Communication
For A Better Future In Animal Welfare

By
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People Who Are Involved in Animal Welfare

Scientist

Animal Technician

Veterinary Surgeon
Why Do We Need To Communicate

• To get a better understanding of the Science

• To gain mutual respect.

• Help each other with the day to day issues surrounding animal welfare

• By discussing animal welfare we promote good science
Supervisors

• Assign technicians to specific Scientists Projects.
• Ensure the NACWO’s are available within the animal rooms.
• Staff understand the correct process for reporting sick animals.
• Arrange for Scientist to visit the unit on a regular basis to meet technicians
• Allow staff to attend Lab Meetings
Animal Technicians

• Read Project Licenses and Phenotype Profiles
• Attend seminars and Unit Meetings
• Take photos and videos of animals as evidence
• Encourage Scientist to visit the unit
• Ask questions to get information about the animals you a care for.
• Offer advice to Scientist that may improve animals welfare.
What Results from Good Communication

• Animal Welfare Concerns are addressed by discussion and an amicable resolution found.
• Phenotype Profiles are available for all GM mice.
• Scoring Systems
• We all achieve our GOALS!
Introducing an Objective Animal Health and Welfare Assessment

Introduction

The introduction of the scoring system was developed by animal technicans. Researchers and the Named Veterinary Surgeon. This was developed to allow us to assess the lifetime experience of the animal. When assessing a sick mouse there are two opinions to be considered the mouse welfare and the science. Developing a scoring system has many advantages:

-Clinical patterns of individual animal phenotypes
-Health and Welfare monitoring of the mice against specific criteria
-Decisions are made on when mice exhibit signs of ill health
-Standardised record of data for the individual

How The Scoring System Was Developed

It was suggested by the team that a system needed to be developed to help them identify观察 patterns in mice with unknown phenotypes. It was decided a scoring system would cover the points of concern when evaluating a sick mouse. These are:

- And incapacitating the health and welfare
- Will there be any additional information gained that can benefit the research
- Will we reach the humane endpoint

A group consisting of a researcher, the Named Veterinary Surgeon and an animal technician looked at the existing scoring systems that have been developed and used in practice. One particular scoring system of interest was the one developed by Pastor, Vilmanis and Hicken (2000) Enpoints for Minimal Abnormality Testing Models. Refinement of Current Criteria, using body condition scoring and behaviour to assess their endpoints for sick mice. This scoring system had two levels of assessment which described a system where sick mice are identified by their body condition which is difficult to assess because it was too subjective. The other part of this scoring system assesses the mice behaviour which has many variables to determine the level of sickness but this was also agreed it was too subjective, and it would be difficult to use as they had similar endpoints in the same place. It was also felt the system had a complete scoring system and required veterinary surgeons and two technicians to score each animal, which was deemed not to be practical. It was decided to develop our own scoring system that included all the project licence requirements and used clinical signs that were grouped within a four tier section each with its own action plan.

Developing the Scoring System

Once it was decided that we would develop our own scoring system we looked at clinical signs and observations of sick mice that would be relevant to the study, as some of the mice are of unknown phenotypes.

We divided the signs and observations into four categories white, green, yellow and red. We felt it would be unhelpful to have color as a main axis which makes the cages stand out and can immediately draw attention to anyone that may work in the room. Each of the categories has its own action plan which should be easy to follow and allows for standardised outcomes and communication between technicians and the researcher.

The next step was to design a form that would be easy to use and record the data required, especially when a mouse is being monitored closely. Using Microsoft Excel we developed a form that contained only information relating to specific mice, the date of assessment and the signs therefore have been observed for this mouse using a tick system. This form is filled out every time a mouse becomes sick and if the mouse has further monitoring this form allows us to re-score and identify any further changes.

Conclusions

In conclusion we have tried to introduce a scoring system to help us standardise our assessment of mice with unknown phenotypes minimizing the amount of pain and distress the mouse may experience while identifying healthy and sick. A system has been developed which is easy to use by placing signs in four color bands with their own individual plan.

The scoring system has been in place for a year and has proven to help us improve communications between the animal staff and research team and to date this has improved response times for urgent issues.
Questions

Thank you for listening
are there any questions?