



Call to Order

The meeting of the Virginia Board of Veterinary Medicine, Veterinarian Shortage Study Workgroup, Veterinary Class Size subgroup was called to order at 3:57 p.m. on July 8, 2024, at the Department of Health Professions (DHP), Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, 2nd Floor, Board Room 3, Henrico, Virginia 23233.

Chair

Kelli G. Moss, Executive Director

Workgroup Participants Present

Charles Broaddus, DVM, PhD, Dip. ACT, VA Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services
William T. Swecker, DVM, PhD, DACVN, Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine
Daniel Givens, DVM, PhD, Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine
Martha Moore, Virginia Farm Bureau
Julia Murphy, DVM, Virginia Department of Health
Cliff Williamson, Virginia Agribusiness Council

Staff Present

Erin Barrett, Director of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs
Laura Jackson, MSHSA, Board Administrator
Laura D. Paasch, Senior Licensing & Operations Specialist
Taryn Singleton, LVT, Board of Veterinary Medicine

Public Present

Jake Tabor, Virginia Farm Bureau

Public Attending Electronically

Randall Evans, DVM, CPCC, Lincoln Memorial University College of Veterinary Medicine

Call to Order

The participants were welcomed, and introductions were made.

Ordering of Agenda

Ms. Moss opened the floor to any edits or corrections regarding the agenda. Hearing none, the agenda was accepted as presented.

Public Comment

No public comment was provided.

Discussion

Ms. Moss reviewed the trends and statistical data compiled. Dean Givens reported on the status of several new veterinary schools or programs currently seeking accreditation, including a University of Maryland program located on the Eastern Shore. If all the new programs are accredited the number of seats available to students would increase the current capacity by approximately 30%.

Dean Givens explained the bimodal distribution of seats available for Virginia and out-of-state students at VMCVM with fifty seats reserved for Virginia students in each class. The school receives an average of 7.4 applications per seat in the Virginia pool. He reported the amount of state support available for Virginia and out-of-state students in comparison with other schools' funding. Growth constraints are based on the size of classrooms and laboratory facilities, and this impacts the potential for increasing the number of seats available. An additional consideration is recruitment and retention of qualified veterinary educators needed to expand class size. He provided statistical data showing the high probability that Virginia students will remain in the commonwealth, and the likelihood of out-of-state students practicing in Virginia after graduation.

The subgroup discussed the downward trend of student pass rates of the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE) and their effects on full and provisional accreditation of schools. They discussed the American Veterinary Medical Association's Council of Education's attempts to coach students based on the public institution model to address this trend, which can affect accreditation of schools.

Dean Givens reported on student demographics and statistics for minority representation in veterinary programs, with VMCVM data showing above-median representation and geographical data following the general population. He stated that while a maximum 10% seat capacity increase may be possible, limitations based on current contractual obligations with other states must be considered. Virginia students currently accept nearly 100% of the seats that are available to them. The number of applicants per cycle offsets any concern that a student will not meet academic requirements.

The subgroup discussed whether and how increasing class size would affect large animal veterinarian shortages and considered the development of incentivizing programs for rural placement in Virginia modeled after Kansas's loan forgiveness program.

Dean Evans with Lincoln Memorial University College of Veterinary Medicine reported on scholarships available for Appalachian students and other underrepresented groups, and possible expansion to include more Virginia students.

Potential resources and ideas were discussed that would aid in increasing student seats in Virginia, and that would encompass a holistic approach to increasing veterinarians in shortage areas. The subgroup agreed that financial incentives focused on Virginia students and partnerships with rural communities to identify areas and types of shortages may encompass public-private partnerships, outreach through current programs such as the animal response team currently overseen by Dr. McCall, support from the Tobacco Commission and other funding sources, and expanding the Tuition Assistance Grant program to graduate students.

The subgroup agreed that the current data show factors affecting the capacity to increase class size in Virginia's veterinary schools. The status of each new veterinary program is uncertain as they complete the accreditation process. Expansion of rural incentive programs that correlate with student resources available for public and private schools may be considered through public-private partnerships.

Next Steps: The subgroup determined a follow-up meeting is not necessary as data gathered for this meeting will be used to present the subgroup's findings to the Workgroup at its next meeting projected for early October.

New Business

There was no new business to report.

Next Meeting

The next subgroup meeting will be determined after the full Workgroup meeting.

Adjournment

With no objection, Ms. Moss adjourned the meeting at 5:37 p.m.

Kelli G. Moss, Executive Director
Chair