## ACMVET4X09 Nurse animals

#### Application

This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required to provide nursing care for patients (animals) being treated or housed in a veterinary practice. It includes establishing and following nursing care plans, monitoring clinical signs and providing basic animal welfare requirements, carrying out or assisting in carrying out medical procedures and communicating with animal owners (clients) on the animals’ condition.

This unit applies to veterinary nurses, who work under the supervision of a registered veterinarian in a veterinary practice. Veterinary nurses who nurse animals need to hold and apply specialised knowledge of animal anatomy, physiology, pharmacology and nutrition requirements.

**Licensing, legislative, regulatory requirements**

Legislative and regulatory requirements apply to the range of permitted veterinary nursing procedures but vary according to state/territory jurisdictions. Users much check with the relevant regulatory authority before delivery.

#### Pre-requisite unit Nil

#### Unit sector

Veterinary Nursing (VET)

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| **Elements** *Elements describe the essential outcomes.* | **Performance criteria**  *Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.* |
| 1. Establish patient needs in consultation with the veterinarian | 1.1 Identify patients according to features and fixed identification  1.2 Access nursing care plan to identify relevant nursing routines, medical treatments, monitoring requirements and frequency, and interventions or adjustments for quality care of individual patients |
| 2. Monitor patient for signs of pain | 2.1 Identify and record audible, visual or measurable signs of pain to assist in identification of the need for analgesics  2.2 Identify and report behavioural changes which may indicate pain  2.3 Use industry recognised pain management techniques to minimise patient trauma  2.4 Use an empathetic and caring approach in the husbandry of animals in pain  2.5 Use compassionate and safe handling techniques according to work health and safety (WHS) requirements |
| 3. Prepare for and implement prescribed routines, treatments and medical procedures | 3.1 Prepare equipment, instruments and materials for required routine, treatment or procedure and calibrate where necessary  3.2 Prepare patient, using low stress handling techniques and appropriate restraint according to WHS and animal welfare principles  3.3 Perform and/or assist in performing procedures, treatments or practice routines  3.4 Clean patient as required, and return patient to housing or client following routines, treatments or procedures  3.5 Record procedure, relevant monitoring data and/or post procedure care instructions using industry standard terminology  3.6 Clean, sterilise, store and maintain medical equipment and instruments |
| 4. Care for and monitor patients | 4.1 Provide basic animal welfare requirements for patients in care  4.2 Maintain environment specifically required for individual animals, according to their nursing care plan  4.3 Calculate patient dietary requirements, adapt food or feeding methods to patient's condition and assist with feeding, as required  4.4 Monitor and facilitate patient’s bodily functions  4.5 Carry out and record regular monitoring and observation of patients  4.6 Prepare and administer medication, as prescribed by veterinarian  4.7 Carry out industry-recognised animal psychological support in conjunction with patient monitoring |
| 5. Communicate with clients | 5.1 Counsel and inform clients of patient’s progress and condition at regular intervals  5.2 Check patient records to ensure routines are communicated to client |

#### Foundation skills

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

**Assessment Requirements**

**Performance evidence**

An individual demonstrating competency must satisfy all of the elements and performance criteria in this unit.

There must be evidence that the individual has performed the activities outlined below in a veterinary practice, under the supervision of a registered veterinarian:

* provided nursing care for a minimum of two hospitalised patients covering at least two different species and implemented nursing routines, including:

providing exercise and physical therapy

providing enrichment

supporting toileting

providing nutritional support

bandaging, using common bandage types

managing at least two different indwelling apparatuses, including catheters, intravenous catheters or feeding tubes

* fed a minimum of two patients using two different assisted feeding methods

* prepared for and carried out, or assisted with, at least three of the following procedures:

inserting an IV catheter

inserting or removing a nasogastric tube

inserting or removing an oesophageal tube

inserting or removing an orogastric tube

major ear clean for sedated patient

urinary catheterisation

endoscopy

major enema

thoracocentesis

cerebral spinal fluid tap

blood transfusion

crystalloid or synthetic colloid fluids

electrocardiogram (ECG)

* prepared for and performed medical procedures under immediate veterinary direction that include administration of at least three of the following:

subcutaneous injection

intramuscular injection

IV injection

oxygen supplementation by any of these methods: flow-by, nasal prongs, head tent, mask, oxygen cage, placed nasal tube

* prepared and monitored intravenous (IV) fluid therapy (via gravity feed or fluid pump) on at least one occasion, as instructed by the veterinarian.

