

Delegation of Veterinary care in BC

With a focus on
**Empowering RVTs to utilize
their amazing skills to the
fullest**

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to our
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for
Having Me

**THOMPSON
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UNIVERSITY**

Faculty of
Science

X **STAMP**

Faculty Friday

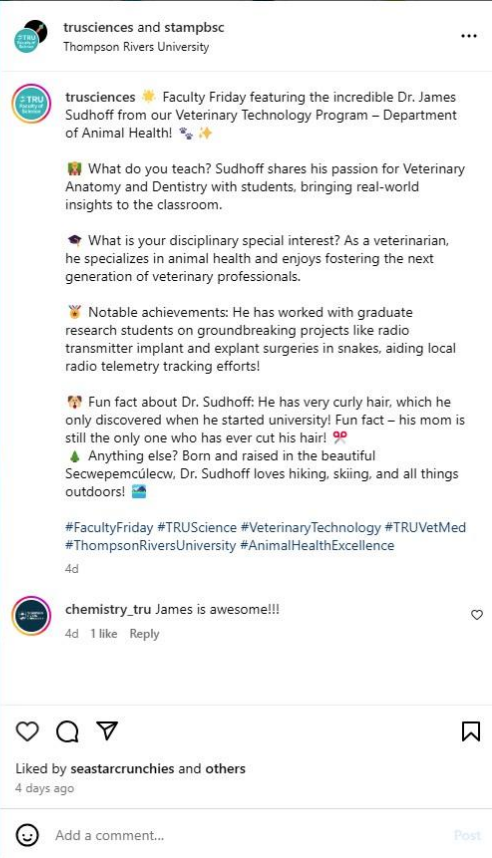


Dr. James Sudhoff, DVM

Position: Assistant Teaching Professor

Interest: Love of animals and propagating a culture of responsible animal guardianship. Improving lives through education.





truscience and stampbsc
Thompson Rivers University

truscience Faculty Friday featuring the incredible Dr. James Sudhoff from our Veterinary Technology Program – Department of Animal Health! 🐾👩🏻‍🔬

📖 What do you teach? Sudhoff shares his passion for Veterinary Anatomy and Dentistry with students, bringing real-world insights to the classroom.

👩🏻‍🔬 What is your disciplinary special interest? As a veterinarian, he specializes in animal health and enjoys fostering the next generation of veterinary professionals.

🏆 Notable achievements: He has worked with graduate research students on groundbreaking projects like radio transmitter implant and explant surgeries in snakes, aiding local radio telemetry tracking efforts!

🐾 Fun fact about Dr. Sudhoff: He has very curly hair, which he only discovered when he started university! Fun fact – his mom is still the only one who has ever cut his hair! 🐾

🌱 Anything else? Born and raised in the beautiful Secwepemcúlecw, Dr. Sudhoff loves hiking, skiing, and all things outdoors! 🌲

#FacultyFriday #TRUScience #VeterinaryTechnology #TRUVetMed #ThompsonRiversUniversity #AnimalHealthExcellence

4d

chemistry_tru James is awesome!!!

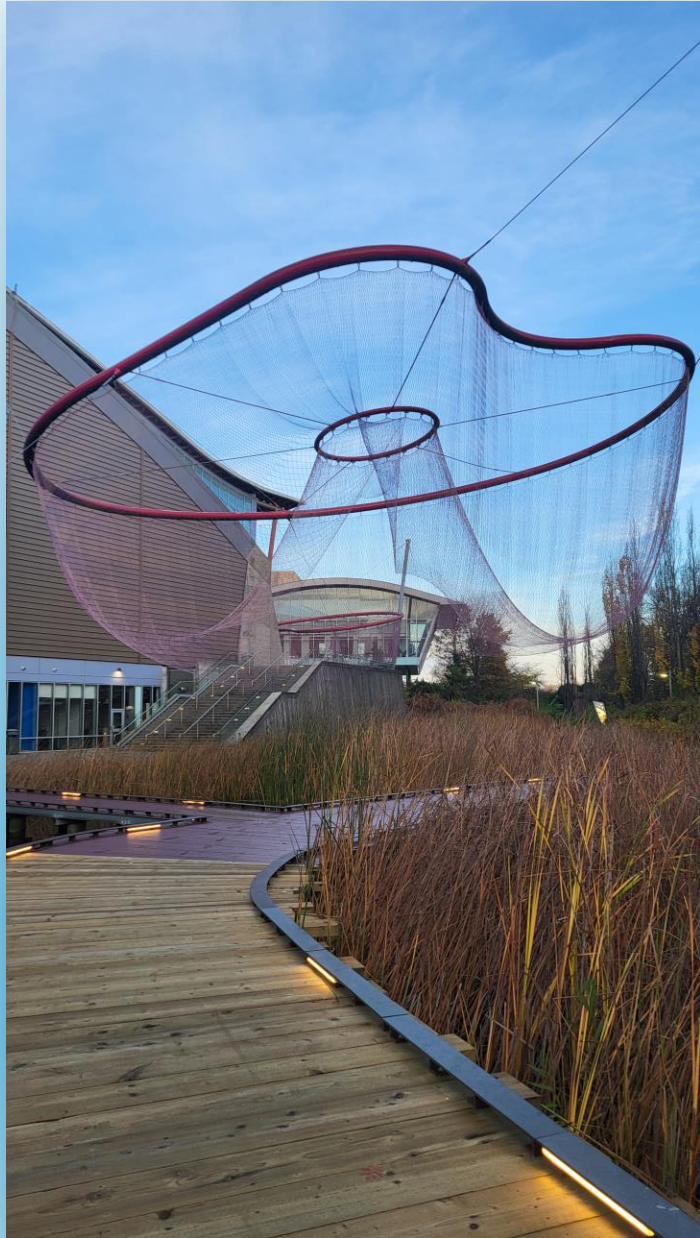
4d 1 like Reply

Liked by seastarcunchies and others
4 days ago

Add a comment... Post

*I share learning within ancestral lands of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc
within Secwepemcúlecw, the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc*

Our Learning today



Let's take a moment to remember...

- That language really matters

We Respect **Registered Veterinary Technologists** in BC

- Communication

Sender → message → receiver

- Owning your mistakes!



Today We will Cover

First Half

- The Issues at hand
- RVT Training and Certification
- The Legal Documents
- Terms Defined
- Delegation of tasks
- Trust and Competence

Second Half

- What's happening in other Provinces?
- Putting it together:
 - Specific clinical examples
- How do we get there?
- Options available for Training

By the end of these sessions I hope you can appreciate...

- That you have to **want to change** to really pursue it.
- Changing clinic culture is an **investment**, but its worth it!
- The power, the knowledge and skillset of a **motivated RVT**.
- That you **can** do it.
 - “Many things seem impossible until they’re done”
 - You can change clinic culture to improve outcomes
- You have **guidance** from provinces that are further ahead on this.
- That Legislative **change is needed** to clarify RVT scope of practice
 - Internal (vet clinic) policy will only go so far
 - Will remove uncertainty regarding roles and allowances

The end result

- A better quality of life and fulfillment
 - For you
 - Your entire team
 - Your clients and their animals
- Job Satisfaction
 - Empowerment
 - Employee retention (and less attrition)
 - Achieving better medical outcomes

Ultimately who are we **all** here for?

Remember our Canadian Veterinary Oath

Retrieved from CVMA Website:

<https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/about-cvma/the-canadian-veterinary-oath/> , Sept 2025

"As a **member of the veterinary medical profession**, I solemnly swear that I will use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society.

I will strive to:

- > promote animal health and welfare,
- > prevent and relieve animal suffering,
- > protect the health of the public and the environment, and
- > advance comparative medical knowledge.

I will **perform my professional duties conscientiously**, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics.

I will strive continuously to **improve my professional knowledge and competence** and to maintain the highest professional and ethical standards for myself and the profession."

- CVMA 2004
(revised 2018)

We are all in this together

- DVMs and RVTs are...

Veterinary Medical Professionals



The issue: Under Pressure



“the Pimple”

Under Pressure

We are all very aware of the current situation we are in.

- ❖ Veterinary shortages
- ❖ Compassion fatigue
- ❖ Employee Burnout
- ❖ Increased Client expectations
- ❖ Client Dissatisfaction and mistrust on the rise
 - Impression that costs for care are skyrocketing
 - Value of Service - Rushed feeling
 - Communication gaps
 - Not enough time available to understand conditions or procedures.

Change

- **Why** even change?
- You have to **want** something different.
- It can be **exciting and frightening** at the same time.
- What is the “North star” that **guides you**?
 - Better patient care?
 - Work Life Balance?
 - Meeting your communities needs?



What are we afraid of?

- ❖ Legal ramifications – unlawful practice?
- ❖ Loosing your License?
- ❖ Decreased quality of patient care?
- ❖ Competition between RVTs and DVM's with expanding roles ?
- ❖ Client Dissatisfaction? Social media attacks?
- ❖ That it will be too “hard”?
- ❖ That your Staff will not be on board?
- ❖ That you will suffer an income loss?

What can be gained?



Better Patient Care

DVM freed up to focus on Medicine, Surgery, Difficult Case workups



More patients can be served in a timely manor



Better Client Communications



Better work-life balance



Increased Job Satisfaction for the whole team.

Staff appreciation- sense of increased importance
Validation of worth to the organization



Training up a New RVT

Regulations?

Training an RVT

- On-site training at an accredited institution
 - **2-year, full time courseload** (fall and winter semesters)
 - In addition to schoolwork, they perform **patient care** and practical “**essential skills**” evaluations, as well as **240 hours of in-clinic practicum**
- Open Learning Distance Education through an accredited institution
 - **3-year**, part time courseload (fall, winter, and summer semesters)
 - Must be **working** a minimum number of hours per week **at a vet clinic**
 - Work with Clinic Mentors to complete essential skills demonstrations
 - Complete a mandatory 1-week “wet lab” for large animal and exotics **essential skills**.

Accredited institutions (2 in BC)

Veterinary Technology Programs

Thompson Rivers University – Veterinary Technology Diploma Program

www.tru.ca/science/diplomas-certificates/vtech.html

Thompson Rivers University – Veterinary Technology Open Learning Diploma Program

www.tru.ca/distance/programs/veterinary-technology.html

Douglas College – Veterinary Technology Program

<https://www.douglascollege.ca/program/dpvtec>

Retrieved from BCVTA website, <https://www.bcvta.com/links/>, Oct 2025



Retrieved from:

<https://www.tru.ca/marcom/brandguide/logos.html>, Oct 2025



Retrieved from: <https://www.douglascollege.ca/>, Oct 2025

ANESTHESIA

1. **Premed/Drugs**
 - a. Understand the common premeds and effects on the body including contraindications
 - b. Understand the need for anticholinergics
 - c. At home sedatives like Gabapentin and Trazadone
2. **Induction**
 - a. Understand the types of induction drugs available including:
 - i. Propofol
 - ii. Alfaxalone
 - iii. Ketamine, Ketamine/benzodiazepine, Ketamine/propofol
 - iv. Neurolept-analgesics
 - b. Understand indications for mask induction and chamber induction – no longer performed routinely at TRU
 - c. Know how to intubate a dog and cat
 - d. Transitioning on to inhalant anesthetics
3. **Maintenance**
 - a. Maintain an animal once induced with
 - i. Injectable drugs
 - ii. Gaseous anesthetics using Isoflurane
 - b. Monitor an animal under anesthesia, including several parameters to determine anesthetic stages and planes & know when the Veterinarian needs to be informed
4. **Recovery**
 - a. Recognize when to extubate patient
 - b. Understand the need for ongoing post anesthesia monitoring
5. **Equipment Care & Maintenance**
 - a. Endotracheal tubes
 - b. Rebreathing bags and circuits
 - c. Anesthetic machines

DENTISTRY

1. Know the dentition for the dog & cat
2. Identify, use and care of basic hand instruments
3. Use an ultrasonic scaler and a simple dental unit
4. Perform dental radiography using a digital dental x-ray unit
5. Understand the principles of simple extractions
6. Understand periodontal disease, its progression and its treatment
7. Know how to perform a complete dental cleaning on a dog or cat
8. Be able to give the client basic education on oral home care

LABORATORY ANIMALS

1. Know how to pick up, handle & restrain rats & mice
2. Perform a PE, including sexing the animals
3. Know how to obtain a blood sample from each species
4. Understand the basic concepts of anesthesia for rats & mice
5. Understand nutritional & husbandry needs for rats & mice
6. Know basic concepts of quality control/biohazard containment associated with lab animals in research.

