



**SASKATCHEWAN  
VETERINARY MEDICAL  
ASSOCIATION**

# **CONTINUING EDUCATION STANDARDS AND OPERATIONAL POLICIES**

**November 2019**

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## CONTINUING EDUCATION OPERATIONAL POLICIES

### GENERAL

The Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association (SVMA) is the professional regulatory organization responsible for approving and tracking mandated continuing education for members. The intent of Continuing Education (CE) is to enable members to expand and improve their professional activities on a continuous basis.

Each licenced veterinarian is required to earn a minimum of 30 credit hours in a designated 24-month period that are relevant to their area of professional activity.

CE that is SVMA or Registry of Approved Continuing Education (RACE, <http://www.aavsb.org/race/>) approved is appropriate provided that it is relevant to the member's area of professional activity.

Any program will be considered that is,

1. relevant to animal health and welfare
2. relevant to practice management and communication
3. intended to improve the member's skill in the delivery of veterinary services.

Each licenced member will annually report to the SVMA at the time of membership renewal, the total number of hours of CE that were obtained in the past calendar year.

SVMA members are required to accumulate CE hours that are educational and relevant to their area of professional activity. There are many different areas of professional CE activity for licenced veterinarians and registered veterinary technologists and as a result, many different and varied subjects or topics may be considered appropriate as CE for an individual veterinarian or registered veterinary technologist.

The purpose of this document is to provide:

- I. Guidelines for organizations wishing to provide SVMA approved Continuing Education.
- II. Guidelines to allow SVMA members to self-assess CE opportunities for their suitability for credit.
- III. Guidelines for SVMA members claiming preparation of Publications and Presentations as CE credit hours.
- IV. Guidelines for members recording and reporting CE hours.
- V. Information on the auditing process used by the SVMA to verify the hours of completed CE that are reported by members.

- VI. Information on consequences of Non-Compliance with CE requirements.
- VII. Information on the process used regarding CE reporting and audits.
- VIII. Information regarding re-instatement and Non-Practicing member transfer.

## I Guidelines for organizations wishing to provide SVMA approved CE.

### a) Content

The content of SVMA approved CE will include the following:

#### Continuing Education in Clinical Veterinary Medicine and Science

Science or clinical based CE, supported by applied or basic research, that has been presented in peer reviewed scientific literature, or has been typically presented at accredited schools of veterinary medicine or nationally recognized organizations or institutions.

#### Continuing Education in Disciplines that have an Impact on Animal Health and Welfare

Disciplines such as animal nutrition, management, husbandry, behaviour, alternative and complimentary therapies and others are appropriate. As these areas are essential to animal health and welfare, they are desirable CE opportunities, provided that the other conditions outlined here are met.

#### Continuing Education areas or topics that have an Impact on the Profession of Veterinary Medicine

Continuing education in areas that have an impact on the profession of veterinary medicine is encouraged. These may include areas of policy development, legislation, regulations and governance.

#### Continuing Education in topics that Impact on the delivery of Veterinary Medical Services

Disciplines such as practice management, communication, conflict resolution and employment standards are increasingly necessary for practice owners. Such CE will be relevant to many members in Saskatchewan.

Other areas may be considered, provided they are relevant to animal health and welfare and if they enhance the member's skill in the delivery of veterinary services.

## b) Guidelines regarding Presenter and Delivery

Speakers for SVMA approved continuing education programs will be selected on the basis of their qualifications and professional reputation in peer organizations. They must be suitably qualified to speak on the topic presented by virtue of being board certified, having a Ph.D., having research experience, or having evidence of advanced knowledge/skill as demonstrated by past lectures, publications or clinical experience or training.

The presenter must be suitably qualified to speak on the topic presented at such a level that will benefit the target audience (veterinarian or veterinary technologist).

## c) Program Format

Various modes of delivery are acceptable for SVMA required and approved CE. Attendance or completion of these programs must be verifiable in writing for all program delivery formats.

Appropriate formats include:

- 1) Seminars and conferences.
- 2) Wet labs or workshops.
- 3) Interactive distance education or learning (i.e. computer-on-line, satellite conferences, teleconferences) that is verified with a certificate of attendance.
- 4) Non-interactive or independent study (i.e. CD-ROM, videotape, audiotape, "Compendium on Continuing Education" articles verified by examination) must be RACE approved or meet RACE criteria with verifiable attendance.
- 5) Degree or certificate programs offered by accredited academic institutions.
- 6) Other formats or activities as may be appropriate and approved by the SVMA.

## d) Application Process

CE Approval Applications need to include:

1. Name of sponsor/provider
2. Title, class information or a description of the key points covered or a detailed agenda
3. Speaker name, credentials and biography
4. Location, date and time
5. Number of CE hours requested

The appropriate SVMA application form must be completed and submitted before consideration will be given. A fillable *pdf* is available on the website. Formal SVMA approval is required before the event is promoted as SVMA approved CE. Approval for any CE session may also be sought following the date the session was held.

#### e) SVMA Hosted CE

SVMA hosted CE will meet the above criteria with the event documentation clearly indicating the number of credit hours offered.

