



Veterinary Medicine as a Career

Introduction

Many students consider veterinary medicine as a career choice, some having dreamed of it since they were children. This factsheet provides information that will help in making an informed decision about this career.

Veterinary Medicine in Newfoundland

In this province there are 65 licensed veterinarians. They work in various fields such as small animal practice (44), farm animal practice (13), aquaculture (3), regulatory medicine (2), wildlife medicine (1), laboratory diagnostics (1) and others (1).

To work as a veterinarian they must be licensed by the Newfoundland and Labrador Veterinary Licensing Board who enforce the *Veterinary Medical Act*. This Board assures that individuals who practise in this province meet the educational criteria expected across North America. It also responds to complaints from the public about the manner in which veterinarians operate.

In addition, the Newfoundland and Labrador Veterinary Medical Association promotes veterinary medicine as a profession and informs the public about the benefits of proper animal care.

Salary Expectations

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association reviewed veterinary salaries in 1997, their findings were:

Gender	< 35,000	35-80,000	>80,000
Male	7%	57%	36%
Female	27%	70%	3%

The apparent differences in salaries between women and men relate to average age and choices of full time versus part time work.

A survey conducted in 2000 showed that the average salaries of veterinarians who were in

their first two years of work since graduation earned between \$37-49,000 depending upon which province they worked in.

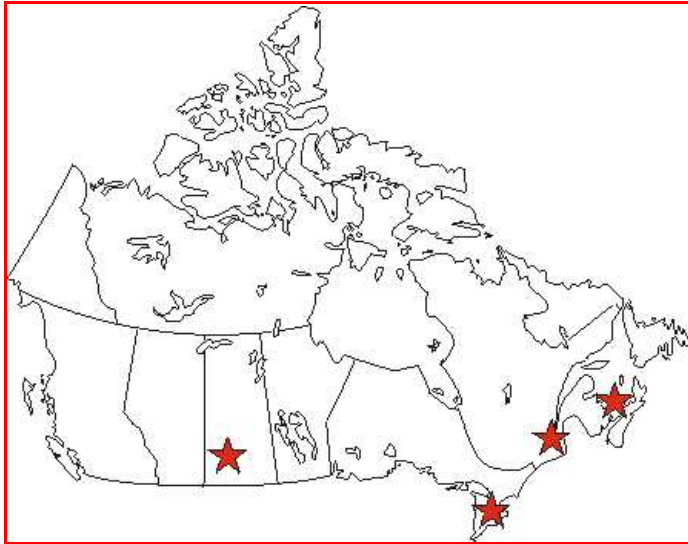


Figure 1 - Veterinary Colleges in Canada

Veterinary Colleges in Canada

In Canada, there are four veterinary colleges (see map). From west to east they are; the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCV, University of Saskatchewan), the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC, University of Guelph), the Faculté de médecine vétérinaire (FMV, University of Montréal), and the Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC, University of PEI). Each of these colleges train students within their region.

WCV serves the western provinces and the territories, OVC serves Ontario, FMV serves Quebec and francophone New Brunswick, and AVC serves Atlantic Canada. There are certain exceptions which can be detailed by the various colleges.



The Atlantic Veterinary College

Students within a region usually only have one college to apply to, in addition, there may be a specific number of seats per province. For students from Newfoundland the regional college is the Atlantic Veterinary College. At AVC, there are 2 seats for Newfoundland, 10 for PEI, 13 for New Brunswick and 16 for Nova Scotia. To apply from these provinces you must meet the residency requirements of the college.

Every year 60 students are accepted into first year. In addition to the provincial seats there are also a number of international students accepted. Studies at the Atlantic Veterinary College take 4 years to complete resulting in the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree (DVM). Graduating students must

also pass the National Examining Board test to be eligible to practise.

Preparing for Application

Competition to enter veterinary college is very stiff. Before applying it is usually necessary to complete two years of university education. Specific courses required for application to veterinary college are available from the appropriate university. Though the average marks needed to compete in any one year will vary depending upon who else is applying, it usually requires marks well into the 80's to be competitive. In addition to a strong academic background, students are evaluated by the experiences they have gained in veterinary and animal related fields as well as their personal characteristics.

Historically, it was considered that veterinary medicine was a career for men only. The figures from the Atlantic Veterinary College show that in its first year of operation (1986) the initial class had 50% women. The class entering in September 1999 had 83% women. Anyone considering applying to veterinary college should also have an alternative career path under consideration in case they don't get accepted.

Related Careers

In addition to veterinary medicine, there are other related programs that students might find of interest.

These other programs include Veterinary Technology (also called Animal Health Technology) which is a 2 or 3 year program offered at a number of colleges across Canada (closest to Newfoundland is at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College); Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (majoring in Animal Science), or a diploma in animal care provided by a private institution.

More Information

All veterinary colleges have websites that provide more specific information. In addition, the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) also provides information to the public. These websites are:

1. AVC: www.upei.ca/~avc/
2. FMV: www.medvet.umontreal.ca
3. OVC: www.ovcnet.uoguelph.ca/
4. WCVM: www.usask.ca/wcvm/
5. CVMA: www.cvma-acmv.org

For the closest Veterinary Technology program please look up the Nova Scotia Agricultural College at: www.nsac.ns.ca

This factsheet was jointly produced by the Animal Health Division, the Newfoundland and Labrador Veterinary Licensing Board, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Veterinary Medical Association. Further questions can be addressed to any of these groups.

1. Animal Health Division, P. O. Box 7400, St. John's, NF A1E 3Y5 (709) 729-6879/0055 phone/fax
2. Nfld & Lab Vet. Licensing Board c/o Dr. Peacock, Carlyle Bldg., 80 Powell Dr., Unit 1, Carbonear, NF, A1Y 1A5 (709) 945-3007/3006 phone/fax
3. Newfoundland & Labrador Vet. Med. Association, P. O. Box 818, Mount Pearl, NF A1N 3C8 (709) 576-2131