ANIMAL DISEASES

1. Understands the concepts of infectious and non-infectious diseases, and how infections occur
2. Be able to give basic advice on the disease, its communicability and methods of prevention
3. Zoonotic risks of Rabies; Sample preparation and submission of suspect cases

SMALL ANIMAL CARE

1. Perform physical exam, TPR & know normal ranges for these parameters
2. General bathing / grooming procedures
3. Basic eye care / ear cleaning
4. Administration of IV, IM, Sub Q, P/O medications
5. Enemas (demo only)
6. Anal Gland Expressions (demo only)
7. Perform basic bandage techniques
8. Collect various samples - blood, urine, fecal
9. Perform basic limb stabilization techniques including:
 - a. Thomas Splint – discussed only – no demo
 - b. Meta splint
 - c. Robert-Jones bandage – discussed only – no demo
10. Care for a traumatized animal including instillation of jugular or extremity catheter & know fluid requirements for these animals
11. Cystocentesis & urinary catheterization (female & male dog & cat)
12. Nutritional needs for various types of patients
13. Understand the principles of enteral nutrition and techniques
14. Animal restraint including muzzles/cat bags
15. Apply basic physiotherapy techniques
16. Manage and deliver nursing care to pediatric and geriatric patients

LARGE ANIMAL CARE

1. Perform basic restraint procedures in cattle, sheep, goats, horses, & poultry
2. Clean hooves & perform routine hoof trimming on small ruminants & horses
3. Perform IV, Sub Q & IM injections
4. Collect blood samples
5. Basic nutrition, genetics, vaccination protocols & large animal husbandry
6. Knots
7. Basic familiarity of L.A. instruments
8. Bandaging
9. Reproductive behavior, parturition and neonatal care

PHARMACOLOGY

1. Be familiar with the various types of drugs used in a Veterinary practice & understand their possible side effects/consequences including:
 - a. antibiotics
 - b. cardiovascular drugs
 - c. G/I drugs
 - d. Anti-inflammatory drugs
 - i. Steroids
 - ii. Nonsteroidal
 - e. Narcotics & the Narcotic & Control Drug Act
2. Understand how to properly label/dispense medication

LAB PROCEDURES

1. Microbiology
 - a. streak plates
 - b. Do grams stain
 - c. Do basic ID of organism
2. CBC
 - a. Perform White Blood cell estimates on blood film
 - b. Do differential & ID toxic cells
 - c. Assess RBC morphology
 - d. Do a complete CBC including PCV, TSP
3. Urinalysis
 - a. Do basic Dip stick procedures
 - b. Examine urine sediment for casts, WBC, bacteria, renal cells, crystals
4. Clinical Chemistries
 - a. Understand the concept of quality control
 - b. Understand the methodology of and "trouble-shoot" dry serum chemistry techniques (we use Idexx equipment in the laboratory at TRU)
5. Parasitology
 - a. Perform fecal analysis for common mammals & ID common parasites
 - b. Perform Heart worm tests (Knotts)
 - c. Know life cycles of common mammalian parasites
 - d. Understand the various types of parasiticides available
6. Understand the concept of ELISA tests and how to perform them
7. Buccal mucosal bleeding time

OFFICE/COMMUNICATION SKILLS

1. Be confident in Microsoft Word and Power Point
2. Students have been trained in the basic functions of a Veterinary Software package - Cornerstone
3. Know how to prepare and write a proper business letter
4. Know how to communicate with clients, including telephone skills
5. Know how to prepare a CV, and conduct an interview for employment
6. Know proper medical terminology
7. Maintain client medical files
8. Understand the concept of client confidentiality & proper record keeping
9. Understand and support human animal relationships, including pet loss and grief
10. Conduct oneself in a professional and ethical manner

DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING

1. Prepare & position small animal patients for routine radiographic exposures including:
 - a. Extremities
 - b. Spine & skull
 - c. Chest/abdomen
 - d. Dentistry
2. Understand the concepts of MAS & KVP & their effect on the radiograph
3. Understand and follow the principles of radiation safety
4. Recognize and correct artifacts
5. Process films via automated and digital techniques
6. Trouble shoot radiographs and correct exposure factors
7. Perform maintenance on accessory radiographic equipment, i.e. screens
8. Perform safety checks on accessory radiographic equipment
9. Ultrasound demonstrated; Emerging concepts and the applications of sonograms

SURGICAL ASSISTANCE

1. Know how to prepare surgical packs
2. Know the basic instruments in a surgical pack
3. Understand the concept of sterility
4. Know how to:
 - a. prep an animal for basic surgical situations
 - b. perform a routine scrub on oneself, gown and glove
 - c. surgically drape a patient
 - d. pass and use surgical instruments
 - e. clean & handle surgical instruments
5. Know the basic types of sutures & suture patterns and how to place skin sutures
6. Know how to assist in a surgical operation
7. Use a gravity displacement autoclave
8. Use a simple IV infusion pump and administer IV fluids
9. Know how to perform identification techniques such as ear tattoos and microchip placement.

COMPANION ANIMAL BEHAVIOR

1. Recognize normal behavior in dogs and cats and to a lesser extend horses and birds.
2. Interpret and apply learning behavior theory including classical and operant conditioning
3. Demonstrate positive, animal friendly management/restraint and training of animals
4. Identify common behavior concerns and problems in dogs and cats and describe/apply sound, basic behavior modification and training techniques to address those concerns
5. Assist clients and others in acquiring current knowledge about pet behavior and determining/attaining realistic behavior goals to facilitate positive pet-people relationships.

BACKGROUND COURSES

1. Anatomy of Domestic Animals – several species examined
2. Immunology
 - a. Theory of vaccinations – Future Trend
 - b. Concepts of antigen/antibody interactions
 - c. Lab Tests – external lab – PCR, Titers, IFA
 - d. Lab Tests – SNAP Tests (in-house) Elisa
 - e. Inflammatory process and the body's immune mechanism
3. Math
 - a. Drug Calculations
 - b. Anesthetic flow rates
 - c. Basic Statistical Data
 - d. Concentration / Volume Problems
 - e. Constant rate infusions of fluids and drugs
4. English
 - a. Writing a formal and informal report, including feasibility study
 - b. Write memos, reports and letters
5. WHMIS - have written & passed WHMIS exam
6. Fear Free Certification (multiple species)
7. Nutritional Counselling

To become a **Registered Veterinary Technologist** **“RVT”**



1. Has graduated from an accredited program of training for veterinary technologists.
2. Has completed the national licensing exam:
“Veterinary Technician National Exam” (VTNE)
3. Has become a member of their Provincial Association.
 - maintains annual education and training requirements.

It's no small accomplishment!

Vitally Important

- BCVTA Website – (one of the top tabs on the main page)
 - <https://www.bcvta.com/vitally-important/>



Retrieved Sept 2025, from above website



What RVTs can do and/or specialize in:

- anesthesia and pain control procedures
- sample collection and laboratory procedures
- radiology procedures
- nursing care for hospitalized patients such as comforting a patient after surgery, changing bandages, and providing nutrition through a variety of methods
- dentistry such as dental cleaning, scaling, polishing, radiographs, and pain control
- emergency medicine
- surgical assistance
- surgical equipment sterilization and preparation
- physical rehabilitation
- massage therapy
- client education
- behaviour consultation
- nutritional consultation
- practice management

What RVTs are:

- college and university graduates
- highly trained
- paraprofessionals
- work under supervision of a Veterinarian
- participate in clinical decision-making
- work with multiple species
- work in many different settings
- can perform many procedures, except in the areas of diagnosis, surgery, and prescription of medications, which can only be performed by a licensed Veterinarian

RVT soft skills often include:

- work ethic
- team-building
- decision-making
- communication
- time management
- empathy
- working well in challenging environments

FROM THE BC VETERINARY TECHNOLOGISTS ASSOCIATION

REGISTERED VETERINARY TECHNOLOGISTS WHAT WE ARE AND WHY IT MATTERS PART 1

BY AMBER GREGG, RVT

If I told you that I had an appointment with an RMT, dental hygienist, LPN, or RN, you would likely know exactly what I meant. You would also have an idea of what kind of education and training they had completed in order to use that title, giving you confidence that you would be treated by a professional.

The term RVT is less widely recognized and typically requires some kind of explanation. Many RVTs say, "I'm like a nurse, but for animals." While this helps the public conceive of how an RVT's role relates to the veterinary team, it is not appropriate for a number of reasons. For example, in British Columbia, the term "nurse" has title protection and is used solely in the context of human medicine. So, while it may be easy to refer to an RVT as a veterinary nurse, that would run afoul of the regulatory body for nurses and would likely result in a complaint.

The Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians describes RVTs as veterinary care providers who participate in clinical decision making alongside veterinarians. The OAVT offers an excellent description of the tasks RVTs are qualified to perform and the ways they differ from the work of other members of veterinary team. However, this does not help to clarify the role of RVTs in day-to-day conversation with the public.

The use of different titles from one jurisdiction to another further complicates the issue. For example, in the United States, the titles include registered veterinary technologist (RVT), certified veterinary technician (CVT), and licensed veterinary technician (LVT). Although professionals using these titles perform similar duties, levels of qualification and regulation vary depending on the state.

In Canada there are only two designations—registered veterinary technician and registered veterinary technologist. In BC, we use the term registered veterinary technologist; we'll discuss the

"... DESCRIBING RVTs AS TECHS, VET TECHS, OR TECHNICIANS, OR REFERRING TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE VETERINARY SUPPORT STAFF AS RVTs CAN ONLY CONFUSE CLIENTS..."

distinction between technicians and technologists in part 2 of this article, appearing in the next issue. In most provinces, these professions are regulated, which means they are internally governed by a professional college, similar to the College of Veterinarians of BC.

In BC, RVTs are not yet internally regulated by a professional college. However, the title Registered Veterinary Technologist is protected under the Societies Act. That means that anyone using the title must be a member of the BC Veterinary Technologists Association, which can only happen if they meet the BCVTA's stringent eligibility requirements.

Ultimately, it is important for veterinarians, veterinary staff, and RVTs themselves to use the title Registered Veterinary Technologist appropriately. Saying that RVTs are "like" another profession, describing RVTs as techs, vet techs, or technicians, or referring to all members of the veterinary support team as RVTs can only confuse clients—and in some cases staff—who do not fully understand what an RVT is and does. And it is vital to professional transparency and public safety that this term is broadly and clearly understood.

