2017 Executive Overview

The AVMA PLIT program is robust and financially stable, continuing excellent relationships with its broker (HUB International Midwest Limited) and its key insurance carriers (Zurich, The Hartford, Travelers and CNA). We completed our 55th year of dedicated service to AVMA members on December 31, 2017. Here are key highlights for the year:

- Our team of Trust Veterinarians reviewed more than 3,650 professional liability claims reported by certificate holders. They also spoke with numerous insureds who were facing license complaints and allegations of malpractice, providing guidance during a very stressful time. Additionally, 890 veterinary license defense claims were handled by the program.

- Advocates worked continuously so that insured AVMA members can be confident they have both access to and an understanding of the protection they need. The team included the PLIT Trustees, PLIT staff and our key strategic insurance partners and advisors.

- As the AVMA family grew in 2017, the Personal Insurance program was reintroduced to expand PLIT’s reach by meeting the needs of veterinarians outside of their practices.

- To help veterinary students prepare for and protect their futures, significant financial assistance was provided in sponsorships for ALL for Students (Achieving, Leading and Learning) program, the Veterinary Business Management Association (VBMA) and the Veterinary Leadership Experience (VLE).
2017 Successes

Professional Liability

The PLIT program continues to be the top choice for veterinarians. The PLIT program closed 2017 with 66,370 members indicating that just under 80% of active AVMA members were insured with professional liability coverage. Participation in the veterinary license defense endorsement continued to grow and reached 77.27%, with 16.88% of those certificates carrying the new highest limit ($100,000).

For the 2018 professional liability renewal, no rate increase was necessary.

Business Insurance

The business insurance program continued to see steady growth in 2017. The policy count at the end of 2017 was at 16,730. Employment Practices Liability policies saw a 7.35% increase from 2016, following educational efforts to explain the liabilities that practice owners face.

The business insurance service unit managed these 16,000+ individual business policies. This included account servicing needs and incoming calls for renewal consultations, updating policy information, clarifying questions about coverage and issuing certificates of insurance and auto identification cards.

Personal Insurance

Relaunch

Prior to 2017, PLIT’s broker was partnered with a third party to manage and service requests for personal insurance referred through the program. In 2017, PLIT rebuilt the program directly with HUB in order to strengthen the service and expand access to premier regional insurance companies for AVMA members.

At the AVMA Convention in Indianapolis, PLIT relaunched the personal insurance program. Promotion around the event focused on continuing PLIT’s mission of “Protecting You Through It All” with insurance programs including: homeowner’s/renter’s, farm and ranch, automobile and recreational vehicles, equine, travel, umbrella liability and more.

The new program was designed so that family members and non-veterinarian employees can also take advantage of the personal insurance program through the PLIT.

Following the relaunch in July, the new program was promoted in PLIT’s newsletters, advertisements, renewal communications and targeted marketing campaigns. Additional personal insurance marketing was done around the AAEP convention.

National Practices

Continuing the PLIT’s strategy to meet the complex needs of national practices, in 2017 the program announced new partnerships with MAVANA, Heartland Veterinary Partners and Amerivet. Marketing initiatives centered on the resources available through the program and HUB’s expertise in the middle-market insurance space.

The partnerships saw success and produced additional collaboration with PLIT. Dr. Scott Spaulding, MAVANA President and Founder said, “AVMA PLIT and HUB professionals have industry expertise, breadth of knowledge and depth of experience that’s a step above the others. We’re confident that risk management for our individual practices and our corporation could not be in better hands. No one in the industry compares.” MAVANA’s portfolio through the PLIT program includes business property/liability, workers’ compensation, professional liability and more.

Business Insurance and Testimonial Videos

Based on the success of the professional liability videos created as part of the Action Center, Dr. Linda Ellis led an initiative to develop three educational business insurance videos. The videos were completed at the end of 2017, incorporated into the PLIT website and featured in PLIT’s communication channels. The initiative aimed to educate AVMA members and veterinary practice managers on PLIT’s veterinary-specific business insurance and risk management programs, and grow the business insurance program.
Each video in the series covers different aspects of the program:

**Business Insurance Overview**
Our leading video provides viewers with an overview of PLIT’s business insurance coverages and benefits.

**Business Insurance Essentials**
The second video in the series takes an in-depth look at the details of the PLIT’s veterinary-specific business insurance products.

