

DAY 1 SKILLS FOR THE VETERINARY NURSING PROFESSION

A. Legal, professional and ethical practice

- Uphold proper conduct with regards to professional, legal and ethical responsibilities in relation to the profession and the Code of Conduct.
- Demonstrate knowledge of and comply with all relevant legislation, including but not limited to:
 - Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993
 - Animal Protections Act 71 of 1962
 - Veterinary and Para -Veterinary Professions Act No 19 of 1982
 - Animal Diseases Act No 35 of 1984
 - Animal Health Act No 7 of 2002
 - Medicine and Related Substances Control Act No 101 of 1965
 - Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Seeds and Remedies Act 36 of 1947
- Ensure recording of scheduled medicines in accordance with legislation.
- Uphold professional confidentiality.
- Always protect the Veterinary Nursing profession by acting in a professional manner when dealing with colleagues and public.
- Report animal abuse or any other misconduct against animals to the relevant authorities.

B. General nursing

- Assist the veterinarian with the implementation of basic preventive and prophylactic programs to promote health, welfare, productivity, and performance for the patient.
- Understand and use Veterinary terminology correctly.
- Maintain accurate and detailed medical records electronically or otherwise.
- Ensure that animals are correctly restrained, housed and handled to prevent injury to self, colleagues, or animal owners.
- Manage the housing, hygiene, feeding and methodologies of disease prevention of animals in a registered facility.
- Advise about the housing, hygiene, feeding and disease prevention of animals in the field.
- Obtain a basic history of the individual animal/group of animals including relevant aspects related to the husbandry of the animal(s).
- Maintain general animal wellbeing. This includes oral and dental care, their comfort and pain management, nutrition, as well as acceptable grooming procedures and techniques.
- Have knowledge and apply the principles of animal behaviour, ethology and animal handling.
- Have knowledge and apply the principles of reproduction and obstetrics, including supervision of animals giving birth and caring for newborns.
- Administer medicines to patients in the prescribed manner.

- Apply pharmacological principles and calculate dosages of medicines according to instructions.
- Store, administer and dispense appropriate pharmacological agents including medicines and vaccines according to relevant legislation.

C. Sampling and diagnostic support

- Ensure safe and correct preparation, collection, preservation, identification, handling, packaging and dispatch of samples.
- Ensure that any diagnostic equipment and instrumentation is used safely and maintained in accordance with current regulations, with appropriate quality control and calibration.
- Record and report findings.

D. Bio-security, disinfection and sterilisation

- Apply principles of bio-security to minimize the risk of contamination, cross infection and accumulation of pathogens at all workplaces including but not limited to the practice and under field conditions.
- This includes the correct handling and disposal of biological/medical waste and contaminated materials in an appropriate manner and ensuring that suitable protective clothing is worn when appropriate.
- Apply principles of physical and chemical disinfection and sterilisation of equipment, theatre clothing and surgical instruments.

E. Primary Animal Health Care

- Educate clients about disease prevention and care of healthy animals and promote primary health care activities.
- Promote Primary Animal Health Care (PAHC).
- Demonstrate knowledge of zoonotic and notifiable diseases and harmful behaviour by animals.
- Awareness of World Health Organization (WHO) requirements regarding the prevention of zoonotic diseases, i.e. managing the risk of zoonotic disease and other pathogens in practice.

F. Clinical procedures

- Perform a basic clinical examination, observe and monitor patients, distinguish between normal and abnormal clinical parameters and assess pain.
- Recognize and attend to animals in an emergency and apply the principles of "triage".
- Assist the veterinarian in all therapeutic or other interventions.
- Placement, maintenance and removal of catheters.
- Intravenous and urinary catheter placements in both male and female patients
- Administer intra-dermal, intra-peritoneal, subcutaneous, intra-muscular and intra-venous injections correctly.

- Implement chemical methods of restraint in accordance with the rules.
- Safely pre-medicate, induce, maintain and monitor analgesia, sedation and general anaesthesia.
- Facilitate safe recovery from anaesthesia.
- Set up, administer and monitor infusions.
- Collect blood and administer a blood transfusion.
- Assist the veterinarian or authorised person [a person authorised by Council in terms of section 23(1)(c)] with surgical procedures using appropriate techniques before, during and after surgery, including correct implementation of aseptic technique.
- Ensure appropriate cleaning, maintenance, sterilisation and storing of surgical equipment.
- Carry out minor surgical procedures in accordance with the veterinary nursing rules.
- Perform dental prophylactic treatment and simple extractions.
- Wound management.
- Perform acute phase physical rehabilitation of in-hospital patients.
- Perform radiography and assist with other diagnostic imaging modalities.
- Implement appropriate instrument and equipment care and safety precautions associated with radiation.
- Correctly identify equipment, surgical instruments and correctly fold gowns and drapes and pack surgical packs, for use in theatre.
- Perform euthanasia safely and humanely where required, ensuring that appropriate consent is recorded.