An important goal of the BCVTA is to educate the public and members of the veterinary community to use the title RVT correctly so that when someone hears it, they immediately know that the individual in question:

- Has attended an accredited program of training for veterinary technologists
- Has completed a national licensing exam demonstrating their familiarity with the required knowledge and skills.
- Continues to undertake annual education and training to ensure their skills and knowledge remain current.

Public recognition and understanding of the RVT title are high on the list of priorities for the BCVTA. We will continue to attend public outreach events and create public awareness campaigns to encourage the public to ask for RVTs and not one of the many current variations of the title.

Knowing that an RVT administers anesthesia, provides nursing care, takes radiographs, and more may help owners understand the breadth of RVT experience, knowledge, and ability to assist veterinarians, while providing excellent care for their animals. 🐾



Amber Gregg, RVT, is the executive director and past president of the BCVTA. She graduated from the Thompson Rivers University veterinary technology program in 2007 and spent eight years in mixed animal practice before gaining experience in not-for-profit management. She joined the BCVTA board of directors as vice president in 2020 and served a one-year term as president in 2021 before being appointed to the executive director position in 2022. Amber is grateful for everyone who made the BCVTA the strong and healthy organization it is today, and she is proud to work with the board of directors and members of the BCVTA to continue to advance the veterinary technology profession.

Why Language Matters

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If you had an appointment with an RMT, LPN, RN, or a Dental Hygienist, you would likely know what is meant.

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Promotional Material you can display



FROM THE BC VETERINARY TECHNOLOGISTS ASSOCIATION

REGISTERED VETERINARY TECHNOLOGISTS WHAT WE ARE AND WHY IT MATTERS – PART 2

BY AMBER GREGG, RVT

In our last column, we explored the Registered Veterinary Technologist (RVT) title and discussed why using the correct title is important for professional acknowledgement and public recognition. Now, I'll explore the difference between "technologist" and "technician".

An internet search of the two terms produces definitions that focus on specialization. A technician develops a set of skills focused on practical knowledge in an industry, such as theatre, or a type of technology, such as laboratory technology.

A technologist develops the same practical skills as a technician, and also learns the theoretical knowledge behind them. For example, a theatre technician would learn the skills to apply lighting as directed, and a theatre technologist would also learn the difference between electronic and digital lighting and why one might be better than the other in certain situations.

The way it was once explained to me is that a technician knows how, and a technologist knows why. While this makes sense, it doesn't explain why some provinces call their RVTs technicians and others call them technologists. A graduate of a program in BC becomes a technologist, and a graduate in Quebec becomes a technician, even though any CVMA-accredited veterinary technology program must meet the same standard.

According to Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC (ASTTBC), a Certified Technician is a graduate of an accredited one-year certificate program (or equivalent on-the-job training). An Applied Science Technologist is a graduate of an accredited two-year diploma program (or equivalent on-the-job training). Using this definition, the term "technologist" certainly applies to RVTs.

Some would simply state that students of animal health technology or veterinary technology programs are technologists. I think we can all agree that a professional title should not be decided based on a Google search or varied definitions of unofficial terms. Because, as discussed in Part 1 of this column, Registered Veterinary Technologist is the protected title for the profession in BC, it is the correct title by which to refer to a member of the BCVTA. Other terms used to describe an individual who performs tasks typically delegated to an RVT are misleading.

(On a related note, your valuable trained-on-the-job staff are allowed to use the term "veterinary technician." To refer to them as "registered," however, is inaccurate and may create misunderstanding for some individuals.)

BCVTA members are permitted to input their own title in the association database and many RVTs use "technician." I also see and hear "technician" in daily communications with RVTs, students, practice owners, and managers. I urge you, as veterinarians, mentors, and practice owners, to refer to your RVTs as "technologists," and I encourage RVTs to do the same when introducing themselves.

As we move toward regulation of RVTs, the BCVTA will continue to clarify the appropriate use of titles, why this is important, and how best to utilize the professionals in your practice to improve patient outcomes, build positive team culture, and provide long-lasting, meaningful care. 🐾



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Why Language Matters

“

- Registered Veterinary Technologist (RVT)
 - Is the protected term in B.C. under the Societies Act
- Veterinary Technician
 - Could refer to an on-the-job trained and skilled employee
 - Many go on to take training to get their credentials.

”



Canada
Province of British Columbia

A Proclamation

CHARLES THE THIRD, by the Grace of God, King of Canada
and His other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth

To all to whom these presents shall come – Greeting

WHEREAS registered veterinary technologists (RVTs) are highly skilled members of the veterinary health care team who work to provide quality animal health care, to ensure the humane treatment of all animals and to protect public safety and interest, and

WHEREAS over 1 400 formally educated RVTs work in British Columbia in general practice, specialty practice, large-animal medicine, shelter medicine, education, industry and sales, and

WHEREAS it is important that RVTs maintain their professional registration by completing lifelong continuing education and upholding ethical standards, and

WHEREAS in October, British Columbia's RVTs join their colleagues across Canada to promote awareness of the important contributions of RVTs to the health and well-being of all animals, to public safety and to biosecurity;

NOW KNOW YE THAT We do by these presents proclaim and declare that October 2025 shall be known as

"Registered Veterinary Technologist Month"

in the Province of British Columbia.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent and the Great Seal of Our Province of British Columbia to be hereunto affixed.

WITNESS, The Honourable Wendy Cocchia, Lieutenant Governor of Our Province of British Columbia, in Our City of Victoria, in Our Province, this third day of October, two thousand twenty-five and in the fourth year of Our Reign.

BY COMMAND.

Attorney General and Deputy Premier

Lieutenant Governor

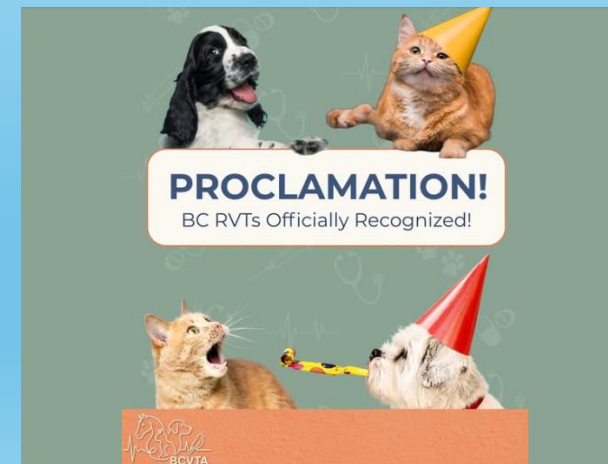
Title protection:

Registered Veterinary Technologist

As Proclaimed:

October is RVT month in BC

An acknowledgement of their value to the Veterinary Team.



Retrieved from: <https://www.facebook.com/BCVTA/posts/updateclarification-this-post-is-an-announcement-that-the-bc-government-has-proc/1362244115901149/>, Oct 2025

Vitally Important



- BCVTA Website

In most Canadian provinces, RVTs are regulated, which means they are internally governed by a professional college. In BC, while we are not currently a regulated profession, the title Registered Veterinary Technologist is a protected title under the Societies Act. This term indicates that the individual using the title is a member of our organization – the British Columbia Veterinary Technologists Association – and meets the eligibility requirements.

Retrieved from: <https://www.bcvta.com/vitally-important/> ,Sept 2025

In the News...

“Veterinary technologists provide critical care to animals, large and small”

B.C. is one of the only Canadian provinces where RVTs aren't regulated — but BCVTA is working with the College of Veterinarians of BC to establish regulations so that all personnel who perform tasks typically delegated to technologists will be required to be registered.

“We expect the landscape to change in this province in a year or so,” Gregg says. “Regulations will protect everyone and draw more attention to the critical work we do.”

Published Oct 01, 2023

Retrieved from: The Province, <https://theprovince.com/sponsored/news-sponsored/veterinary-technologists-provide-critical-care-to-animals-large-and-small> ,
Sept 2025

Market Trends: New Analysis

Harry Caton

Professional regulation and Governance

“Memorandum on Best Practice in Professional Regulation and the challenges facing the College of Veterinarians of British Columbia”

- Report Published June 2025 (Available on the CBCV website – Reports and publications)

Recommends Legislative Reform: Amendment to the Veterinary Act

This opens up the opportunity, amongst other things, to Establish Regulations for Registered Veterinary Technologists in BC.

Regulating RVTs in BC

- Regulation can't be something that is “done” to RVTs
- RVTs need to have a seat at the table and be part of the conversation.

These Animal Health Professionals need a defined Scope of Practice.



Shutterstock.com

BC: On the road again...

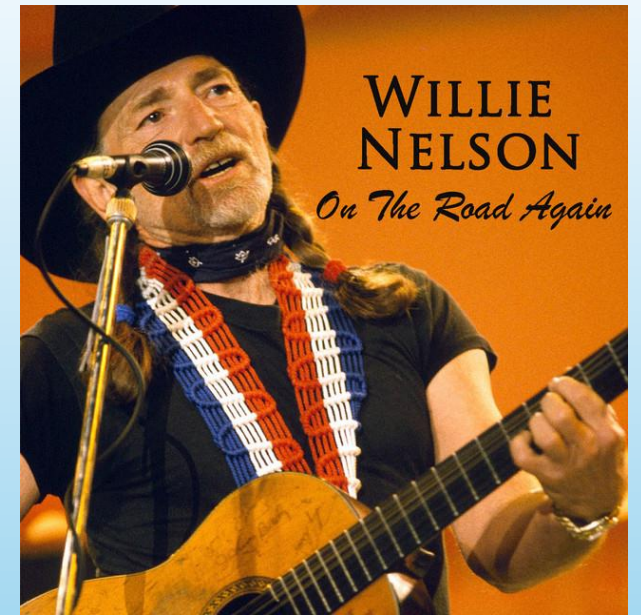


Image Retrieved from, <https://open.spotify.com/> Oct 2025

- BCVTA has now accepted a proposal from Hill & Knowlton to support the regulatory initiative in BC.
 - Helped the OAVT
 - Aiming for regulatory framework that reflects the critical role RVT's play in Veterinary Medicine.



The Legal Documents

A review:

- The Veterinarians act -

- Division:
 - 4.2 – Code of Ethics
 - General Principles
 - Qualifications or Competence
 - Duties to: Patients and Clients, Public, College, Report, the Profession, other Registrants
 - 4.3 - General Standards:
 - Informed Consent (211)
 - Unauthorized Practice: defined(224) , preventing (255) & Reporting
 - 4.7 – Delegation and Supervision

Statement from the CVBC Registrar

e-mail reply : Sept 8th 2025

Q: Is there any message you would directly like me to pass on to fellow registrants during this presentation?

A: **“unless a particular task/procedure is explicitly addressed (as an example) in the delegation and supervision bylaws, as with all delegation decisions (whether to RVTs or other clinic support staff), professional judgement of the veterinarian (re what is appropriate to delegate, who it is appropriate to delegate to, and the appropriate level of supervision) is paramount”**

→ Check out the “Roles for RVT” blog on the CVBC website (published Sept 8th 2022)”

It was just by chance that I got an e-mail reply on the same date 😊

CVBC Website – “Roles for RVT”

- On main page,
 - Hover over “News”
 - Click on “Blog”
 - Scroll to the bottom → Go to Page 2.
- Done in Compliance with the
 - Veterinarians Act
 - CVBC’s bylaws – (part 4 – Ethics and Standards).



Roles for RVT

🕒 September 8, 2022

Maximizing your veterinary team capacity while staying within the CVBC Bylaws. The pandemic, together with the veterinarian and Registered Veterinary Technologist (RVT) ...

