

What is the **Veterinary Innovation Council** and how does it connect to telehealth?



The Veterinary Innovation Council (VIC) was launched by the NAVC and is a collaborative, industry-wide initiative focused on leading innovation in global animal health. VIC is on the forefront of positive changes and pushes the envelope for innovative solutions across professional boundaries. VIC is committed to bringing telehealth solutions to the veterinary community and empowering veterinarians with the freedom to use telehealth tools within their practice at their professional discretion.

How does the Telehealth cycle work with your clients and veterinary team?



To learn more, and to access our telehealth tools visit NAVCom.com/VIC.

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Telehealth Tips + Guiding Principles

A Practical Approach for Telehealth Legislation



What is Telehealth?

Telehealth is remotely delivering health information, education or care through electronic means.

Telemedicine is a tool, or use of a tool, to augment the practice of veterinary medicine involving diagnosing and prescribing. An example would be using Skype or a specialized app to communicate with a client and visualize the patient for a postoperative follow-up examination and discussion.



Seven Guiding Principles of Telehealth Legislation



1

Telehealth is an innovative and practical tool with vast potential to serve existing clients *and* attract new pet owners into the pet healthcare system.



2

Telemedicine tools will become an integral part of veterinary medicine with the potential to grow the economic footprint for veterinarians.



3

Expanded telemedicine use should be encouraged as supporting technology and telemedicine practice standards are developed.



7

How does the Veterinary-Client-Patient Relationship fit in Telehealth?

- The VCPR will continue to be a requirement for veterinarians service;
- The VCPR should be able to be established through:
 - (1) Physical examination *or*
 - (2) Visit to the patient's premises *or*
 - (3) Electronic means based upon precedents established in human medicine

Establishing VCPR through electronic methods helps veterinary practices:

- Lower the barriers of access to veterinary care
- Drive more patients to veterinary practices
- Provide care to underserved communities
- Allows veterinarians to compete with non-veterinarians

How does the state board regulate Telehealth?

- Veterinarians providing professional services should be licensed in the state the patient is located;
- State veterinary medical boards should continue to regulate veterinary licenses within their jurisdictions, even if the licensed veterinarian is located elsewhere;
- Veterinarians should not be allowed to provide professional services in states where they are not licensed.



4

Veterinary medicine can learn from the 25 years of experience and applications for telemedicine in human healthcare.



5

The Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR) is fundamental to veterinary practices. Its shape and rules must evolve as practices, technologies and consumer expectations evolve.



6

Veterinarians are equipped to decide when they have enough information to diagnose or prescribe. The current VCPR regulations do not allow veterinarians to exercise their professional medical judgment when that information is received electronically.

Examples from Human Medicine

SAMPLE 1: Defining the VCPR

Precedent from **State of Colorado** with “*veterinarian*” inserted in place of “*provider*”:

The Board defines “veterinarian” to include licensees regulated by the Board and the “Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR)” as the mutual understanding, between a veterinarian, client and patient, of the shared responsibility for the patient’s healthcare. This relationship is established when:

- A. The veterinarian agrees to undertake diagnosis and treatment of the patient, and the client on behalf of the patient, agrees for the patient to be treated whether or not there has been an in-person encounter between the patient and the veterinarian.
- B. The veterinarian:
 - Verifies and authenticates the patient’s identity and location,
 - Discloses his or her identity and applicable credential(s) to the client,
 - Obtains appropriate informed consent after any relevant disclosures regarding the delivery models and treatment methods or limitations, including any special informed consents regarding the use of telehealth technologies.

SAMPLE 2: Patient Evaluation

Precedent from **State of Maryland** Medicine Provider-Patient language with “*veterinarian*” inserted in place of “*physician*”:

- A. A veterinarian shall perform a patient evaluation adequate to establish diagnoses and identify underlying conditions or contraindications to recommended treatment options before providing treatment or prescribing medication.
- B. A licensed veterinarian may rely on a patient evaluation performed by another licensed veterinarian if one veterinarian is providing coverage for the other veterinarian.
- C. If a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) does not include prior in-person, face-to-face interaction with a patient, the veterinarian shall incorporate real-time auditory communications or real-time visual and auditory communications to allow a free exchange of information between the pet owner and the veterinarian performing the patient evaluation.