G. Veterinary Nurses working for own gain and business management

Veterinary Nurses are in the position to start, register, run and own their own businesses – working for own gain. They need to offer related goods and services as specified in the promulgated Rules. In order to successfully run a business, soft and technical business skills are required. The following table is not exhaustive.

	Core Skill/Competency	Related Tasks
Soft Business skills	Communication	• Ability to communicate effectively with clients and other stakeholders • Develop and maintain good customer relationships • Ability to apply collaborative skills • Proficiency in customer service skills
	Leadership development	• Ability to lead and provide direction on activities of the business • Ability to manage working in a team • Ability to develop and use group skills

	Conflict management	Ability to diffuse difficult situations
	Presentation Skills	Ability to examine, analyze and present information (reporting)
	Problem-solving	- Ability to identify problem areas and devise solutions to problems - Innovation - Ability to apply critical thinking
Technical business skills required before opening a business	Basic Business Planning, Strategic planning	Draw up and implement business plans based on business goals and to access credit from financial institutions Entrepreneurial skills, ability to do research and identify where business will operate
	Workflow Management	- Understand the business cycle - Organise and coordinate work/workflow (determining areas of responsibility and allocation)
	Marketing	- Implement marketing and advertising strategies. - Brand awareness, campaigns and identification boards
	Facilities & Inventory / stock management	- Management & maintenance of facilities, equipment & vehicles - Management of supplies, veterinary products, cold chain, consumables and keeping an inventory. (Ordering, sales & recordkeeping of transactions)
	Supplier development & collaborations	Identify suppliers, other veterinary / para-veterinary service providers to collaborate with for referrals and mentoring
	Basic Risk Management	- Understand and implement risk management strategies - Risk mitigation through Insurance (Professional Indemnity, facilities, vehicles, inventory, insurance)
	Financial Planning and Management	- Price determination and setting - Sourcing & accessing funding - Use banking services (keep business and personal finances separate)

	Basic Bookkeeping & Accounting	• Implement receipting and invoicing systems • Cash flow forecast, sales and management of expenses • Monitor profit and loss • Identify practice costs
	Legislation, Policies, Ethics and Professionalism	• Ability to understand, Interpret and apply the various legislation, rules and policies affecting the practice and business environment. • Ensuring that the business complies with various instruments applicable in the specific sector. • Tax Laws & Regulations • The Companies Act (where applicable) • Health & Safety Laws • Labour Laws
	Education	• Ability to educate clients, prospective students and co-workers
	Mental wellness	• Ability to manage stress • Ability to be resilient in the workplace

LIST OF PRACTICAL PROCEDURES VETERINARY NURSES

[NOTE: This is not a complete list of common procedures. It is a list of procedures designed to test the candidate's competence. Candidates must be able to complete / explain / demonstrate **any one or more** of the following procedures / actions.]

THEATRE PRACTICE

Small animals, production animals and horses unless specified

- Apply a surgical head cover
- Apply shoe covers
- Apply a face mask
- Aseptically gown
- Aseptically glove – open and closed gloving
- Surgical scrub
- Position small animals in dorsal recumbency
- Position small animals in sternal recumbency
- Position small animal in lateral recumbency
- Aseptically prepare the surgical field
- Place a fenestrated drape

- Use four corner draping
- Drape a patient for ovariohysterectomy
- Drape a production animal for a rumenotomy
- Maintain a sterile surgical field
- Maintain an orderly trolley
- Open a wrapped sterile pack
- Open sterile aseptic packets
- Open sterile peel back packets
- Organise an instrument trolley
- Do an instrument count
- Do a swab count
- Pass instruments in the correct manner
- Swab an operation field
- Cut sutures during suturing process
- Apply surgical haemostasis
- Apply topical haemostatic agents
- Apply a tourniquet to control diffuse bleeding during surgery of extremities
- Dispose of biological/medical and surgical waste
- Prepare items for steam sterilisation
- Use, maintain and care for circulating water blankets and electric blankets
- Operate, maintain and care for suction apparatus
- Inspect all electrical equipment before use
- Place a ground plate for an electro-surgical unit
- Operate, maintain and care for diathermy and/or hyfrecators
- Identify surgical instruments and know their functions
- Care for and handle surgical instruments in a correct manner
- Store surgical instruments in a correct manner
- Inspect and test surgical instruments
- Identify needles according to shape, size, and type of point
- Identify suture material according to colour coding
- Identify size of suture material according to suture diameter
- Select appropriate size suture material for different tissue types
- Handle suture material correctly
- Place simple interrupted sutures with the correct knotting technique
- Remove skin sutures
- Identify the different suture patterns
- Select the disinfectant of choice for different types of materials

SURGICAL NURSING

Small animals, production animals and horses unless specified

- Wound lavage and management
- Lancing abscesses
- Cat castrations
- Physical rehabilitation