Delegation of Tasks

1. The *Veterinarians Act* establishes:

- **the definition of veterinary medicine** (section 1, Definitions) and also
- **the practice of veterinary medicine as a regulated activity, only to be performed by registrants of the CVBC, except within a series of excepted scenarios, one of which is the treatment of an animal by an employee of a registrant under the supervision of a registrant** (s. 46, Prohibitions regarding practice of veterinary medicine), and

2. The following expectations and requirement for practice are established through bylaws and *Professional Practice Standards*:

- A. Veterinarian-Client Patient Relationship
- B. Delegation and Supervision
- C. Informed Consent
- D. Unauthorized Practice
- E. Medical Records Keeping

The definition

Veterinarians Act, Part 1- Introductory provisions, definitions

- **"veterinary medicine"** means the art and science of veterinary medicine, dentistry and surgery, and includes, whether or not for consideration,
 - (a) the diagnosis and treatment of animals for the prevention, alleviation or correction of disease, injury, pain, defect, disorder, or other similar condition,
 - (b) the provision of a service prescribed by regulation of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, and
 - (c) (c) the provision of advice in respect of a matter referred to in paragraph (a) or (b).

A: Veterinarian-Client Patient Relationship

- Defined as: in the CVBC bylaws part 4 199.

“veterinarian-client-patient relationship” means the relationship created when a **registrant** agrees with a client, expressly or by implication, including by actions, to provide veterinary services to a patient”

- The Practice Standard: VCPR

- One of the foundations of effective veterinary care and service.
- Must exist before a vet recommends or provides veterinary services
- Required for even “making a recommendation for the use of a particular product”

Pertinent
Excerpts from
the Professional
Practice
Standard: The
VCPR

A veterinarian meets the Professional Practice Standard: Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship when he/she:

1. Establishes a VCPR prior to recommending and/or providing treatment or veterinary services (including the prescribing, dispensing, or administering of drugs) for any animal, group or animals, or herd.
2. Reaches an agreement with the client as to the scope of services to be provided by the veterinarian and advises the client that services will only be provided in accordance with the CVBC's bylaws and Professional Practice Standards.
3. Understands that a legitimate VCPR is established and maintained only when:
 - a. The veterinarian has assumed the responsibility for making clinical assessments and recommendations regarding the health of the animal(s) and the need for medical treatment;
 - b. The client has agreed to follow the veterinarian's recommendations and prescriptions;
 - c. The veterinarian has recent and sufficient knowledge of the animal or group of animals or herd on which to base the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of the medical condition of the animal(s). What constitutes "recent and sufficient knowledge" is a matter of the professional judgement of the veterinarian in the individual case. When making an assessment, diagnosis, or prescribing, administering or dispensing a drug, recent and sufficient knowledge is a matter of
 - i. History and inquiry, and
 - ii. Physical examination of the animal or group of animals, OR medically-appropriate and timely visits to the premises where the animal or group of animals are keptto reach at least a general or preliminary diagnosis.
 - d. The veterinarian ensures that he/she is readily available in case of an adverse reaction to a drug or a failure of treatment, or has made reasonable arrangements for follow-up evaluation and care with another veterinarian.

B: Delegation of Tasks and Staff Supervision

Sections 259-266 of the bylaws (Part 4)

- Requires:
 - the existence of a Valid VCPR
 - an **Assessment**, **Diagnosis**, and **Treatment plan** by the veterinarian.
- When making decisions, Strongly consider:
 - Potential for harm (adverse reactions)
 - Unforeseen complications &/or human error
 - The ability of a Veterinarian to promptly intervene and respond if needed.
 - & that “Particular scrutiny” is required when RVTs perform tasks in a mobile practice setting (delegation under indirect supervision)

C: Informed Consent

Section 211 of the bylaws (Part 4).

- Imperative:
“that the informed consent discussion is between *the veterinarian* and *a client*
– it is one part of practice that **cannot be delegated to staff.**”
- Obtain in writing whenever possible
- Verbal or implied consent may be valid
 - Have a witness to that consent
 - Is not considered best practice when written consent may be easily obtained.
- Document: **That you did** & **how you got** informed consent
- RE-confirm Consent: It is an ongoing obligation, not “one and done”

CVBC Bylaws, Part 4: Ethics and Standards, Division 4.3 General Standards, (Excerpts)

- 211 Informed Consent, (6)

“the information provided to obtain informed consent must include information about:”

(g) Whether non-veterinarian staff and or other veterinarians may be providing some or all of the veterinary services to the patient.

(h) The need for follow-up care, if it is likely to be required, and how such follow-up care will be provided.

j) The level of supervision that will be provided...

(9)After a client has given informed consent, the registrant must either document in the clinical record the process by which consent was sought and obtained from the client, or obtain written consent.

D: Unauthorized Practice

CVBC bylaws, Division 4.3, General Standards, Sections 224-226 refers to Section 46-47 of the Veterinary Act

“While a veterinarian is responsible for delegating appropriately, under necessary levels of supervision and for the outcomes of those delegated activities, **if non-registrants are engaging in those aspects of veterinary medicine which cannot be delegated (diagnosis and treatment decisions)**, the CVBC may need to **consider** whether the **activities have expanded beyond inappropriate delegation** by the veterinarian and into the staff member **engaging in the unauthorized practice** of veterinary medicine.”

Unauthorized practice: 224: Defined 225: Preventing 226: reporting

E: Medical Record Keeping

Section 245 of the Veterinary act, CVBC Bylaws, Division 4.5 Medical Records, 245(1)

“a registrant must create and maintain medical records, and that **the author of an entry in the medical record would be the person who provided the service and could include any person authorized by the registrant to provide the service, or could be the registrant who supervised the provision of a service.**

The *Professional Practice Standards (PPS)* for medical record keeping provide more detail on what should be included in a complete medical record.”

Delegation

Division 4.7- Delegation and Supervision
262 (1).



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Registrant delegation to employees

262(1) Subject to sections 264 to 266, a registrant **may delegate** procedures or treatments to an employee or another person who is not a registrant.

(2) A registrant **must not** direct or permit an employee or another person who is not a registrant to perform any procedure or treatment **if the registrant is not satisfied that person is competent to perform that procedure or treatment.**

As Registrants, we are Accountable

Division 4.7- Delegation and Supervision
263.

Registrant ultimately responsible

263. Despite any provision of this Division

- (a) a registrant is responsible for the actions of any person to whom the registrant delegates the performance of a procedure or treatment, and
- (b) if a registrant delegates the performance of a procedure or treatment, the registrant is responsible for assessing that person's competence to perform such a delegated procedure or treatment.

Responsible to and Liable for...

DVM

- Ensuring RVT Competency
- Ensuring Appropriate Supervision level
- Ensuring Clear Communication
 - Task delegated & Accepted
- Addressing Near Misses and adverse outcomes
 - Ensure competency remains

RVT

- Only accepting tasks when competent
- Continually assessing personal competence
- Completing delegated tasks competently
- Asking DVM for supervision or clarification if needed

Liability - Actions that can be taken against Veterinary Professional

Professional (Regulatory)

Administrative Action:

- Can result in limitations, suspensions and cancellations of registration.
- Initiated when a complaint is filed against a registrant

Civil

Legal Process:

- Does not affect your Licence
- Initiated by client or 3rd party who has suffered harm or loss due to action or inaction.
- Seek compensation for damages or losses.



Definitions

Again, Why Language Is important

- We are currently behind the times regarding referencing “RVTs”.

From the Veterinary Act, Part 1 definitions:

"certified technician" means an individual who is certified as a certified technician in accordance with the bylaws;

From the CVBC Bylaws, Division 4.7 – Delegation and supervision, Definitions, 259

“animal health technologist” means a person who is:

- i) a graduate of a course in animal health technology accredited by the CVMA and recognized by the college, or
- ii) a person registered with the Animal Health Technologists Association of British Columbia.

“The council may by bylaw do any of the following:”

17 Bylaws regarding practice of veterinary medicine

(e) establish aspects of the practice of veterinary medicine that

- (i) a registrant **may** authorize an employee who is **not** a certified technician to provide or perform under the supervision of a registrant,
- (ii) a registrant **must not** authorize an employee who is **not** a certified technician to provide or perform, or
- (iii) may be performed only by registrants;”

20 Bylaws to establish services that certified technicians may provide

(a) establish aspects of the practice of veterinary medicine that a registrant

- (i) may delegate to a certified technician to provide or perform, or
- (ii) may authorize a certified technician to provide or perform under the supervision of a registrant;

(b) establish one or more classes of certified technicians;

(c) specify limits or conditions for registrants in respect of

- (i) delegating aspects of the practice of veterinary medicine to certified technicians, or
- (ii) authorizing certified technicians to provide or perform aspects of the practice of veterinary medicine under the supervision of a registrant.

The language used in the Bylaws:

...discussing specific procedures in the CVBC bylaws

- “ A registrant may permit an employee or any other person who is not a registrant to perform the following procedures or treatments or other tasks that are comparably similar in nature to those listed...provided they are performed in accordance with the bylaws”

From; Division 4.7: Delegation and Supervision:

259. Definitions: Levels of Supervision

- Direct Personal Supervision
- Direct Supervision
- Indirect Supervision

Direct **Personal** Supervision

- Registrant must be Present in person
- Sufficiently nearby to see, hear, and direct the employee who is performing the designated procedure or treatment
- Attend to the animal as a competent veterinary practice requires

264. (1) *Specific procedures or treatments under **direct personal** Supervision*

- (a) to induce and maintain anaesthesia;
- (b) to suture skin;
- (c) to collect and transfer embryos;
- (d) to perform dental cleaning and prophylaxis, including dental extractions not requiring surgical intervention;
- (e) to collect urine by cystocentesis;
- (f) to administer rabies vaccine.

Direct Supervision

- The registrant is sufficiently nearby (in a vet facility or place where vet services are performed)
- Available to Consult the person performing the designated procedure or treatment or to attend the animal as competent veterinary practice requires.
- Provided they are performed in accordance with the bylaws:

265. (1) *Specific procedures or treatments under **direct** supervision*

- (a) to monitor anaesthetized patients;
- (b) to clean and prepare surgical sites, including wounds;
- (c) to flush ears;
- (d) to apply bandages and splints;
- (e) to perform dental procedures other than dental surgery;
- (f) to perform urinary catheterization;
- (g) to administer enemas;
- (h) to operate a mechanical ventilator.

Direct Supervision

...continued!

265. (2) *Specific procedures or treatments under **direct** supervision*

(2) A registrant may permit a registered health professional to provide veterinary services at the request of the registrant and under the registrant's direct supervision, provided they are performed in accordance with the bylaws.

Indirect supervision

- Registrant has given **oral or written instructions** to another person to perform the designated procedure or treatment.
- The **patient has been examined by the registrant**, at such times as competent veterinary practice requires.
- They are performed in accordance with the bylaws:

266 (1). *Specific procedures or treatments under indirect supervision*

- (a) to perform radiographic procedures;
- (b) to collect specimens for laboratory analysis, except those specimens that require an invasive procedure to collect;
- (c) to perform diagnostic laboratory procedures;
- (d) to administer medications;
- (e) to insert intravenous catheters.

Indirect supervision ...continued

266 (2). Specific Treatments under indirect supervision

- (2) A registrant may permit an employee or any other person who is not a registrant to administer controlled drugs and vaccines excluding rabies vaccines, under the registrant's indirect supervision, provided:
- (a) the registrant has conducted an appropriate examination on the patient consistent with standard medical care,
 - (b) the patient has been adequately supervised in the period between the registrant's examination of the patient and the time the registrant's instructions are given, and
 - (c) the service is administered in accordance with the bylaws.

