In order to provide better service to our Principal Investigators (PI), research staff, and administrative managers, the Office of Animal Care and Use (OACU) has compiled this informational memo. Please feel free to call the OACU staff if you have any questions about any items in this memo.

AAALAC INTERNATIONAL SITE VISIT JUNE 7 – 10, 2011

AAALAC International concluded its site visit and review of the UNC-Chapel Hill Animal Care and Use Program Friday afternoon, June 10. In general, for an institution this size, the site visit went very well. There is one mandatory item for correction and several suggestions for improvement. The institution received many commendations and we thank everyone involved in the site visit for their hard work and preparation. Without your help and cooperation, we could not have had such a successful evaluation.

Items Identified during the AAALAC Site Visit

Use of Volatile Anesthetic Agents and the Drop Method

Use of volatile anesthetics such as Isoflurane must be described in your approved Animal Care Application (ACAP) and must be used according to the allowed methods indicated on your Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) approved Chemical Hazard form. Any use of jars, desiccators or bell jars for the drop method of administering Isoflurane should be conducted in a chemical fume hood, ducted biosafety cabinet or other local exhaust system. If you have questions about scavenging of volatile anesthetics or wish to have you work area monitored for potential exposure, contact Catherine Brennan, EHS Chemical Hygiene Officer at 843-5331 or crbrennan@ehs.unc.edu.

As with other agents used for anesthesia and analgesia, the use of isoflurane must be documented. A template for recording the use of isoflurane is available on the IACUC website for reference HERE.

Review of Approved Hazard Forms by Laboratory Research Personnel

Principal Investigators should ensure that all of their research personnel working with hazardous agents (biological, chemical or radiological) in animals have access to and routinely review the EHS approved hazard forms for the specific protocol. It is important that all personnel understand the correct safety precautions and proper handling procedures prior to using the hazardous agent.
Cage Side Identification of Hazardous Chemical Use in Animals

After piloting a program with several investigators in Genetics Medicine and Thurston-Bowles animal facilities, the Division of Laboratory Animal Medicine (DLAM) will be rolling out a program for proper identification at the cage level of chemical hazards used in animals housed in DLAM facilities. DLAM has completed training with husbandry personnel on the DLAM Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) “Handling Cages of Animals Dosed with Chemical Hazards” (see links below) and will be implementing this policy in all facilities. Training for research personnel will become part of the required Animal Care Application (ACAP) approval process. The online training will have a link to the new DLAM SOP. Rollout will be accomplished by August 31, 2011. Please look for future information about this process.

EHS: Handling Animals Dosed with Chemical Hazards
DLAM: Training Module 3 - Policies and procedures

Hand Washing of Primary Enclosures and Behavioral Equipment

IACUC, OACU and DLAM microbiology will work together with investigators to perform periodic microbiologic monitoring (swabs and RODAC plates) of random satellite primary enclosure surfaces, behavioral testing equipment, and hand-washed dog bowls to ensure that appropriate sanitation is occurring.

Recent Animal Concern Issue

Expired Pharmaceutical Agents
In June there were two Animal Concerns involving expired pharmaceutical agents used in research animals to provide anesthesia, analgesia, or euthanasia. It is imperative that you have a system in place to identify and remove from use all expired drugs used for anesthesia, analgesia, or euthanasia.

Anesthesia, analgesia, emergency drugs and euthanasia drugs that are within their expiration dates are required for all procedures. The facility should either dispose of all expired materials used to deliver anesthesia, analgesia, emergency intervention and euthanasia or segregate them in an appropriately labeled, physically separate location from non-expired medical materials. Please contact the OACU Training and Compliance Coordinators at 966-5569 if you have any questions.

A template for the recording of all controlled and non-controlled substances is available on the IACUC website for reference HERE.

Charles River Offers Free Handbook of Clinical Signs in Rodents and Rabbits
The handbook is a resource designed to help those working with rodents or rabbits to recognize and clearly describe both abnormal and normal clinical conditions for these animals. It contains descriptions and images of normal and abnormal clinical findings which may be associated with illness, behavioral abnormalities, genetic conditions or injury. The handbook is available to researchers, free of charge, from Charles River. Follow the URL: http://www.criver.com/en-US/NewsEvents/WhatsNew/Pages/Clinical_Signs_Handbook.aspx

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