

available to animals in Alberta including certified veterinary care and certified non-veterinarian practitioners

- An “open door” policy and a synergistic relationship between veterinarians, non-veterinarian practitioners and animal owners with a common goal of animal welfare
- The freedom of non-veterinarian practitioners to provide humane animal wellness services for pay without the threat of legal recrimination
- The freedom of veterinarians to associate with non-veterinarian practitioners without the threat of legal recrimination
- Wellness and prevention techniques for animal owners and all animal health care providers through articles, seminars, courses, etc.
- The planning of an “umbrella group” for all non-veterinarian practitioners to ensure credibility, ethics and promote accessibility to animal owners



What Can I Do?

Join the AAAOR. Freedom of choice is a treasured gift in life. Owners are about to see some of these freedoms disappear unless their voices are heard loud and strong.

Take the time to inform yourself by going to the new website (below). Look at the articles and proposed changes to the Veterinary Professional Act. Take time to write to your MLA. Become interested in this issue. Sitting on the fence is not an option.

For more detail and information on finding out how to make your voice heard go to the AAAOR website www.aaaor.ca or contact Sonja Christopher at (780) 922-0752 or sonja.christopher@yahoo.ca.

To get on an email list for ongoing information and upcoming events, please contact Jan at (403) 933-2612 or email jan@skylinedesign.ca.



Alberta Association for Animal Owners' Rights

AAAOR is a group of animal owners lobbying for the legislation to provide an exemption clause allowing owners free access and the freedom of choice to make a decision to use non-veterinarian services for the health and well being of their animals.

Animal Welfare Controversy

The Alberta Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) is lobbying the Government of Alberta to make changes to the definition of veterinary medicine to clearly define what a veterinarian does. However, this change will also enlarge their professional monopoly over animal care - and will restrict others from providing services that helps animal owners maintain the health of their animals.

Who does it affect?

For animal owners and those using non-veterinarian animal therapists (ie. light, magnet, massage, acuscope, acupuncture, acupressure, animal communicators, homeopathic therapists, equine dentists, chiropractors, animal nutritionists, etc.) this new legislation will put an end to our freedom of direct access and freedom of choice to use these individuals. In the end, limiting an animal owner's freedom to directly access complimentary animal healthcare will affect the animals.

Freedom of Choice

Owners shoulder the responsibility of caring for their pets/animals/stock. It should continue to be their right to decide who they purchase care from when professional expertise is needed. A number of U.S. states have already faced an increase of jurisdiction of the veterinary profession and have already lost their right to choose, except as deemed by a veterinarian. Many owners living in these states are fighting back to regain some of their rights. Perhaps pet/animal/stock owners in Alberta can learn from their hard lessons so we do not lose our rights to choose the best practitioner for the job when it comes to caring for our animals.

Veterinarians are Essential

Veterinarians are essential health professionals and we would not have a complete team without their important skills and knowledge. However, most are generalists. It is similar to the situation where a person requires heart surgery and must go to a heart specialist to have the surgery done because their family physician, although having general knowledge about the heart, has little, if any, experience and expertise in actually correcting the problem. So is the situation with many vets. They have great understanding and knowledge but they may not have the specific expertise and skill set to provide this particular level of care. Thus who will protect the owner from a veterinarian who has jurisdiction over areas they are not competent in? The law, if passed, does not care. Many non-veterinary practitioners compliment conventional animal health by providing natural options to drugs and surgery, and by having a preventative approach to health.

AVMA Annual Report of 2004

"Ours is a profession where the public is poorly equipped to assess expertise and it is the [AVMA's] job to judge it for them." They can make good decisions

about their families and animals as long as good information is available to them. They can decide who best would be the practitioner needed for any particular care of their animals.

If the proposed changes to the AVMA's scope of practice are passed and enacted, owners will have little say. The veterinarian becomes the gatekeeper for animal care. There will not be any independent non-veterinarian practitioners to give you a hand making your animals (whether a pet, performance horse, or the stock you raise to make a living) feel better when the veterinarian has not been able to help them. That type of monopoly is frightening. We need to be practical. Will competency go down? Will prices go up?



AAAOR Mission Statement

- Final decisions about animal health care to be entrusted and made by the animal's owner
- A new level of animal welfare that includes physical, mental and spiritual wellness for all animals
- A variety of wellness options