What's Happening in
other Provinces and
Organizations?

Some Great Guiding
Examples 🌟

Some Great Guiding Examples to Follow

Ontario

- **Veterinary Professionals Act in 2024. Law June 6th 2024**
- Acknowledges evolving roles of Veterinary health care providers.
- Does not impose a rigid scope of practice
- Empowers DVMs to delegate tasks based on what the team needs are.

Manitoba

- **Delegation of Veterinary Tasks Policy (Regulatory Policy) adopted, Dec 6th 2023 adopted by MVMA council.**
- Provide Veterinary Professionals with better guidance about veterinary task delegation.

AAHA Technician Utilization Guidelines

Ontario

Changing the Veterinarians Act

The OAVT, together with the College of Veterinarians of Ontario (CVO) and the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA), have been advocating for an updated *Veterinarians Act*, 1996 for many years to better reflect the current practice of team-based care in veterinary medicine.

In late 2022, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) announced the *Veterinarians Act*, RSO 1990, was open for public consultation.

On March 7, 2024, Ontario's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Lisa Thompson, announced the new ***Veterinary Professionals Act, 2024***, under the ***Enhancing Professional Care for Animals Act***, which will formally recognize RVTs' growing role in team-based veterinary care. This legislation is a significant, positive development in the regulation and modernization of veterinary care for the benefit of animals, RVTs, and the public. On June 6, 2024, the bill received Royal Assent and is now law in Ontario.

- “The OAVT expects this process to be complete before the end of 2025 with regulations taking effect over the course of 2026.”
- “This change will formalize the **one profession, two professionals' model** that is already widely in practice among modern veterinary teams. **RVTs will finally be able to practice to the full scope of their training**, enabling them to use their education and training to benefit animals, veterinary teams, and the public. The legislation will also ensure RVTs have a seat at the Council table where the profession is governed, increasing representation of RVTs' interests and concerns.”

Podcast

Listen to this January 4, 2022 episode of Oculus Insights' Hire the Smile Podcast, hosted by Dr. Mike Pownall, DVM. In this important episode, titled "HOW REGISTERED VETERINARY TECHNICIANS CAN HELP SAVE THE VETERINARY PROFESSION," Dr. Pownall speaks with OAVT President Kirsti Clarida, RVT about the roles, value and utilization of RVTs. They also touch on the topics of RVT burnout and setting boundaries.



Scope of Practice

RVTs Scope of Practice in Manitoba

As the regulatory body for the veterinary technologist profession in the province, the Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA), through its bylaws, is responsible for establishing the rules for veterinary technologists' scope of practice.

The Manitoba Veterinary Technologists' Association (MVTA's) role, with regards to scope of practice, is to advocate for its technologist members through meetings with the MVMA and government.

All veterinary technologists must be registered in the Province of Manitoba with the MVTA and MVMA as practicing members in order to work in a clinic as an RVT.

It is important to note that any individual cannot use the title VT, RVT or Veterinary Technologist or engage in the practice of veterinary medicine (as defined through scope of practice) in Manitoba without registration in both associations.

MVMA By-Law on RVTs Scope of Practice

The MVMA General By-Law No. 1 defines the RVT Scope of Practice as:

- A Practicing Veterinary Technologist Member may practice all aspects of veterinary medicine other than**
- (a) making a diagnosis
 - (b) determining a course of treatment (including prescribing medications)
 - (c) applying surgical techniques

MVMA By-Law

MVMA's Delegation of Veterinary Tasks

On December 5, 2023 the MVMA Council adopted a Delegation of Veterinary Tasks Policy (Regulatory Policy) to provide veterinary professionals (DVMs and RVTs) with better clarity and guidance on how tasks can be delegated.

The utilization of Registered Veterinary Technologists (RVTs) is essential in building an efficient and healthy veterinary practice. Utilizing RVTs to their fullest extent can increase productivity, reduce RVTs leaving the profession, and increase job satisfaction and career opportunities. Utilizing RVTs can also increase overall medical care to Manitobans and increase the sustainability of the practice of veterinary medicine. However, there are barriers/practices may face when looking to utilize RVTs. This guidance document will provide clarity on the scope of practice for RVTs, as well as information about liability and other barriers/practices may face when looking to utilize RVTs.

Click the button below to learn more about how veterinary medicine is delegated in Manitoba to RVTs are helpful to consult when determining appropriate tasks to delegate. These can be found in Appendix 1 (for RVTs) and Appendix 2 (for unregistered auxiliary).

Delegation of Veterinary Tasks Policy



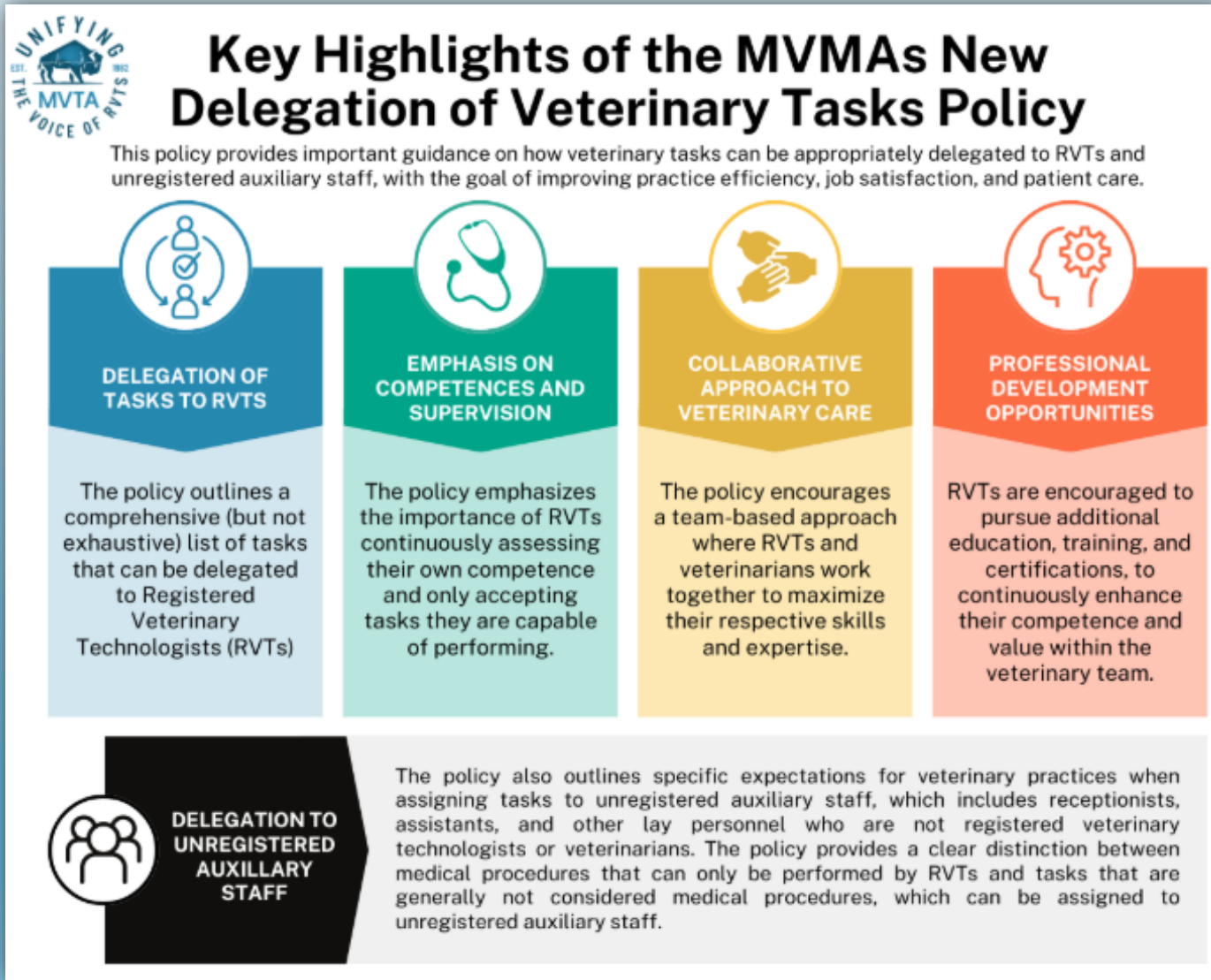
MVMA By-Law on RVTs Scope of Practice

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- (a) making a diagnosis
 - (b) determining a course of treatment (including prescribing medications)
 - (c) applying surgical techniques

- All veterinary technologists must be registered in the Province of Manitoba with the MVTA and MVMA as practicing members in order to work in a clinic as an RVT.
- It is important to note that any individual cannot use the title VT, RVT or Veterinary Technologist or engage in the practice of veterinary medicine (as defined through scope of practice) in Manitoba without registration in both associations.

Manitoba



“ The utilization of Registered Veterinary Technologists (RVTs) is essential in building an efficient and healthy veterinary practice.

Utilizing RVTs to their fullest extent can increase productivity, reduce RVTs leaving the profession, and increase job satisfaction and career opportunities.

Utilizing RVTs can also increase overall medical care to Manitobans and increase the sustainability of the practice of veterinary medicine.

However, there are barriers practices may face when looking to utilize RVTs.

This guidance document will provide clarity on the scope of practice for RVTs, as well as information about liability and other barriers practices may face when looking to utilize RVTs.”

Competency:



Delegation of Veterinary Tasks Policy
Regulatory Policy

Effective Date: December 6, 2023
Review Date: 2026

<https://www.mvma.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Delegation-of-Veterinary-Tasks-Policy-2023-12-06.pdf>, Retrieved, Oct 2025

- Not a fixed state
- As an RVT progresses from (novice) graduate to expert
 - Competency becomes more intuitive
 - Can handle harder tasks with less supervision
- Development of professional competence
 - Access to ongoing training and mentorship
 - Exposure to new techniques
 - Active involvement in practice.
 - Informal in-Practice training.

Building mutual trust!

Determining Competency

DVM Role

- Communicate with RVT about previous training or experience
- Monitor performance
- Onboarding:
 - Gradually increase difficulty level
 - Pair New RVT with Experienced
- Provide appropriate training and supervision as needed

RVT Role

Ask oneself...

- Am I permitted (scope of practice)
- When did I last engage in task?
- Task on same or similar Species?
- Does patient exhibit behavior that requires higher experience?
- Am I competent to engage?

