

CASE STUDY on Crisis Communications



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NJ Veterinary Medical Association

- 2,400 individual members in New Jersey.
- Members are veterinarians, deemed essential personnel during the pandemic.
- Members and their hospitals are governed by state Medical Board.



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Challenge

- The NJVMA had to step up because their governing body was extremely late in issuing protocols for operating a veterinary hospital during the pandemic, resulting in chaos and confusion, as well as negative impact to members businesses.

Actions Taken

Step 1 Confirm veterinarians as essential personnel and their business could stay open.

Step 2 Initiate regular communications with Medical Board Director in order to inform members

Step 3 Weekly virtual meetings with members to field questions and share information.

Step 4 Communicate important information through urgent communication methods

Goals

- Provide direction and clarity on ambiguous or non-existent state guidelines for operation.
- Help state develop practical and achievable guidelines.

Results

- Gratitude for leadership and direction shown in 90% member renewal rate in midst of pandemic.
- Member hospitals/businesses stay open and safe during pandemic.
- State issued sensible guidelines.

Insights/Learnings

- Healthy, positive relationships with state leaders is essential.
- Staff leadership was critical as volunteer leaders' attention needed to be diverted to keeping their hospitals operational.

Client quote "NJVMA's critical role in keeping veterinarians in-the-know was never more evident than during the pandemic. The teamwork between staff and volunteers provided valuable, timely information and answers to members."