

**Guidelines on the Use of Animals for Training Surgeons and
Demonstrating New Surgical Equipment and Techniques
February 2007**

This document was developed as guidance when considering applications for the use of animals to train surgeons or other individuals in new techniques on how to use new technology.

The use of animals for surgical training and demonstration and for the development of new surgical procedures may be necessary in those circumstances where it can be demonstrated that a suitable alternative is not available. Failure to properly train surgeons in new procedures can have serious implications for patient care. Nevertheless, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) must ensure that such use is justified, according to the following conditions which are based on the *Guide, Animal Welfare Act and Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (PHS) for scientific purposes.

GUIDELINES

These guidelines apply to surgeons, associated personnel, and any individuals planning to undertake surgical training or demonstration of new techniques in animal models, or who are engaged in the development or further development of new techniques.

1. All use of animals for the purposes of surgical training and demonstration must comply with the PHS policy for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes.
2. Prior to the commencement of any training sessions, the Principal Investigator must obtain approval from the IACUC by completing and submitting an Animal Use Protocol.
3. All participants must be informed of, and fully understand, their ethical and legal responsibilities regarding the use of live animals. They should also be informed of their right to report incidents of incompetence, misconduct or other breaches of policy to the Institutional Official (IO).
4. Training methods which do not need animals must be used wherever possible. Training in basic surgical skills such as suturing knot tying and the anastomosis of hollow viscera and blood vessels can, to a large extent, be performed on non-living material, and most other skills can be learnt directly from more experience surgeons.
5. The Principal Investigator must ensure that the welfare of the animals will be considered at all times; before, during and after procedures. This includes provision of appropriate holding facilities, food and water, minimization of pain and distress and euthanasia.
6. The Principal Investigator must ensure that there are enough trained personnel to provide proper monitoring of all the animals during the procedure and proper care of the animals before and after the procedure. (It is assumed that most procedures will be non-recovery, recovery surgery should only be allowed in exceptional circumstances).

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7. The Principal Investigator should carefully evaluate the benefits of holding surgical workshops sponsored by a commercial organization where animals are required for the demonstration of new equipment. The primary purpose of all surgical workshops is for the training of surgeons or students, and not for the primary purpose of training members of the commercial organization. Workshops must not be held purely for promotional or commercial reasons. Animals should only be used where the new techniques or equipment to be demonstrated are likely to lead to significant benefits in human or animal's surgery.
8. If the animal is to be euthanized, it must be euthanized using an American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) approved method.
9. Proposals for surgeons to perform the same procedure repeatedly on anaesthetized animals in a single workshop may be approved provided anesthesia and analgesia are maintained and the animals are euthanized at completion of the workshop.

Check list for Principal Investigator and IACUC Reviewer:

1. What are the benefits of the proposed training workshop?
2. Is the use of animals justified?
3. Has the applicant provided evidence that the use of alternatives has been fully considered?
4. Is the person conducting the workshop competent in the procedures to be performed?
5. Has provision been made for adequate housing and care of the animals? Does the species to be used have particular requirements?
6. If recovery of the animals after surgery is requested, is this justified? Will the animal require special housing, diet or care?
7. Have details been provided regarding pain relief, anesthesia and post-operative care? Are they adequate?
8. How many animals will be used? Is this number justified?
9. Will animals be used for more than one invasive procedure in any one session/workshop?
10. What provisions have been made for the disposal of animal carcasses?