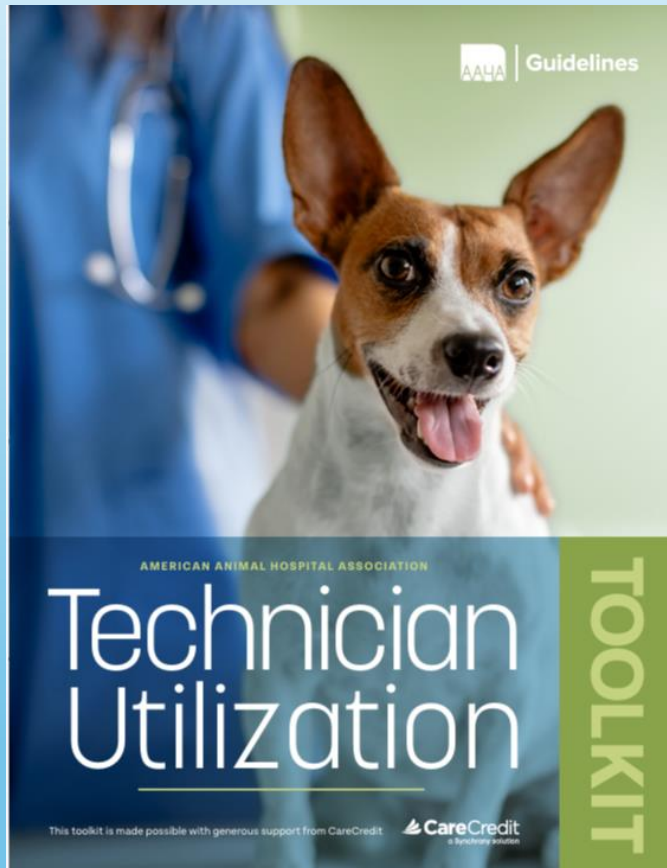
Determining Supervision

- Levels of Supervision
 - Experience and Competence
 - Task Complexity
 - Complex medical procedures v/s routine procedures with established protocols
 - Patient Stability
- Regular Assessment and Training
- Communication and Documentation
 - Maintain clear channels regarding task assignment and expectations
 - Fully Document all tasks done by RVT: Legal and reference

Appropriate delegation includes considering:

- 1) Is it within the RVT Scope of Practice?
 - Does not include: determining course of action, diagnosing, Surgery
- 2) Is the RVT Competent?
 - If not – how can the team work together to increase this
- 3) What level of supervision is required?
- 4) Is the RVT willing and able to provide care?

AAHA Guidelines



Contents

- 3** Resources for Veterinary Teams
- 4** Supporting Veterinary Technicians through Healthy Workplace Culture
- 6** Building a Team-Based Approach to Cost of Care
- 10** Trust Your Team
- 12** Protecting the Veterinary Technician Title in Practice
- 13** Strategies for Creating Trust Among Teammates
- 14** Trust Our Team Client Handout
- 16** Know Your Role
- 17** Career Progression for Veterinary Assistants and Technicians
- 18** Resources for the Utilization and Support of Veterinary Technicians
- 19** References



Meet Indy, mascot of the AAHA
Technician Utilization Guidelines

Retrieved from, <https://www.aaha.org/resources/2023-aaha-technician-utilization-guidelines/technician-utilization-toolkit/> Oct 2025.

Guidelines at a Glance

Are you leaving credentialed veterinary technicians on the bench when they could be star players?

Credentialed veterinary technicians are a valuable resource for a veterinary practice, but their skills, education, and experience are often not being used to their full potential. Optimal utilization of credentialed veterinary technicians can benefit the entire veterinary team by supporting professional longevity, mutual trust and collaboration, improved patient care, and financial sustainability. The 2023 AAHA Technician Utilization Guidelines outline the steps you can take right now to improve credentialed veterinary technician utilization in your practice.

These guidelines include practical tools to help implement optimal utilization, including:

-  **Goal worksheets**
-  **Workflows by role for everyday clinical examples**
-  **Veterinary team member utilization assessment tools**
-  **Examples of levels and skills for professional growth and increased learning potential for credentialed veterinary technicians**
-  **Case examples showing optimal utilization**
-  **Open-ended questions to structure conversations around improving utilization**



3/2/1

3 Takeaways

-  Credentialed veterinary technicians cite lack of utilization as a top reason for leaving the profession, along with burnout and decreased job satisfaction.
-  Proper utilization is crucial for optimizing team efficiency, which in turn can increase access to veterinary services, improve patient care, and address staffing and retention problems.
-  Using credentialed veterinary technicians to the full extent of their education and training contributes to financial sustainability. Practices where veterinarians rarely perform tasks that credentialed veterinary technicians can, and should, do show an average revenue increase of 36%.

2 Actions

-  Recognize that the causes of poor utilization often stem from lack of knowledge and learn about what tasks and procedures credentialed veterinary technicians can legally perform in your area.
-  To begin integrating greater utilization into your workflow, prioritize appointments/initial assessments, surgeries and anesthetic procedures, and telehealth/teletriage. Develop detailed plans based on agreed-upon protocols and train everyone on implementation.

1 Thing to Never Forget

-  Optimal utilization is tied to job satisfaction, and it's an essential piece for retaining credentialed veterinary technicians in the profession. Veterinary practices must make the commitment of time and training for all team members to implement optimal utilization. When practices make this commitment, change can start now!

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American Animal Hospital Association

- Promotes optimal utilization of (RVTS)
- Supports professional longevity
 - Job Satisfaction
- Creates mutual trust and collaboration

The Guidelines **outline the steps you can take right now** to improve utilization and start making changes NOW.

- Prioritize
- Develop detailed plans based on agreed upon protocols and train the whole team.

2023 AAHA TECHNICIAN UTILIZATION GUIDELINES

CREDENTIALLED TECHNICIANS CAN, AND WANT TO, BE DOING MORE.

So what does optimal utilization look like?

- Creating training and development programs
- Clearly defining team roles and responsibilities
- Implementing SOPs for greater utilization
- Having frank and open conversations about overcoming barriers to change
- Learning about credentialed veterinary technicians' scope of practice and what tasks they can legally perform
- Building a workplace culture of trust and psychological safety
- Shifting perspectives to a team-centric model, where everyone feels empowered to reach their highest potential



CREDENTIALLED VETERINARY TECHNICIANS ARE HIGHLY SKILLED PROFESSIONALS WHO:

- ✓ Trained and studied hard
- ✓ Passed a rigorous national examination



OPTIMAL UTILIZATION OF CREDENTIALLED VETERINARY TECHNICIANS BENEFITS THE ENTIRE VETERINARY TEAM BY:

- ✓ Supporting professional longevity
- ✓ Creating mutual trust and collaboration
- ✓ Improving patient care, and
- ✓ Increasing financial sustainability



ARE YOU LEAVING CREDENTIALLED VETERINARY TECHNICIANS ON THE BENCH WHEN THEY COULD BE STAR PLAYERS?

CREDENTIALLED VETERINARY TECHNICIANS ARE A VALUABLE RESOURCE FOR A VETERINARY PRACTICE...



...YET, THEY ARE OFTEN IN JOBS THAT PREVENT THEM FROM FULLY USING ALL OF THEIR TRAINING, SKILLS, AND EDUCATION



THE 2023 AAHA TECHNICIAN UTILIZATION GUIDELINES OUTLINE THE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE RIGHT NOW TO IMPROVE CREDENTIALLED VETERINARY TECHNICIAN UTILIZATION IN YOUR PRACTICE. GO TO [AAHA.ORG/TECHNICIAN-UTILIZATION](https://www.aaha.org/technician-utilization) TO LEARN MORE.



Some Specific Examples

Dentistry

From: CVBC Professional Practice Standard:
Veterinary Dentistry (Companion animals) Oct 2018/2020

- A veterinarian who provides dental services to any companion animal(s) meets the Professional Practice Standard: Veterinary Dentistry (Companion Animals) when he/she:
 - “ Diagnoses and determines a treatment plan through direct assessment of the animal and includes radiography in the assessment as indicated”

- Delegates a dental procedure under the following circumstances:
 1. The veterinarian is confident that the employee has the education and experience to perform the procedure.
 2. The veterinarian is available on-site to provide appropriate supervision to the competent employee; and
 3. The veterinarian confirms that the delegated procedure was correctly performed by re-examining the entire oral cavity on completion of the procedure

Dentistry

From: CVBC Professional Practice Standard:
Veterinary Dentistry (Companion animals) Oct 2018/2020

4. Does not delegate the examination of the teeth and/or oral cavity needed to:
 - Make an assessment,
 - Develop a diagnosis, and/or
 - Formulate a treatment plan.
5. Does not delegate extraction procedures.
5. Uses appropriate dental charting.

Putting it together: An RVT

- Makes an initial pre-anesthetic assessment
- Prepares Sedation – Collaborate with DVD (Age, BCS) adjust?
- Induces Anesthetic (D.P.S.) and then maintains.
- Charts the oral cavity → DVM confirms and Diagnoses
- Performs Oral Radiology
- Delivers Appropriate local analgesia (Nerve Blocks)
- Performs the Dental COHAT → DVM confirms completeness
- Anesthetic recovery
- Prepares or formalizes the medical record (AI assisted?).
- Patient Discharge, Client Communication,

Anesthetic

From The CVBC Professional Practice Standard:

Small Animal Anesthetic Monitoring

“The Council acknowledges that this Professional Practice Standard does not address the delegation and supervision of anesthetic monitoring. These requirements are currently prescribed in Part 4 of the CVBC bylaws (sections 259-266).

A Standard cannot impose requirements that are contrary to the bylaws”

Anesthetic: Small animal Anesthetic Monitoring.

Focus is on “Competent” care and record keeping.

- Circulation
- Blood Gasses
- Ventilation
- Temperature
- Medical Record Keeping
- Recovery Period
- Personnel:
 - A responsible and “competent person” – from induction to recovery
- Sedation without G.A. – if loose control of protective airway reflexes



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How Do We Get
There?

So How Do We Get There?

- You need to have a plan
- Adopt a Team Mindset
- Communicate with your entire team
- Set the boundaries
- Reimagine work flow
- Decide what Training can happen

Building RVTs into the team approach

“

- **As a veterinarian, practice manager, or practice owner, you can support your RVTs in a number of ways.**
- **Ask them what their professional goals are** and work with them to achieve those goals.
 - Can you give them a continuing education budget that will help them meet their goals?
 - Are there opportunities for them to get hands-on experience in your practice, or
 - can you allow them time off to be able to seek that experience elsewhere?

Supporting your RVTs' career goals will allow them to expand their knowledge and skills, which will help them create meaningful and long careers.

- **Include your RVTs in decision-making when appropriate** and consider their opinion, especially with changes to protocols, procedures, or equipment that will affect their day-to-day responsibilities.
- Including RVTs in these types of discussions can go a long way to helping them feel like they are a valued member of the patient care team
- Studies show that when people feel fulfilled, engaged, and appreciated, morale goes up, along with employee retention rates

”

bcvta.com / WCV-January-Article

FROM THE BC VETERINARY TECHNOLOGISTS ASSOCIATION

RETAINING RVTs
BY OFFERING THEM OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

BY AMBER GREGG

As the Executive Director of the BC Veterinary Technologists Association (BCVTA), I am often responsible for providing support for our members, the hard-working Registered Veterinary Technologists (RVTs) of BC. I receive requests for advice from our members every day on how to navigate discussions with their clinic owners, practice managers, and veterinary co-workers when it comes to protocols, policies, and procedures in their practices. Questions and concerns often include patient safety and outcomes, utilization of skills, compensation packages, and personal safety. I can tell you with absolute certainty that these members are seeking support because they are often torn between wanting to be a good team member by not "causing trouble" and advocating for patients, clients, and their own personal safety and well-being.

Recognizing the value of RVTs in the veterinary field and fully utilizing their skills can help alleviate veterinarians' heavy workloads. The Veterinarian's Art and College of Veterinarians of BC (VCVBC) bylaws allow veterinarians to delegate a range of tasks to RVTs. According to the BCVTA's 2022 Employment and Wage Survey, nearly 100% of respondents have additional certifications and credentials including Veterinary Technician Specialties, Certified Canine Rehabilitation Practitioner, and Veterinary Practice Management Certificate. It is clear that most RVTs

are not satisfied with careers where they are restricted to performing the same old daily tasks and procedures, and often pursue continuing their education beyond what is required to maintain their membership. Does this mean that RVTs are not satisfied with their career choice? Absolutely not! Does it mean that they are looking to get out of veterinary medicine? Again, absolutely not! It means that RVTs want to pursue opportunities that allow them to apply all of their knowledge and skills and grow within the profession.

