

# **Implementation Plan: Discontinuance of Provincial Veterinary Field Services (PVFS) and Transition of Provincial Veterinary Lab (PVL) and Foreign Animal Disease Lab Functions (FADL)**

## **Rationale**

The Government of New Brunswick (NB) recognizes the need to address its fiscal deficit while fostering a more sustainable and effective model for veterinary services in the province. As one of only two provinces in Canada, along with Newfoundland, that still offers government-operated veterinary services, New Brunswick is moving to align with national practices by transitioning this work to the private sector. This shift creates an opportunity for private clinics and veterinarians to deliver more agile and responsive services to the agriculture industry across the province. By entrusting veterinary operations to the private sector, the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries (DAAF) can refocus its efforts on supporting farmers directly through helping them grow their businesses, improve productivity, and strengthen the agricultural sector. This new approach also ensures the continued oversight of provincial disease management, and animal welfare, through the functions of the New Brunswick Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), while enabling private sector innovation to enhance service delivery and meet the evolving needs of New Brunswick's livestock, equine and hobby farms.

## **Overview**

The implementation plan details a three-phase approach to discontinue the Provincial Veterinary Field Services (PVFS) and transition the Provincial Veterinary Lab (PVL) and Foreign Animal Disease Lab (FADL) services. This phased approach, covering fiscal years 2026-2027, 2027-2028 and 2028-2029, ensures an orderly transition while maintaining uninterrupted service delivery.

## **Objectives**

1. Ensure a smooth and systematic transition of the PVFS and PVL/FADL services.
2. Ensure continued oversight of disease management and animal welfare through the NB Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO).
3. Minimize service disruptions and allow for an appropriate transition period.
4. Allow for more agile and flexible veterinary services for livestock, equine and hobby farms in the province.
5. Provide support to impacted staff and stakeholders.

## **Timeline Overview**

- **Phase 1 (2026-2027):** Discontinuation of PVFS operations.
- **Phase 2 (2027-2028):** Transition and discontinuation of PVL and FADL functions.
- **Phase 3 (2028-2029):** Support and Monitoring

## **Phase 1: 2026-2027 – Transition and Discontinuation of PVFS**

### **Objectives**

- Transition of PVFS operations to private clinics or independent veterinarians.
- Begin feasibility assessment for RPC (Research and Productivity Council) to assume PVL and FADL responsibilities.
- Maintain the NB Chief Veterinary Officer position to oversee disease management and animal welfare support.

### **Key Activities**

1. Coordinate discussions with private clinics, veterinarians, PVFS clients, stakeholders, and the NB Veterinary Medical Association.
2. Work with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DTI):
  - Develop options for impacted veterinarians to acquire trucks and equipment at fair value.
3. Cease PVFS operations as follows:
  - Equine operations: By December 31, 2026.
  - Livestock operations: By March 31, 2027.
4. Develop and implement a **Private Veterinarian Registry Program (PVRP)** that will support commercial livestock operations in underserved areas provincially.
  - This program would support private veterinarians registered in the program with reimbursement of km's traveled to provide care to clients outside of their service areas.
  - The program eligibility, requirements and application process as well as reimbursement claim process will be further detailed.
5. Coordinate with the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL) and Working NB to assist impacted veterinarians wanting to set up their own practice.
6. Facilitate a feasibility assessment with RPC to assess a valid business case to assume PVL and FADL functions.

### **Outcomes by March 31, 2027**

- PVFS operations ceased.
- Clients transitioned to private veterinary services.
- PVRP developed and implemented for delivery on April 1, 2027.
- Feasibility assessment for RPC's role in assuming PVL/FADL services completed.

## **Phase 2: 2027-2028 – Transition and Discontinuation of PVL and FADL**

### **Objectives**

- Transfer PVL and FADL functions to RPC on or before March 31, 2028.
- Facilitate the continuity of essential veterinary laboratory and pharmacy services in the province.

### **Key Activities**

1. Confirm RPC's ability to assume PVL and FADL functions, based on feasibility assessment from Phase 1.
2. Provide RPC time to obtain accreditations and authorizations for lab and pharmacy services.
3. Develop a Collaborative Agreement with RPC for their assumption of PVL and FADL functions.
4. DAAF support RPC in recruitment, training, and redeployment of staff required to provide services.
5. Cease PVL and FADL operations by March 31, 2028.
6. Delivery of the PVRP to support underserved areas.

### **Outcomes by March 31, 2028**

- PVL and FADL operations transitioned to RPC.
- Veterinary lab and pharmacy services are sustained.
- Successful delivery of year one of the Private Veterinary Registry Program.

## **Phase 3: 2028-2029 – Support and Monitoring**

### **Objectives**

- Provide support to underserved areas through offsetting travel costs of private veterinarians providing care to clients outside of their service area.
- Facilitate timely and accessible testing and access to pharmaceuticals through RPC.

### **Key Activities**

- Ongoing delivery of the PVRP for year two.
- Ongoing monitoring on the effectiveness and demand on the program.
- Assess ongoing need of the program beyond the 2028-29 fiscal year.
- Assess delivery of lab and pharmaceutical functions to ensure they meet the needs of industry.

### **Outcomes by March 31, 2029**

- DAAF able to quantify the impact and effectiveness of the PVRP by having two years of delivery data.
- DAAF able to quantify and assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the plan and validate ongoing needs if required.

- Successful transfer of lab and pharmacy functions to RPC that meets the needs of industry.
- Underserved areas are supported by private veterinarian care.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries (DAAF)**

- Oversee and manage the transition process, particularly support for impacted employees.
- Communicate with impacted industry stakeholders, clients and associations.
- Communicate with federal and provincial partners.
- Develop and implement PVRP.
- Maintain the NB Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) position to ensure continued oversight of disease management and animal welfare.
- Lead coordination efforts with stakeholders, including private clinics, impacted veterinarians, and the NB Veterinary Medical Association.
- Collaborate with RPC to conduct a feasibility assessment.
- Coordinate with DTI on surplus vehicles and equipment.
- Coordinate with PETL and Working NB on supports for impacted veterinarians wanting to set up their own clinic.

### **Research and Productivity Council (RPC)**

- Conduct a feasibility assessment to validate assumption of PVL and FADL functions, including laboratory and pharmacy services, on or before the end of March 2028.
- Obtain necessary accreditations and authorizations.
- Ensure proper staffing and resource management to meet service requirements.
- Communicate processes to access lab and pharmacy functions to private veterinarians, clinics and industry clients.

### **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

1. Number of private veterinarians enrolled in the PVRP.
2. Percentage of underserved areas supported through the PVRP.
3. Successful transition of PVFS operations by March 31, 2027, with number of private clinics offering expanded large animal services in the province.
4. Completion of PVL and FADL transition by March 31, 2028, and successful integration of these services into RPC.