



Practice Facility Accreditation Committee Policy: Accreditation of Non-typical Facilities

Published October 26, 2023

A practice facility is defined in the CVBC (College of Veterinarians of British Columbia) Bylaws, Part 3 – Accreditation and Naming s. 3.1 as the premises, structure or vehicle in, on or from which a registrant provides veterinary services, and includes any equipment, supplies, records or documents used in that facility, but does not include a consulting practice”.

A Private Practice Registrant of the College of Veterinarians of BC (CVBC) must practice from an accredited practice facility.¹

Schedule D, the Accreditation Standards, are written with the expectation that a veterinary facility will meet the Standards relevant to the declared scope of practice of that facility. Standards 1-45 are to be met by all facilities, where appropriate. The remaining standards relate to the declared scopes of practice.

Both Schedule D and Part 3 of the CVBC By-laws are silent on the physical set-up/structure of the building that houses these various scopes of practice except for the core principles requiring that a facility must be clean and in good repair, with consideration of preventing foreseeable harm to the staff, public and patient. Emergency care must be available in all areas where patient care is provided.²

The Accreditation Standards were last updated in 2005 and were constructed as a framework to accredit a “typical” veterinary facility. A typical facility would be:

- a sole purpose free-standing (fixed) veterinary space in one dedicated building,
- a mobile facility that attends house calls or farm calls at the residence/farm of that client
- a mixed facility of one self-standing space and mobile unit(s).³

Several factors have been considered when developing this policy:

- The profession is seeing rapid growth, with increased client demands resulting in an evolution of practice structure and type including registrants who are providing focused, limited scope care

- British Columbia has limited available appropriately zoned real estate and registrants have had to consider alternative models in order to expand capacity to meet the demand for veterinary services.
- the need and requests for care of animals in parts of the province that cannot sustain a permanent fixed or mobile facility and may require a non-typical space approval in order to facilitate the provision of care.

In order to ensure registrants are able to still provide care from an accredited facility, the Practice Facility Accreditation Committee (PFAC) has been increasingly asked to accredit “non-typical” structures and set-ups.

Policy

A facility that does not align with the typical practice facility as described in the standards should initially present a plan to the Practice Facility Accreditation Committee for consideration in advance of proceeding with construction or an accreditation request.

Guidelines for commonly requested scenarios are provided as an adjunct to this policy to guide the registrant on what to submit for PFAC consideration of their plan. Meeting these guidelines is not a guarantee of PFAC approval and PFAC decision making will be based on the risk of harm to the public, staff, and patients. The CVBC staff will give feedback to the applicant before presenting the plan to PFAC.

Examples of Non-Typical Facilities may include but are not limited to:

1. Two or more non-adjacent spaces that make up one fixed facility.
2. A public fixed facility sharing space with another non-veterinary business.
3. A small animal mobile clinic: non-surgical or surgical.
4. An extremely limited scope facility
5. A facility that supports a component of their practice from a veterinary facility in another province or territory.

Other non-typical approaches may exist that have not yet been considered by PFAC. If you are considering a non-typical approach when building or expanding your practice facility:

- Notify CVBC Facilities Staff of your proposal
- Submit plans for review by CVBC Facilities staff
- Await PFAC direction before the registrant embarks on setting up the facility.

References:

1. A. Section 3 Accreditation and Naming

General Requirements

3.4 Every practice facility must:

...

(2) be accredited.

...

B. Section 3 Accreditation and Naming

Registrant's General Duties

3.5 (1) A registrant must not practice in or from a practice facility in any of the following circumstances:

...

(b) if the practice facility has not been accredited;

...

2. Core Applicable Standards from Schedule D for Facility Set-up:

2. All areas of the facility must be constructed and equipped to prevent foreseeable harm to the staff, the public and patients.

8. The facility must be cleaned, in good repair and functional.

9. The facility must be constructed, equipped and maintained, so as to reduce cross- contamination, animal-to-animal pathogen transmissions and transmission of zoonotic pathogens between animals and humans and to be consistent with the principles of biosecurity.

10. The facility must be constructed so that all veterinary equipment, instruments, drugs and or supplies can be stored, handled and disposed of so as to ensure efficacy of the product and safety to the patients, staff and the public, consistent with applicable legislation/regulation, and in a manner that prevents transmission of pathogens.

12. Appropriate means and equipment to render emergency resuscitation must be readily accessible to all areas within a facility where patient care is conducted.

3. See definitions of Facility Types in [Facility Accreditation: Revisions to Terminology](#).