As a veterinarian, practice manager, or practice owner, you can support your RVTs in a number of ways. Ask them what their professional goals are and work with them to achieve those goals. Can you give them a continuing education budget that will help them meet their goals? Are there opportunities for them to get hands-on experience in your practice, or can you allow them time off to be able to seek that experience elsewhere? Supporting your RVTs' career goals will allow them to expand their knowledge and skills, which will help them create meaningful and long careers. Include your RVTs in decision-making when appropriate and consider their opinion, especially with changes to protocols, procedures, or equipment that will affect their day-to-day responsibilities. Including RVTs in these types of discussions can go a long way to helping them feel like they are a valued member of the patient care team—and studies show that when people feel fulfilled, engaged, and appreciated, morale goes up, along with employee retention rates.

The BCVTA's vision is for every animal care facility in BC to employ and fully utilize RVTs, and we believe this is a key factor in the longevity and well-being of these amazing professionals. The association is grateful for the opportunity to share our thoughts on issues like this, and we are always happy to discuss them further. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to reach out to us at bcvtboard@gmail.com.



Amber Gregg, RVT, is the Executive Director and Past President of the BCVTA. She graduated from the TRU veterinary technology program in 2007 and spent eight years in mixed animal practice before gaining experience in not-for-profit management. She joined the BCVTA Board of Directors as Vice President in 2020, and served a one-year term as President in 2021 before being appointed to the Executive Director position in 2022. Amber is grateful for everyone who made the BCVTA the strong and healthy organization it is today, and she is proud to work with the Board of Directors and members of the BCVTA to continue to advance the veterinary technology profession.

Retrieved from : <https://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclclefindmkaj/https://www.bcvta.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/WCV-January-Article.pdf>, Sept 2025

How well do you know your RVT?

- When did they graduate
- What training and additional certifications have they obtained.
- What excites and interest them?
- What are their Professional Passions?
- What would they like to **champion**?
- Identify people who look bored?
- How do you ignite their spark?



Listening to our RVT's

- Let Technologists utilize their time to do what they are trained to do.
- If not Utilized, RVT's will get bored – loose their passion.
- Growth and development are limited if there is nothing else available that they want to do.
- Reshape a mindset that RVTs aren't just part of the process, they are the process.
- Create an environment that is intentionally set up not to just “do more” , instead be elevated to champion more.

Champion: 🥰

- **Noun**

“a person who fights or argues for a cause on behalf of someone (or something) else”

-- Our RVT is a champion for adaptive patient warming regarding all aspects of anesthesia and recoveries.

- **Verb**

“support the cause of; defend”

-- *We thank our RVTs who championed hands-free radiology practices to help decrease exposure rates for our staff.*

True Champion

A true Champion is someone who...

- Is courageous yet humble, willing to take on new challenges beyond their normal comfort zone and is excited to give to a team success.
- Doesn't give up when things get challenging. They control what they can but know that adversity, making mistakes, and potentially coming up short are all part of learning. They are satisfied, knowing they do their best.
- Feels that making a difference is part of who they are. Their motivation extends beyond simply winning or finishing, finding joy in the committed focus that builds towards excellent process.
- Defends those who cannot speak for themselves and stands up for the truth.

A hand holding a silver trophy cup, with a large number of small, five-pointed gold stars falling out of the top. The background is a light blue gradient. The trophy is positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the slide.

What could RVT's Champion?

- Patient comfort and care
- Laboratory efficiencies
- Rehabilitation outcomes
- Nutritional counselling
- In-depth client communications
- Wellness exams for Puppies & kittens and healthy animals
 - Vaccine administration, weight loss plans.
- Specific Areas of Practice
- Social Media

And so much more...

The focus

- Should not be on what an RVT can do
- But rather what an RVT **CANNOT** do.



Competency and Trust

A cultural shift in veterinary medicine.

Believe in it...

- Trust in something and let go of control. (I know, it's hard)
- RE-think **Team effort**:
 - Utilizing the skills of the entire team becomes a baseline, not a luxury
- Key to growth is a collaboration built on mutual respect, **not hierarchy**
- Every member of the team is valuable and has an integral role
- Create the culture where technologists are respected.
 - Where they can make a mistake and not be reprimanded, but supported
 - Where they can take the lead



Train RVTs to Complement the DVM

- Why? Expand your practice, help more pets.
- It's not about Competition but **collaboration**
- Help your team members with **Goal Setting**
- **Devise a plan** to reach those goals with frequent check-ins.
 - Is the clinic need being met?
 - Is competency being met?
 - Is the desire ongoing
- **Revise the plan** as needed along they way



Train your Clients Too!



Onboard them to your shift for optimized patient care.



Let them know that another Qualified Animal Health Professional will be handling their needs.



Reinforce the Language at every Team interaction



Introduce your Registered Veterinary Technologists – Be Proud



The majority of your clients will understand and appreciate.



There may some that are reluctant to change, work with them.

The plan

- Short term interventions are rarely going to give you **long term** relief.
- You have to **want change** for it to happen
- You need to look at this as a **strong investment** and stand behind it.
- **Envision** where you want your clinic to be within a specific time frames
→ Create clear, measurable goals to reach for.
- **Communicate** throughout your entire team, frequently.
- Communicate the enhanced **changes** with your clients.
 - Expect some to take to new ideas better than others.

Communicate with your team

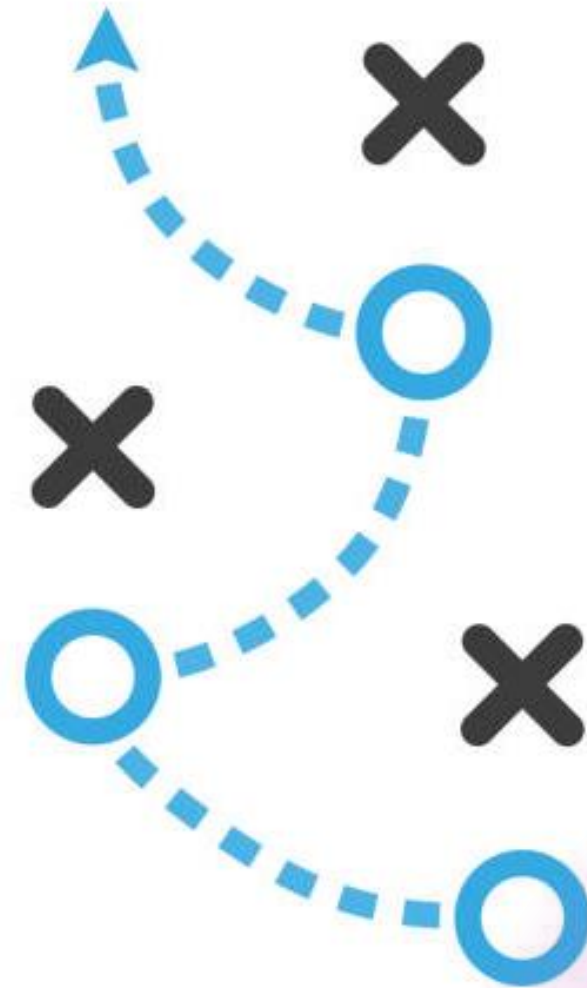
- Focus on what the **shared purpose** is → Better patient care.
- Collaborate to find out what **expectations** are held.
- Determine **what is the need of the clinic**, how can it be met?
- Start small and build bigger as comfort grows.
- **Try something**. If not effective, follow up and moderate.
 - Nothing is static, nor perfect the 1st time

Create a culture where expectations go from desire to standard

Some Potential Training Options

(this list is not exhaustive)

1. Intra-clinical mentorship:
2. Continuing education
3. Specific Career or Communications Training.
 - Companies such as BS Communications Strategies
 - RECOVER CPR: basic (BLS) and advanced (ALS) life support.
4. Veterinary Technologists Specialties (VTS)



1) Intra-Clinic mentorship

- Pair seasoned RVTs with Novice.
- Changing Clinic culture involves a whole team approach
- Not just your RVTs
- Specific Additional Training is an investment.
- Continuing education



2) Continuing Education Eg's



<https://www.bcvta.com/>



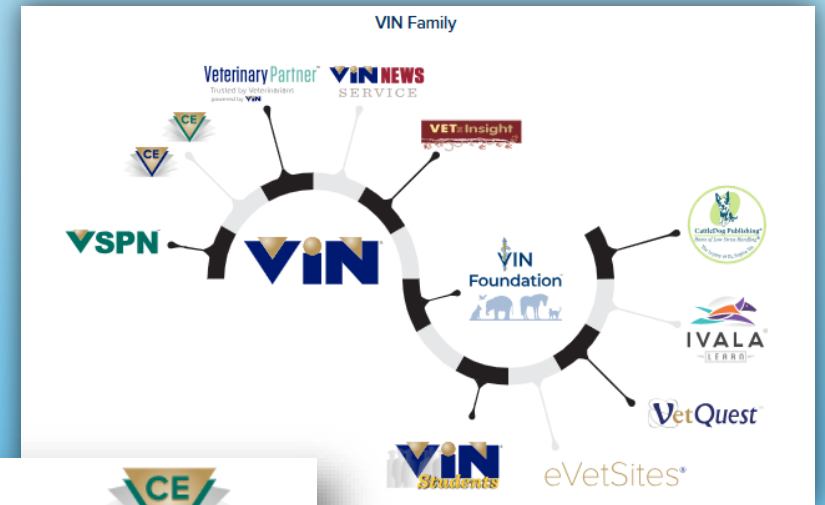
<https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/education-and-events/continuing-education/>



<https://www.communivet.com/en/ca/>



<https://www.avpbc.com/frmHome.aspx>



<https://www.vin.com/vin/>



Remember...

“The Human Resourceless Challenge” Sept 21, 2021)

- Onboarding staff from outside of the profession
- Attraction Strategies
- Employee Retention
- Workflow and Scheduling
- Feeling valued and important
- Relief through
 - Outsourcing 3rd party resources
 - Utilizing technology



“Take time to enjoy
veterinary medicine” 🥰

3) Specific Career/Communications Training

→ e.g., **bs communication strategies**

- Training your RVTs who will then bring their extensive skills back
- They also offer Onboarding Specialists to implement learned strategies
- I met Becky Taylor, RVT, MA at the 2022 CVMA Convention in Halifax

CVMA Signature Events

Thursday, July 21

8:00am -
12:00pm

CVMA Summit - Time for a Paradigm
Shift for the Veterinary Profession



“What I know to be true is that, in veterinary medicine, when we communicate better, patient care gets better, clients are less likely to complain and we are happier.”



Mobilizing RVTs®: A 5-day program that empowers RVTs to lead wellness appointments by developing their communication skills & strategies within the scope of practice in their jurisdiction. We have 4 editions: Companion Animal Wellness (the OG program), Large Animal Wellness, End of Life and Pet Nutrition (coming soon).

Rally the Receptionists: A 2-day program for busy reception teams to handle all the client interactions (even the 'difficult' ones) with confidence and skill. It's tough being on the frontline having 100's of convos a day!

Clinically Clear: A 2-day program that shows veterinarians the communication tools to handle tough client conversations, improve compliance and strengthen team culture. Made specifically for DVM's to improve efficiencies & grow business revenue.

Feedback from Such Training...

- “It is Awesome”
- “We Can Practice Better Medicine”
- “Really, a Giant Triage system was created”
- “Our jobs are more fulfilling as we now do more of what we love”

It has become a positive feedback loop.

