

**University of Notre Dame Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee  
Program of Veterinary Care: Reporting Sick Rodents and Follow-up Care**

## **Background**

The Regulations of the Animal Welfare Act and the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals both include provisions that require proper veterinary care to be provided to sick animals used in teaching, testing, or research. In that regard, this document describes standards and procedures for reporting sick or dead animals to the veterinary staff.

## **Procedures**

1. All sick, injured or abnormal (including behavior) animals housed in FLSC should be reported to Dr. Suckow, Valerie Schroeder, RVT, or Kay Stewart, RVT. Those animals housed in RCH should be reported to Dr. Suckow, Vicki Western, RVT, or Kay Stewart, RVT. This is done by placing a yellow **Veterinary Care Card** in front of the animal's cage card. A Pink tab will alert the Attending Veterinarian (AV) of animals requiring veterinary observation during weekly rounds. For animals requiring immediate attention, Dr. Mark Suckow will be notified by phone or e-mail.

2. On weekends, attempts to contact the attending veterinarian (Dr. Mark Suckow) should first be made by phone 631-5393. If unsuccessful, Dr. Suckow can be contacted by email: Suckow.1@nd.edu. If Dr. Suckow is out of town, Ms. Kay Stewart should be contacted by phone 631-6086 or email: Stewart.1@nd.edu. Emergency numbers can be accessed in RCH and FLSC offices.

3. It is the responsibility of husbandry staff to make the initial report of rodent illness or injury using the Veterinary Care Cards. A member of the veterinary staff will conduct an initial evaluation of the animal. The card will be filled out with Animal ID, Clinical Signs, Date and Initials of reporting staff member. Once filled out, a pink tab will be affixed to the left side of the card and the **Veterinary Care Card** put over the animal cage card.

4. The AV will record the diagnosis and assigned treatment on the Veterinary Care Card. In addition the AV will place a color coded tab to notify staff of illness/injury category and place stickers on the Veterinary Care Card to record treatment schedules and observations required. The veterinary Care Card is then placed behind the animal's cage card with the pink tab visible.

Purple: Prolapse – Follow **Standard Operating Procedure for Mice with Rectal Prolapse**

Yellow: Skin problems – Follow **Standard Operating Procedure for Managing Rodent Ulcerative Dermatitis**

Brown: Lesion/Lump – Follow **Standard Operating Procedure for Lesion/Mass Monitoring**

Blue: Watch – These animals will require daily observations for a variety of issues including malocclusion, dehydration, dystocia, post-operative complications, etc.

5. The veterinary staff may perform specific diagnostic procedures or recommend treatment. Some cases however may not require such efforts. Veterinary visits, observations, clinical progress, and recommendations are recorded on the **Veterinary Care Cards**. The veterinary technicians oversee medical treatment of sick animals, although other trained personnel may also be instructed to provide specific treatments which are recorded on the **Veterinary Care Cards**.

6. Reported animals will be monitored until clinical resolution or euthanasia.

7. The Attending Veterinarian will be notified of all **Veterinary Care Cards**. When the case is resolved, the Veterinary Care Cards will be filed According to the species/strain or Principal Investigator and maintained for 3 years from the time the injury/illness occurred.

8. If an animal is unexpectedly found dead, the **Notification of Animal Death** form will be filled out and maintained in a file located in office 408. Forms will be maintained in the “Unexpected Death” file for three years beyond the date of the animal’s death. Animal deaths which result in a necropsy being performed will be recorded on the back of the **Notification of Animal Death** and located within that record stream.

9. The Director, Associate Director or Supervisor will contact investigators regarding animals found sick or dead.