## ACMVET4X07 Triaging and responding to animal emergencies

### Unit outcomes

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to triage animals experiencing injury, acute illness or other potential emergency conditions or situations, and advise on or administer emergency first aid to animals.

Graduates of this unit will recognise indicators of clinical urgency, effectively gather, record and communicate relevant information and apply triage principles. Triage may be required to be conducted remotely using communication technologies, on presentation of the animal at a veterinary practice or during nursing and animal care routines. Graduates will also administer emergency animal first aid within their legal scope of practice.

#### Licensing, legislative, regulatory requirements

Legislative and regulatory requirements apply to the provision of health information or advice by veterinary nurses and permitted scope of practice in relation to the administration of first aid or other emergency treatment but vary according to state/territory jurisdictions. Users must check with the relevant regulatory authority before delivery.

### Knowledge

* purpose and process of triage in animal care and veterinary contexts, including the prioritisation of animals for treatment based on **clinical urgency, available resources and animal welfare** considerations
* veterinary triage frameworks including classifications and applications
* crucial information required to make triage decisions, including presenting signs, normal and abnormal animal health parameters and behaviours, animal history and urgency indicators
* effective communication techniques to obtain accurate information from clients or persons presenting animals, including while under stress and reporting animal status to supervising veterinarians
* common species-specific indicators of clinical urgency and life-threatening conditions, including requirements for isolation and application of infection prevention and control (IPC) procedures
* animal first aid principles, procedures and techniques including roles and responsibilities of veterinary team members
* legal scope of practice for veterinary nursing personnel when conducting triage, providing advice or administering first aid
* ethical responsibilities to promote animal welfare, maintain confidentiality and apply professional standards.

### Skills

* gather and record relevant information from the client, including in person and via communication technologies
* recognise and report signs or descriptions indicating clinical urgency, injury, pain or distress
* communicate accurate and appropriate advice or instructions within the limits of job role
* apply triage principles and frameworks to prioritise animals for assessment or treatment
* escalate information and seek guidance promptly from the supervising veterinarian
* provide first aid to animals using approved techniques and within the limits of own competence and job role.

### Application of knowledge & skills

This unit applies to work carried out by individuals in animal care settings who conduct or assist with the triage of animals and provide animal first aid within the limits of their job role and legal scope of practice.

Individuals will apply broad factual and technical knowledge of veterinary triage processes, frameworks and classifications, animal health parameters and first aid procedures, to prioritise animals for treatment. They will use judgement to interpret presenting signs, recognise urgency indicators, and determine appropriate responses or escalation pathways.

They will gather and record accurate and relevant information from clients or persons presenting animals, including in-person and via communication technology interactions, and observations to support timely and appropriate clinical decisions by supervising veterinarians.

Individuals will exercise autonomy in managing routine or predictable triage situations while complex or high-risk cases, requiring veterinary intervention, will be promptly referred.

Work is performed under general supervision, with accountability for following established protocols.

### Pre-requisite unit Nil

### Unit sector

Veterinary Nursing (VET)

### Foundation skills

|  |  |  |  |  |
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| **Learning** | **Reading** | **Writing** | **Oral communication** | **Numeracy** |
| 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 |

## Assessment Requirements

### Performance evidence

Individuals must apply the knowledge and skills specified in the unit of competency to:

Triage a minimum of 6 animals, where each animal is a different species, and where:

* at least 3 of these animals are triaged using communication technology, and
* at least 3 of these animals are triaged on presentation of the animal at a veterinary practice

Administer first aid to a minimum of 3 animals of different species, each with a different first aid need

Demonstrate cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) procedures on a minimum of two model animals, each of a different species.