You will free up time so that you can treat the ill animals, and you will have time to talk to clients, because you have freed up your time.

Feedback from Such Training... An interview summary



An interview with a DVM who's Clinic Mobilizes RVTs

(Some tips from a vet who has taken the journey before you.)

While researching how to effectively mobilize RVTs, I interviewed a veterinarian whose clinic invested in BS Communication Strategies training and has been mobilizing RVTs for several years now. Here is a summary of the words of advice that were offered in how they took a leap of faith, trusted in something better, and are enjoying a new, rewarding practice model.

Why did they consider changing their clinic culture?

1) They started to burn out, were seeing extended wait times, and frustrated clients. They could not find vets to fill the coverage gaps. DVMs had to generate all the significant income themselves, and it was becoming unsustainable.

2) They asked themselves; how can we truly and effectively make change happen?

"Vets all want a solution without paying for it", but they knew this would not generate the change they were looking for. Everything is expensive. They made a mental budget and trusted that a new direction can work; if they didn't commit fully, they knew it would fail. "We all could see how it should happen, but we are scared". So, we trusted that it is doable, that we wanted it, and we went for it.

3) They researched and invested into BS communication strategy programs.

BS Communication Strategies = "Communication Nerds"

- Engaged in training over the next 2 years. Sent the first technologist, their most experienced, to the training and launched their new clinic workflow six months later.

- Integration Services were offered so that after the teaching, instructors came in and worked with staff to get through hurdles and problems. The vet needed no different skill set other than communication. They came and did a full team day.

- The second Technologist who wanted to go was their least experienced tech. Now have 4 technologists on board.

How to get there? Supporting each other.

We have to care about our people. Be kind to ourselves, protect our RVT's, and be careful.

You have to look 5 and 10 years out and have several goal and check ins along the way.

You have to want to change. This truly is a financial and emotion commitment.

"The reaction to change is resistance". Individuals (staff and clients) can be stubborn to engage in change. However, all things to all people we can't be. How do we expand care?

Through communication and recognition, give clients trust; "this professional is who you will see as you pet is not ill"

These situations work for clients, as technicians are much better at communicating at a level that is more realistic. They get more fulfillment as they are leaders in client care.

They determined:

What sort of tasks or appointments are you having RVTs doing? Wellness oriented. If techs are not comfortable, they have the right to refuse.

Technologists need to trust that when they reach for the vet, they have coverage, and the vet will not throw them under the bus. The vet needs to take the baton to follow up if there is a discrepancy of any sort.

Internally, they defined a specific scope of practice for the technologists, being very conscious to local bylaws. The 1st time an animal is seen, it must be by a doctor who determines a wellness plan.

The practice owner wrote an RVT handbook.

- When do they reach for a vet? What prompted the client to call the clinic?
- Mental Wellness matters to the RVT. What appointments are driven by the RVT?
- When does the team not involve a doctor? When are there plans for a DVM to follow up?

They have Standard operating procedures to guide/follow them during assessments.

Regarding client communications: they clearly define what topics, updates, or information are meant for RVTs to communicate to clients. Who should disclose what: a technologist, a veterinarian, another team member?

Language in appointments is important.

- They are strict to use "assessment" for a Technologist. Veterinarians can do an "examination".
- They can make a "recommendation".

For E.g., A technologist can do an assessment and recommend a dental. During the dental, the DVM will examine and diagnose.

The Outcome:

They "Launched the program" within their clinic. The DVMs trusted the training, **let go of the control**, and put their faith towards a new clinic workflow and culture

"It is awesome." They look at their days now, look at their schedule, and know that they have a return on their investment. Bookings are very full for RVTs and there are now openings for DVMS. **"We can practice better medicine"**

"Really, a giant triage system was created"

When a senior vet looked at their schedule and noted the full RVT bookings and the openings for the Veterinarians it was asked: "Shouldn't vets be completely filled first? The answer, **"No they should be open for ill animals"**.

It has become a positive feedback loop. You will free up time so that you can treat the ill animals, and you will have time to talk to clients, because you have freed up your time.

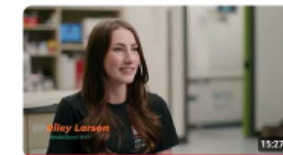
The DVM job became more fulfilling as they do more of what they love now!

- As summarized by James Sudhoff, DVM.

Also: Check out the documentary about BS Communication Strategies Inc. on YouTube.

"Mobilizing RVTs" 2.0 documentary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tund3ZK8KEc>



Mobilizing RVTs® 2.0 Documentary

You will be inspired!

4) Veterinary Technician Specialties



Approved Veterinary Technician Specialties

- Dental Technician
- Anesthesia and Analgesia
- Internal Medicine
- Emergency and Critical Care
- Veterinary Behaviour Technician
- Veterinary Zoological Medicine
- Equine Veterinary Nursing Technician
- Veterinary Surgical Technician
- Physical Rehabilitation Veterinary Technician
- Veterinary Ophthalmic Technician
- Veterinary Technician in Diagnostic Imaging
- Veterinary Technician in Clinical Practice
- Veterinary Nutrition Technician
- Veterinary Clinical Pathology Technician
- Laboratory Technician
- Dermatology Technician

Retrieved from, <https://rvtcareernavigator.ca/vts/> Oct 2025

• CVTS: the NAVTA Committee

“NAVTA’s VTSSM program exists to help veterinary technicians attain a higher level of recognition for advanced knowledge and skills in specific disciplines.”

Retrieved from: <https://navta.net/veterinary-technician-specialties/> , Oct 2025

Career planning

To become a Veterinary Technician Specialist, you must:

- Graduate from high school
- Graduate from an accredited degree program in Veterinary Technology
- Pass the Veterinary Technician National Examination
- Obtain your RVT
- Get experience in a specialty
- Take continuing education in a specialty
- Apply to a National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America recognized academy (Note: Each academy has specific requirements a Veterinary Technician must complete before taking the VTS credentialing exams so find out directly from the academy what is required.)

A commitment in itself!

- But not impossible 😊 🌟

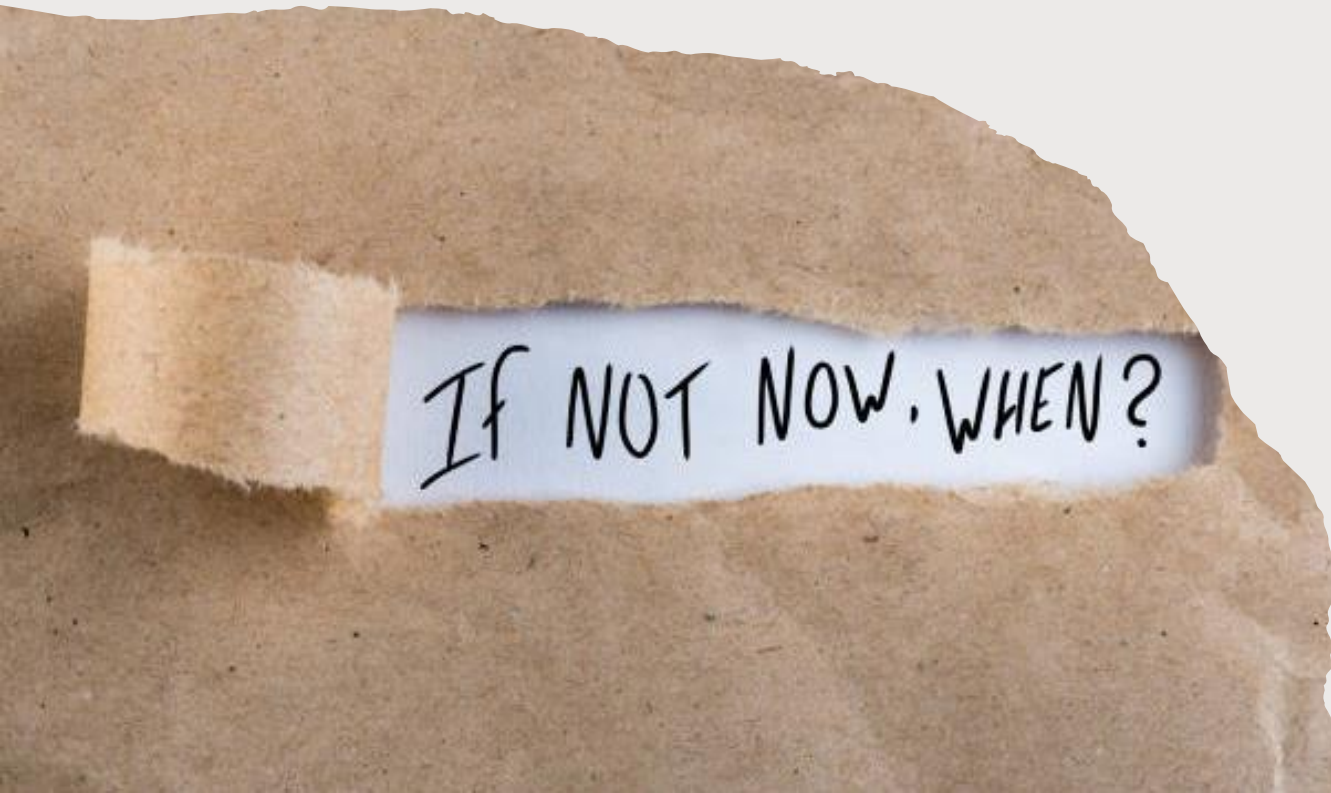
Education

Typical application materials to earn a VTS designation include:

- Completed application with work experience, including proof of 1,000-10,000 hours of experience in the specialty area
- Registered Veterinary Technologist/Technician, Certified Veterinary Technician, or Licensed Veterinary Technician credentials
- 40+ hours of continuing education related to the specialization
- Letter(s) of recommendation
- Skills assessment signed by a supervisor
- Case logs
- Detailed case studies
- Passing score on a specialized exam
- Application fee
- Exam fee

In Summary

- If you want change, you have to actively pursue it.
 - It does not just happen by accident.
- Changing Clinic Culture (for the better) takes...
 - A plan
 - Commitment
 - Time: Long term goals
 - Engaging, knowing, listening to, & respecting your RVTs opinions.
 - Training: Meaningful, directed, and encouraged
 - Continual revisiting and modification



IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

Why Language is Important:

Key Words from this presentation

- Communication
- Trust
- Competency
- Mutual Respect
- Growth
- Encouragement
- Care
- Protection



ASSOCIATED VETERINARY
PURCHASING CO. LTD.

Once again,
Thank you AVP
for making this
presentation
possible

Resources:

Legislation

BC: Veterinarians Act: https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/10015_01

Ontario: Veterinary Professionals Act, 2024: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/24v15>

Manitoba: RVT Scope of Practice: <https://mymvta.ca/membership/scope-of-practice>

Guidance documents:

CBCV Legal Documents:

<https://www.cvbc.ca/resources/legislation-standards-policies/>

AAHA: 2023 AAHA Technician Utilization Guidelines:

<https://www.aaha.org/resources/2023-aaha-technician-utilization-guidelines/>

Manitoba: Delegation of Veterinary Tasks Policy, Regulatory Policy

<https://www.mvma.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Delegation-of-Veterinary-Tasks-Policy-2023-12-06.pdf>

Further Training Examples for Technologists

BS Communications: <https://www.bscommunication.ca/>

RVTC: RVT Career Navigator: <https://rvtcareernavigator.ca/>

VTS training. <https://navta.net/veterinary-technician-specialties/>

Policies and Procedures; National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America Committee of Veterinary Technician Specialties. (Revised December 6th 2024).