

(D) CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCY FOR AUTHORISATION OF ANIMAL WELFARE ASSISTANTS (AWAs)

ALL SPECIES

Definitions

"The veterinarian" refers to the veterinarian employed by, in the service of or contracted to the relevant AWO who is responsible for the activities of the AWA.

"Direction" means that the veterinarian gives the AWA directions but is not necessarily present when they are carried out.

"Supervision" means that the veterinarian is present on the same premises and in a position to assist, yet is not necessarily at the AWA's side or in the same room.

1. Procedures that Animal Welfare Assistants may perform under direction of a veterinarian-basic primary health care

1.1 Examining a patient and recognising a healthy animal

The AWA must be able to:

- take a relevant history of the patient;
- restrain the patient adequately and humanely to perform his/her duties;
- be able to recognise clinical signs of a healthy animal;
- demonstrate that s/he can evaluate the temperature, pulse, respiration, colour of mucous membranes and hydration status of the patient;
- be able to describe clinical signs to the veterinarian and follow instructions from the veterinarian;
- keep correct patient- and treatment records and understand their relevance;
- make a blood smear; and
- effectively communicate the principles of primary health care to animal owners.

1.2 Basic husbandry

The AWA must demonstrate basic knowledge of:

- correct feeding;
- appropriate housing / confinement / restraint;
- hoof / claw / nail / coat / tooth care;
- the role of sterilisation / castration where applicable;
- general principles of prevention of cruelty to animals.

1.3 Administration of medicines

The AWA must:

- know how to handle and store the relevant medicines s/he will be directed to use by the veterinarian;
- know the possible side effects of the relevant medicines;
- be able to measure correct dosages of oral and injectable medications as directed by the veterinarian;
- be able to administer medicines per os (solid and fluid e.g. dewormer);
- know how to handle sterile needles and syringes;
- be able to give a proper subcutaneous injection aseptically;
- be able to advise the owner concerning the further administration of dispensed medication; and
- keep accurate records of all medicines administered.

1.4 Vaccinations, deworming and external parasite control

The AWA must:

- know the correct care, handling and storage of vaccines;
- vaccinate and deworm animals according to a programme supplied by a veterinarian;
- be able to keep records of vaccinations and deworming;
- dip animals according to a protocol supplied by the veterinarian; and
- educate the owner on the importance of external parasite control, vaccination and deworming.

1.5 Dealing with injured animals

The AWA must:

- know how to transport a sick or injured animal;
- be familiar with the basic principles of aseptic techniques;
- be able to clean superficial wounds;
- apply ointments as directed by the veterinarian;
- be able to stop severe haemorrhage with a pressure bandage as a first aid measure; and
- be able to assess the degree of pain in order to involve the veterinarian at the earliest stage possible.

1.6 Zoonoses

The AWA must understand the concept of zoonoses.

2. Optional procedure that Animal Welfare Assistants may perform under direction of a veterinarian

2.1 Administering an intramuscular (IM) injection

The AWA must

- be able to give a proper IM injection aseptically.

3. Procedures that AWA's may perform under supervision of a veterinarian (when authorised)

3.1 Radiographs (assisting)

The AWA must:

- be able to assist with restraint;
- have knowledge of the dangers of radiation.

3.2 Euthanasia

The AWA must:

- demonstrate the ability to administer euthanasia by intravenous injection in a competent and humane manner;
- know how to handle and store the relevant medicines;
- know how to handle a failed intravenous injection that leads to haematoma;
- show an understanding of appropriate methods of carcass disposal.

Administering an intravenous (IV) injections

The AWA must

- be able to give a proper IV injection aseptically.

Performing intravenous (IV) catheterisation (separate application required, authorisation granted by special dispensation only)

- demonstrate the ability to place an intravenous catheter aseptically in a competent manner;
- know how to maintain an IV catheter; and
- know how to monitor and adjust flow rate when instructed by the veterinarian.