Procedures for Veterinary Visits

Category: Compliance Assurance

Subject: Veterinary visits of any areas in which animals are held and/or used for research, teaching or testing at Western and affiliated institutions

Approving Authority: Animal Use Subcommittee

Responsible Office: Animal Care & Veterinary Services

Related Policy: Veterinary Visits

Effective Date: April 23, 2014

Revised:

Definitions

1. **ACVS –** The Department of Animal Care and Veterinary Services accountable to Western's Vice-President Research, Western's Animal Care and Use Program senior administrator.
2. **Affiliated Institutions –** Institutions where live animal-based research, teaching and/or testing *Animal Use Protocols* are under the jurisdiction of the Animal Use Subcommittee (e.g. Lawson Health Research Institute, St. Joseph's, Huron University College).
3. **Animal Use Protocol (AUP) –** The AUS's mandatory animal ethics form that contains details of a researcher's intended live animal use, which must be reviewed and approved by the AUS in advance of animal use**.**
4. **Animal Use Subcommittee (AUS) –** A subcommittee of the University Council on Animal Care, the working Animal Care Committee responsible to ensure that the care and use of live animals used for research, teaching or testing at Western and/or its affiliated institutions is in accordance with all regulatory policies and guidelines**.**
5. **AUS Rounds -** Formal site visits undertaken by members of the AUS. The intent is to assess the animal care and use program annually at each of the animal facilities and approved labs across campus and institutional affiliates
6. **High Risk AUPs –** AUP*s* with assigned Categories of Invasiveness D and/or E, as defined by the Canadian Council on Animal Care, philogenetically higher species, and/or history of AUP non-compliance.
7. **PI -** Principle Investigator responsible to ensure that his/her own animal-based research aligns with his/her approved AUP.
8. **Protocol Drift –** Animal-based **r**esearch, teaching or testing involving elements not currently specified within an approved AUP.
9. **Regulatory Compliance –** Alignment of Animal Care and Use program with federal, provincial and institutional bodies whose laws and policies govern animals used in research, teaching and testing, e.g. Canadian Council on Animal Care, Tri-Council, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.
10. **Veterinary Rounds -** Formal post-approval AUP assessment undertaken by the ACVS compliance assurance team on behalf of the AUS. The intent is to assess procedures and identify Protocol drift.

Responsibilities and Procedure – Compliance Assurance Technician

1. *Prioritize areas for veterinary visit by considering the following*:
   1.1. Species

1.1.1. Prioritize ethically sensitive species (NHPs, dogs, cats)
1.2. Invasiveness and frequency of procedures
1.2.1. 'E' level procedures, 'D' level procedures, animals subjected to multiple invasive procedures, any procedures that have the potential for causing problems in the animal model, any long and/or invasive procedures (including long anesthesia times)
1.3. Location
1.3.1. Non-arms-length versus arms-length managed areas
1.4. AUP Compliance
1.4.1. Any AUP with recurring issues relating to animal health and welfare
1.5. Facility and Research Staff Feedback
1.5.1. Concerns regarding use, care, monitoring, endpoints, Protocol drift, etc.
1.6. Veterinary oversight history
1.6.1. Dates of previous veterinary rounds, AUS site visits, ad hoc visits
1.6.2. History of concerns or matters outstanding to AUS

2. *Establish visit schedule and visit inspection template*
2.1. Confirm last visit via any AUS Site Visits, Veterinary Rounds, or Veterinary Visits and identify those that have not met the minimum requirement
2.2. Prioritize based on criteria of Procedure 1.
2.3. Prepare and distribute to veterinarians veterinary visits schedule 1-month in advance
2.4. Prepare visit inspection documentation: template and, if appropriate, copies of previous reports and other pertinent documentation
2.5. Meet with veterinarians to identify availability and assign
2.6. Provide template and documentation to attending veterinarian 2-days prior to visit date

3. *Participate in visits at the attending veterinarian's discretion*
3.1. Take notes as directed by the attending veterinarian

4. *Prepare post-visit reports*
4.1. Within 5 business days of visit documentation receipt:
4.1.1. Review template notes from attending veterinarian
4.1.2. Prepare draft veterinary visit report
4.1.3. Submit draft to attending veterinarian for review, edit and/or approval
4.2. Within 2 business days of receipt from attending veterinarian:
4.2.1. Prepare final report as per any edits
4.2.2. Electronically file and distribute reports to the AUS on a monthly basis
4.2.3. Where matters of concern are noted, ensure a copy of the report is provided to the Protocol Support Veterinarian

5. *Follow up on outstanding concerns and resolution documentation*
5.1. Receive direction from attending veterinarian and/or Protocol Support veterinarian and/or the AUS as to follow-up steps and timeframes
5.2. Document all follow-up actions on the veterinary visit template as requested by the veterinarian
5.3. File follow-up reports and distribute to the AUS on a monthly basis

Responsibilities and Procedure – Attending Veterinarian

1. *Prior to Visit*
   1.1. Confirm availability for visit and review all assembled documentation in advance of visit to assess animals, housing facility, procedures and all other aspects of animal care and use to ensure compliance with regulatory authorities and humane animal care and use
   1.2. Where appropriate inform Principal Investigators and/or their research staff and/or facilities staff prior to a veterinary visit
2. *During Visit*
   2.1. Assess animals, housing facility, procedures and all other aspects of animal care and use to ensure humane animal care and use and compliance with regulatory authorities.
   2.2. Endeavour to collegially identify and discuss concerns and seek to provide assistance to researchers, research staff, and facility staff wherever possible
3. *Post Visit*
   3.1. Within 10 business days provide completed template and notes to Compliance Assurance Technician for draft report preparation
   3.2. Within 10 business days of receipt, review and edit/approve draft report.
   3.3. Work with the Compliance Assurance team to ensure that issues are dealt with and that concerns are appropriately addressed and resolved

Responsibilities and Procedure – Researcher and Animal Facilities Management Staff

1. *Prior to Visit*
   1.1. Make every reasonable attempt to accommodate veterinary visits by arranging for area access and personnel to be available during the visit
2. *During Visit*
   2.1. Make every reasonable attempt to be available to accompany the attending veterinarian and participate in the dialogue regarding animal care and use
3. *Post Visit*
   3.1. Within 10 business days respond to any follow-up reports, questions, and/or directives arising from the veterinary visit