

Veterinary Workforce Shortage: Lack of Personnel and Increasing Demand

Veterinarians play a crucial role in protecting animal health and ensuring a safe food supply, but Canada faces a severe workforce shortage.

Lori Ahronson

A 2020 Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) study revealed that veterinarians were only graduating at a rate equal to retirement. Given the growing population and increased animal ownership, we're facing a labour shortage that will last until 2031.

"This has increased pressure on veterinary teams to overburden themselves to provide quality care, contributing to exhaustion and mental illness," says Dr. Timothy Arthur, CVMA President.

A 2020 study showed that one in five Canadian veterinarians and technologists reported suicide ideation, burnout, and depression — negatives experiences that can contribute to the labour shortage.

What can you do to help?

Please be patient with your veterinary team. They're doing their best to provide quality care and service. Book regular

check-ups and place medication or food orders well in advance, and understand that securing urgent/same-day appointments is increasingly difficult. Discuss cost concerns so you and your veterinarian can create an affordable health care plan.

What is the CVMA doing to help?

Along with many other initiatives, the CVMA has called on the federal government to:

- Invest in additional projects and veterinary infrastructure;
- Invest in the mental health of all veterinary professionals; and
- Invest in ways to maintain and strengthen the availability of critical veterinary drugs to protect public health and safety, animal health and welfare, and food safety and security.



Find out more about the CVMA and its efforts at canadianveterinarians.net.

This article was sponsored by the **Canadian Veterinary Medical Association**.



Ending Animal Cruelty and Gender-Based Violence with Humane Education

Humane education fosters empathy, combats animal cruelty, and addresses gender-based violence, creating safer, more compassionate communities through awareness and action.

Tara Hellewell

With reports that shelters are beyond capacity this holiday season, the need for solutions has never been greater. Humane education can help create a kinder society by addressing both animal cruelty and human violence. Humane Canada's Promising Practices Project is a three-year initiative funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada to develop education programs to engage men and boys as allies in preventing gender-based violence.

"Animals are frequently used as tools to coerce and harm victims/survivors, causing fear and control that perpetuates the cycle of violence. This underscores the importance of humane education that reaches youth and addresses the root causes of violence," says Sue

O'Neill, Program Manager of the Promising Practices Project.

Fostering a kinder generation

Through humane education, children and youth learn to practise empathy and value all living beings. This not only helps prevent animal cruelty, it also raises critical awareness about the link between violence against animals and humans. People who harm animals are more likely to harm other people, making education a key factor in breaking this cycle.

Under the Promising Practices Project, educators, gender-based violence specialists, and animal welfare organizations are working together to create programs that teach empathy, conflict resolution, and the broader impacts of violence on both animals and humans.

Through humane education, we can foster a generation that values kindness and non-violence. By addressing the causes of cruelty and promoting empathy, humane education has the potential to protect animals and reduce violence, leading to safer, more compassionate communities.

Humane Canada is a leading national charity dedicated to promoting animal welfare and preventing cruelty. Its programs aim to address critical animal welfare issues. It represents over 60 member Humane Societies and SPCAs across Canada.

Visit humanecanada.ca to learn more and donate.

This article was sponsored by **Humane Canada**.



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