- Apply bandages
- Place an endotracheal tube (small animals)
- Pre-operative preparation of the surgical patient
- Position a patient correctly for surgery
- Post-operative patient care of all surgical patients
- Pre-operative nursing of fracture cases
- Post-operative nursing of fracture cases
- Perform 2% Fluorescein stain
- Perform Schirmer tear test
- Prepare a cytological sample of the eye
- Take conjunctival swabs
- Administer eye medication
- Prepare a patient for periodontal therapy (small animals)
- Perform a basic dental scale and polish (small animals)
- Dental extractions
- Placement of drains
- Perform a basic oral examination on a horse
- Obtain dental radiographs
- Position a patient correctly for the different radiographic views of the skull and mandible

MEDICAL NURSING

Small animals, production animals and horses unless specified

- Skin scrape
- Hair pluck
- Woods lamp examination
- Blood smear
- Faecal float
- Faecal analysis
- Wet prep
- Faecal smear
- Collection of faecal material
- Collection of urine free flow method (small animals)
- Collection of urine by cystocenteses
- Urinary catheterisation (male and female patients)
- Urinalysis
- Cardiac auscultation - normal heart sounds
- Place an over the needle (Jelco or Bardicath) catheter
- Pass a stomach tube (small animals)
- Place naso-oesophageal tube (small animals)
- Work out tube feeding regimens
- Set up and monitor i/v infusions
- Calculate drip rates
- Spike a drip
- Calculate revised drip rates when spiked
- Physical rehabilitation (coupage, passive muscle movement, hydrotherapy)

- Examine rumen motility (production animals)
- Rumen fluid examination (production animals)
- CMT (California mastitis test) (production animals)
- Set up and monitor i/v fluid administration
- Restrain patients
- Nail clipping
- Nail clipping & beak clipping in exotics

RADIOGRAPHY

- Assist with small animal and equine radiography
- Have knowledge of routine equine and small animal radiographic techniques
- Have knowledge of routine equine radiographic positioning
- Perform routine radiographic procedures on small animal
- Prepare patient for contrast study procedure
- Clean radiographic image receptors
- Identify films permanently in the emulsion by means other than the actinic marker system
- Process a latent image into a permanent visible image
- Produce a full set of radiographs of good quality from a presented case
- Evaluate radiographic images by applying an effective critique method
- Give instructions on positioning and handling of cases

ANAESTHESIA

Small animals

- Work out anaesthesia protocol, correct, dosages and preparation of induction and theatre
- Care and set up of anaesthetic machine
- Anaesthesia induction
- Intubation and extubation
- Inhalation maintenance
- Monitoring of patient under anaesthesia
- Local anaesthetic blocks
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
- Post anaesthetic care
- Pre-operative care
- Administer analgesia
- Anaesthetic records

REPRODUCTIVE NURSING

Small animals, production animals and horses unless specified

- Place a progestagen sponge in an ewe
- Remove a progestagen sponge from an ewe

- Monitor female animals during parturition
- Care of neonates
- Feeding of neonates
- Collect and store colostrum
- Semen collection
- Semen analysis
- Thaw frozen semen straws and load the AI pistolette
- Manage a nitrogen flask
- Perform a sheath wash on a bull
- Prepare vaginal smears of a bitch
- Evaluate vaginal smears of a bitch
- Vaginoscopic monitoring of the oestrous cycle in a bitch
- Identify and use obstetric instruments
- Correct simple abnormal posture with dystocia ewe
- Correct simple abnormal posture with dystocia cow

GENERAL NURSING

- Evaluate temperature (small animals, production animals and horses)
- Evaluate pulse (small animals, production animals and horses)
- Evaluate respiration (small animals, production animals and horses)
- Examine ocular mucous membranes small animals, production animals and horses)
- Examine nasal mucous membranes
- Pass a stomach tube small animals
- Blood collection cephalic vein small animals
- Blood collection jugular vein horse
- Blood collection middle coccygeal vein cattle
- Blood collection cephalic vein small stock
- Blood collection jugular vein small stock
- Administer an enema small animals
- Tablets and capsules per os small animals
- Fluids per os small animals
- Subcutaneous injection small animals
- Subcutaneous injection horses
- Intra-muscular injection small animals
- Intra-muscular injection production animals
- Intra-muscular injection horses
- Intra-venous injection small animals
- Intra-venous injection production animals
- Intra-venous injection horses
- Apply topical creams and ointments
- Apply eye and ear medication
- Administer oxygen
- Bandage trunk small animals
- Bandage inguinal region small animals
- Bandage pendulous ear small animals
- Bandage erect ear small animals
- Bandage foot small animals

- Bandage neck small animals
- Bandage short tail small animals
- Bandage long tail small animals
- Bandage Robert Jones and modified Robert Jones

PRODUCTION ANIMALS

- Feeding of lambs and calves
- Work out amount of milk to feed and which formulas, at correct temperatures.
- Apply restraining methods.
- Perform TB test – require additional training in the form of courses.
- Correctly identify and know how to use production animal instruments:
 - Trocar
 - Flutter valve
 - Burdizzo
 - Hoof instruments
 - Weinghart set
 - Rumen magnets

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[VC/EDUC/DAY 1 SKILLS/VET NURSES]