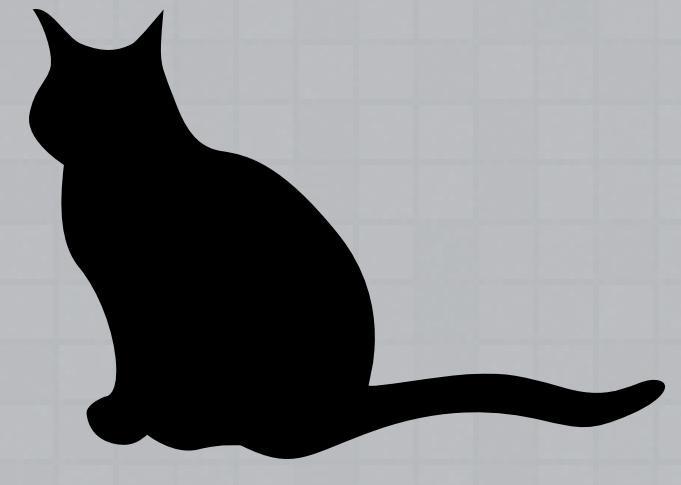
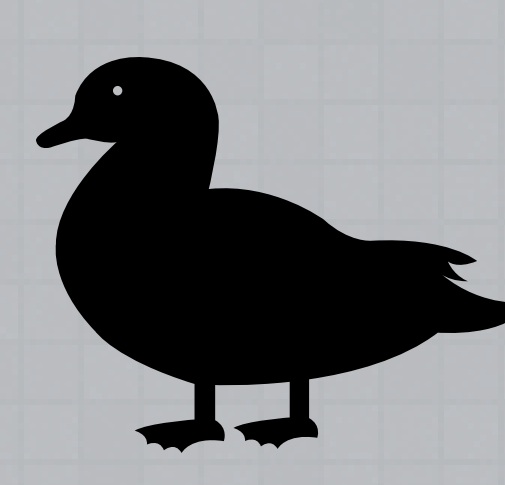
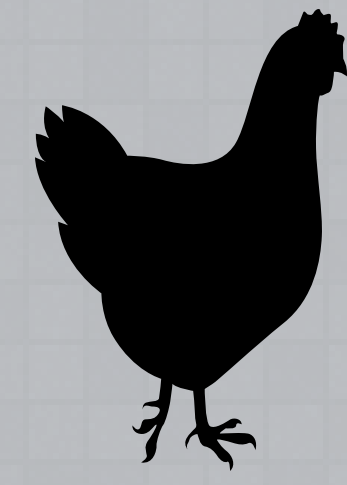
Be vigilant about your animal's health and contact your veterinary team when you see the first signs of a health problem.

## Be patient and kind

Your veterinary team is doing their best and need your understanding now more than ever. They want to be there when you need them the most.

Now is not the best time to transfer to a new veterinarian, unless it is unavoidable or in the best interest of the animal.

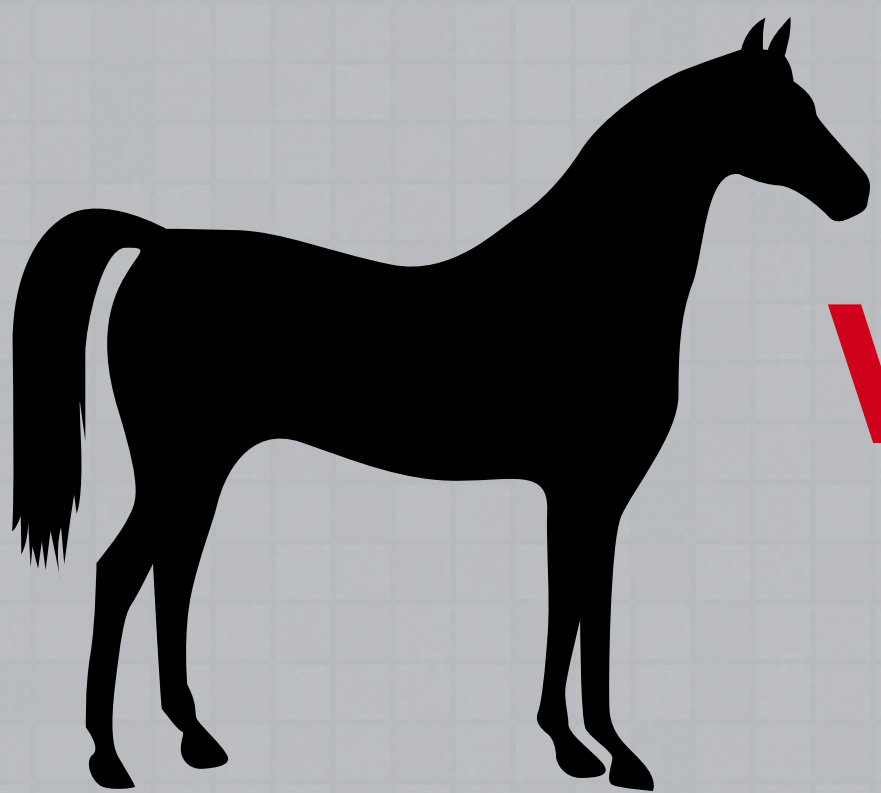
## Know your responsibilities as an animal owner