**Workers’ Compensation 101**
The third video explains why not all workers’ compensation policies are the same. Common workers’ compensation claims at veterinary practices and closed claim examples are included.

In addition to the educational Business Insurance videos, Dr. Nina Mouledous managed the partnership with another third-party video production group to create a testimonial video around the PLIT and professional liability coverages. In September, the completed video was promoted in PLIT’s newsletters and was featured prominently on the website.

**Conventions and Speaking Opportunities**

The 2017 convention calendar was PLIT’s most extensive to date, with 22 scheduled shows. At the AAEP Convention in November, PLIT hosted an Open House Reception for the first time, which saw nearly 150 equine practitioners and practice managers in attendance. The event’s success spurred discussion for similar receptions at conventions in 2018 and beyond.

PLIT Trust Veterinarians also enhanced their speaking engagements in 2017 by incorporating new software into their presentations. Prezi and PollEverywhere were used during the year to interact with attendees and improve the quality of their educational sessions.

**Student Engagement**

Last year PLIT focused its attention on SAVMA members with a number of updates and additions to the PLIT program for students:

- The new **AVMA PLIT Student Facebook page** launched on March 15 during the 2017 SAVMA Symposium at Texas A&M University. The objective was to connect with students on a familiar platform and create brand awareness. By 2018, the Facebook page had nearly 700 followers.

- PLIT created the **Student Smart Guide** as a resource for students to learn about the importance of malpractice protection while they are students and when they graduate. Prior to creating the Student Smart Guide, PLIT held a photo contest for students to engage with PLIT and share a visual story of their veterinary experiences. The best photos were placed throughout the guide and contest winners received cash prizes.

- In October, the **Student Liability Renewal period** was updated to automatically renew eligible SAVMA members for 2018 who were already covered through the 2017 plan year. This change guaranteed protection to 100% of eligible students previously enrolled in the program and minimized the steps required to confirm coverage. PLIT continued sponsoring the full cost of students in the program for the 2018 plan year.
PLIT Trustees and PLIT Staff

The PLIT Trustees oversee the PLIT program to ensure that members are well served and that coverages evolve with the changing needs of the profession. The Trustees actively drive PLIT’s planning and policy development efforts and oversee the execution. The board consists of seven trustees. Additionally, there is one liaison-trustee from the AVMA membership office. In 2017, the board and liaison-trustee included:

- Dr. John Ehrhardt (Chair)
- Dr. Stuart Brown (Vice Chair)
- Dr. Rosemary LoGiudice (Secretary–Treasurer)
- Dr. Douglas G. Aspros
- Dr. Jim Benefield
- Dr. Ted Cohn
- Dr. Noreen Lanza, JD
- Dr. Kent McClure, JD (Liaison-Trustee)

The PLIT staff grew in 2017 with the addition of a fourth Trust Veterinarian in November, Dr. Cynthia G. MacKenzie. Dr. MacKenzie joined Trust Veterinarians Dr. Linda Ellis, Dr. Karen Wernette and Dr. Nina Mouledous, as well as Operations Manager, Ms. Ali Shomali. The Trust Veterinarians have many years of practice experience and review all reported veterinary malpractice claims. The team speaks with veterinarians about potential allegations of malpractice and actively provides guidance and advocacy to Professional Liability insureds on a daily basis.

In 2017, more than 3,650 professional liability claims were reported. Throughout the claims cycle, the Trust Veterinarians provided professional veterinary advice to the insurance company and its attorneys, and referred the insurance company to qualified veterinary experts to assist in defense. The Trust Veterinarians also attended and presented at veterinary conventions. They annually present at 39 colleges/schools of veterinary medicine on the importance of using good communications skills to avoid allegations of veterinary negligence and complaints filed with state licensing boards against a veterinary license.

2018 Initiatives

New marketing and education projects are planned for 2018, including:

+ Convention booth and marketing collaboration with AVMA LIFE
+ Continued promotion of the Personal Insurance program
+ Re-launch of the Business Insurance program
+ Focus on national practice strategy

Summary

The PLIT will continue providing the most complete and supportive professional insurance program with expanded resources and reach as we move into our 56th year. We’re here to protect you, your reputation and our profession. The AVMA PLIT is excited to deliver on our promise of "Protecting you through it all" in 2018 and beyond. We are your advocate.