### Knowledge evidence

To demonstrate the application of the knowledge specified in this unit of competency, individuals must have knowledge of:

* emergency situations that may occur with animals
  + allergic reaction
  + bleeding
  + cardiopulmonary arrest
  + collapse
  + difficulty urinating or inability to urinate in male cats
  + dystocia
  + heat stroke
  + hypothermia
  + profuse and/or bloody vomiting and/or diarrhea
  + respiratory difficulty
  + seizures
  + fractures
  + envenomation
  + tick paralysis
  + swollen abdomen or nonproductive retching
  + poison ingestion
  + trauma or open wounds
* primary and secondary survey purposes and processes
* effective use of communication technologies for client interaction
* indicators of distress, pain, injury or clinical urgency based on client reports and visual observation of animal
  + abnormal vital signs
  + abnormal vocalisations
  + respiratory distress
  + changes in behaviour, appetite, drinking, urination
  + visible signs of injury
  + vomiting or diarrhea
  + skin or coat changes
  + lumps or swelling
  + musculoskeletal or neurological signs
* triage frameworks and classifications

safe and low stress handling and restraining techniques for ill or injured animals, including:

* wildlife
* wild birds
* triage of wildlife:
  + low stress handling
  + zoonotic risks
  + chances of survival after treatment or rehabilitation
* animal first aid procedures and techniques
  + maintaining airway and breathing
  + artificial respiration
  + controlling bleeding
  + supporting injured or broken limbs
  + bandaging bites
  + cooling burns
  + performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
  + infection prevention and control (IPC)
* indicators of need for and procedures for isolation
* interpersonal and communication techniques to elicit from, and impart relevant information to relevant persons
  + tone, empathy, sense of urgency
  + effective questioning and listening
  + confirming information
  + crucial information
  + articulating relevant information to veterinarian
* providing advice to clients or persons presenting animals via communication technology, within scope of practice, including:
  + basic immediate first aid
  + safe handling and transportation techniques
  + directions to practice location
  + procedures for arrival
  + confirm anticipated time of arrival

### Assessment conditions

Skills must be demonstrated in an animal care workplace or an environment that accurately represents real workplace conditions.

Assessment must ensure access to:

* a range of animal models
* first aid equipment and resources
* emergency situation case studies, scenarios and images
* relevant personal protective equipment (PPE)
* access to triage frameworks
* interaction with clients or persons presenting animals
* interaction with registered veterinarian

Assessors of this unit must satisfy the requirements for assessors in applicable vocational education and training legislation, frameworks and/or standards.

#### Mandatory workplace requirements:

Assessment of performance evidence may be in a workplace setting or an environment that accurately represents a real workplace.

### Unit mapping information

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Code and title current version** | **Code and title previous version** | **Equivalence status** | **Comments** |
| ACMVET4X07 Triaging and responding to animal emergencies | ACMVET401 Coordinate veterinary reception duties | Not equivalent | Unit merged with ACMVET406 Nurse animals and ACMVET510 Apply veterinary nursing pathophysiology.  Knowledge and skills specific to triage and first aid procedures has been included in this unit, including E4 (PC4.1- 4.7)  Requirement to demonstrate PE over a specified number of hours of mandatory work placement has been removed, enabling the unit to be assessed in ‘a workplace or in an environment that accurately represents real workplace conditions’  Supervision requirements clarified. |
| ACMVET4X07 Triaging and responding to animal emergencies | ACMVET406 Nurse animals | Not equivalent | Unit merged with ACMVET401 Coordinate veterinary reception duties and ACMVET510 Apply veterinary nursing pathophysiology.  E1.5 Apply animal first aid and PE: Provided animal first aid included in this unit. |
| ACMVET4X07 Triaging and responding to animal emergencies | ACMVET510 Apply veterinary nursing pathophysiology | Not equivalent | Unit merged with ACMVET401 Coordinate veterinary reception duties and ACMVET406 Nurse animals.  PC1.4 re assisting in triage, PE of ‘conducting effective triage of patients’ at least once and KE of principles of triage is now included in this unit. |

## Overview information

### Modification History

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| --- | --- |
| **Release** | **Comments** |
| 1 | This unit of competency was first released in ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Release 7.0. |

**Mandatory workplace requirements:**

Assessment of performance evidence may be in a workplace setting or an environment that accurately represents a real workplace.