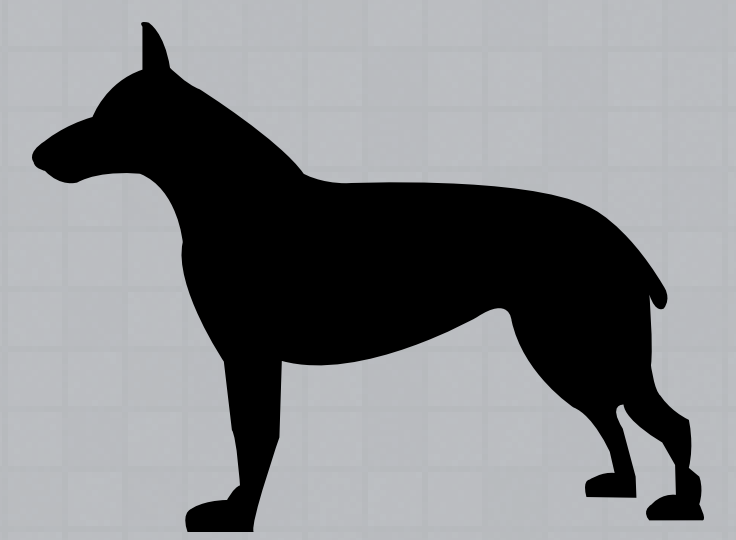
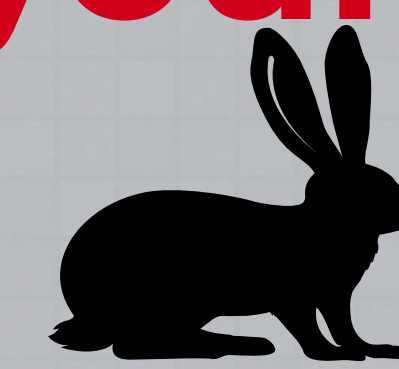
Animal ownership has long-term responsibilities. Decisions about owning an animal should consider obligations that accompany animal ownership, including veterinary care that will be needed throughout that animal's life.

By law, animal owners have duties of care to their animals, including laws about animal welfare, rabies immunization, and municipal bylaws for keeping animals.

Veterinary businesses provide private services that are paid for by insurance or out of pocket, they are not publicly funded. Ask your veterinarian for cost estimates and payment options prior to making decisions. There may be local resources available for individuals who require financial assistance to pay for veterinary care.



## What to expect from your Veterinary team



Veterinarians and their teams provide veterinary services to the public in accordance with legal and professional obligations and ethical principles. This includes making animal health and welfare their first consideration and providing appropriate and adequate veterinary care.

Veterinarians and their teams help their clients understand any limitations to services, such as delays in scheduling appointments. They take the time to address their clients' concerns and answer questions.

Veterinarians provide recommendations and involve their clients in the decision-making process. This includes information about treatments, procedures, and costs, and seeking consent from their client to proceed.

Veterinarians provide their clients with access to emergency care outside of regular business hours, either personally or through another provider, and supply clients with clear information about how to access those services.