## II Guidelines for SVMA members to self-assess CE opportunities for their suitability for credit.

Members must ask themselves and verify that:

- 1) The CE program is relevant to their current or proposed area of professional activity.

AND

- 2) The CE program is SVMA or RACE approved OR the CE program meets the above guidelines for SVMA approval.

## III Guidelines for SVMA members claiming preparation of Publications and Presentations as CE credit hours

Council recognizes SVMA members invest considerable time and effort in preparing:

- i) presentations delivered as CE for the benefit of other members and
- ii) manuscripts for publication.

It is also recognized the member is acquiring significant continuing education in this preparation process. A member may claim CE credit hours for these activities, under the following guidelines:

- 1) A member who delivers a CE presentation that is a RACE or SVMA approved CE event will be eligible for the number of hours of CE that attendees are entitled to, to a maximum of 8 hours of CE per year. A member may claim CE credit hours for a given presentation only once.

2) A member who prepares an article or review as the first author for publication in a veterinary or biomedical peer-reviewed journal is eligible for 2 hours of CE per article to a maximum of 8 hours of CE per year.

3) A member who prepares an article or review as the second author for publication in a veterinary or biomedical peer-reviewed journal is eligible for 1 hour of CE per article to a maximum of 4 hours of CE per year.

4) A member who prepares a chapter of a veterinary textbook as primary author is eligible for 8 hours of CE per book chapter to a maximum of 8 hours of CE per year.

## IV Guidelines for recording and reporting CE hours by members

All licenced members are required to maintain a verifiable record of their CE activities.

This record must include:

1. The date and location of the CE
2. The speaker
3. The topic or title of the presentation.
4. The program format
5. Receipt of payment for registration of the event, certificate or other proof of attendance.

The above record must be maintained for 5 years and be provided to the SVMA upon request, should the member be selected for audit.

### Reporting

Each licenced member will annually report to the SVMA at the time of registration renewal, the total number of hours of CE that were obtained in the past calendar year.

This may be done by completing the applicable section of the membership renewal form.

## V Information on the auditing process used by the SVMA to verify the hours of completed CE that is reported by members.

### Auditing

Each year, the SVMA will randomly select 5% of the total number of practising licenced members for auditing of CE credits.

The licenced members selected will be required to submit a detailed record of all CE hours reported to the SVMA for the time period requested.

The SVMA will verify that the submitted detailed record of completed CE agrees with the hours reported and that the completed CE meets the requirements of this guideline.

## VI Non-Compliance with CE requirement

### Non-Compliance (Reporting)

Members who fail to report or who report a number of hours that is less than the 30 hours required for each two year reporting period will be sent a registered letter requiring the member to respond to the SVMA within 30 days. This response shall include a record of the actual hours, an explanation for any deficiency and provide an explanation as to how the deficiency will be corrected.

An administration fee may be applied to all members requiring this step. An invoice will be sent with the registered letter and payment is due with the response.

If no response is received, if the explanation is unsatisfactory to the registrar and the PCC, or if the fee is not paid, other penalties may be applied. A member who has been out of compliance for greater than a 24-month period, upon 30 days' notice may have his or her name struck from the SVMA register and be suspended from practice until the CE deficiency has been resolved.

### Non-Compliance (Auditing)

Members who are selected for audit and who do not submit a record of completed CE will be sent a second notice via registered mail to the address on file with the SVMA.

- Members who fail to respond to the second notice within 30 days, or



- Members who are selected for audit and who submit a record of completed CE that does not agree with the hours reported will be referred to the Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) for unprofessional conduct.

## VII Information on the process used regarding CE reporting and audits

The PCC will consider each matter of non-compliance in the following manner:

- 1) SVMA will inform the member that their case is referred to the PCC
- 2) The member is required to respond.
- 3) The PCC will consider the response and forward a complaint of unprofessional conduct to a Discipline Committee (DC) for a hearing and determination of penalty which may include one or more of the following:
  - a. a fine of \$500
  - b. require additional CE hours
  - c. ongoing annual CE audit
  - d. suspension

## VIII Information regarding CE requirements for re-instatement and Non-Practicing member transfer.

Non-practicing members are encouraged to maintain records and report CE activities annually with the renewal form. This is not mandatory but will be helpful should a practising licence be sought in the future.

Members who are registered as non-practicing will be required to acquire the appropriate number of CE hours per year for up to 5 years of CE in order to transfer to their former membership or registration category.

Members who have allowed their registration to lapse will be required to obtain the appropriate number of hours per year for up to 5 years of CE in order to be re-instated to their former membership or registration category.

Example: If a veterinarian's registration has lapsed for 3 years, that member must obtain  $3 \times 15 = 45$  hours of CE.

Members wishing to transfer or reinstate their registration may be required to practice under appropriate supervision until the required CE is completed and acknowledged as such by the SVMA.

Non-practicing members are encouraged to maintain and record CE activities. Annual reporting of hours to the SVMA is not mandatory.

Date Approved by Council: September 5, 2019

Date Reviewed: September 5, 2019

Previous Approval Date: June 14, 2018

Future Revision Date: September 2020