Performance must be demonstrated in a workplace or an environment that accurately reflects a veterinary practice where nursing routines and medical procedures are carried out on real animals, under the supervision of a registered veterinarian.

**Knowledge evidence**

* animal behaviour characteristics and traits
* animal pain management procedures and techniques
* techniques to measure animal vital signs, including:

blood pressure

pulse rate and quality

respiratory rate and effort

rectal temperature

pulse oximetry

electrocardiograph (ECG)

capillary refill time

palpebral reflex

heart rate and rhythm

mucous membrane colour

pedal withdrawal reflex

end tidal carbon dioxide

* vital signs and their normal range, and reasons for concern for measurements outside normal range
* examination techniques to check health status
* signs of pain
* objective pain scoring systems
* barrier nursing principles
* wound classification, phases of wound healing and wound management principles
* bandaging techniques and standard bandage layers
* preparation and administration of medication, including drawing up injectables
* medical procedures, including:

administration of intravenous fluid

blood transfusion

oxygen supplementation

ear cleaning

urinary catheterisation

enema

thoracocentesis

cerebral spinal fluid tap

endoscopy/bronchoscopy/laparoscopy

insertion and removal of nasal, nasogastric (NG), oesophageal, orogastric tubes

electrocardiogram (ECG)

other procedures commonly carried out in the veterinary practice

* injection types, purposes and administration techniques:

subcutaneous

intramuscular

intravenous

* anatomy and physiology of animal digestive systems, and typical feeding behaviours for species serviced by the practice
* sources of nutrients for particular animal classes and groups
* medical and surgical conditions which require specific diets or assisted feeding
* assisted feeding methods

syringe

crop

tube

bottle

* the identification, operation, cleaning and basic maintenance of equipment, including:

intravenous fluid pumps and equipment

* state and territory legislation relevant to work health and safety, animal welfare and veterinary nursing scope of practice
* legislative and health regulations for the storage, use and disposal of chemicals and biological debris from medical procedures.

**Assessment conditions**

Performance must be demonstrated in a workplace or an environment that accurately reflects a veterinary practice where nursing routines and medical procedures are carried out on real animals, under the supervision of a registered veterinarian.

Assessment must ensure access to:

* real animals, including animals undergoing specific medical procedures and animals requiring in-patient nursing care
* resources, equipment and instruments typically available in a veterinary practice for nursing animals
* organisational policies and procedures relevant to the provision of nursing care and the conduct of medical procedures, including state or territory legislation and regulations relating to scope of work and required supervision
* supervision by a registered veterinarian

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

#### Unit mapping information

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| **Code and title current version** | **Code and title previous version** | **Equivalence status** | **Comments** |
| ACMVET4X09 Nurse animals | ACMVET202 Carry out daily practice routines | Not equivalent | Unit merged with ACMVET406 Nurse animals, ACMVET407 Carry out medical nursing routines and ACMVET408 Provide nutritional advice and support for animals  Element 2 Carry out daily treatment of animals under veterinary supervision and associated PCs 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 included in this unit which requires monitoring of vital signs, and treating animals according to veterinarian instructions and nursing care plans |
| ACMVET4X09 Nurse animals | ACMVET406 Nurse animals | Not equivalent | Unit merged with ACMVET202 Carry out daily practice routines, ACMVET407 Carry out medical nursing routines and ACMVET408 Provide nutritional advice and support for animals  Application wording changed.  Sequence of elements changed – E2 moved to E5; E3 moved to E2 and reworded PCs. New E3 re undertaking medical procedures from ACMVET407; Merged E4 and E5. Part of E1 included in this unit.  PC5.5 added to explicitly include preparation of and administration of prescribed medication  PE updated to include merged information  KE of techniques to measure blood gases removed  Assessment conditions remove mention of Certificate IV qualified veterinary nurse.  Licensing and regulatory requirements identified explicitly. |
| ACMVET4X09 Nurse animals | ACMVET407 Carry out medical nursing routines | Not equivalent | Unit merged with ACMVET202 Carry out daily practice routines, AMCVET406 Nurse animals and ACMVET408 Provide nutritional advice and support for animals.  Mandatory Workplace requirements clarified.  Assessment conditions remove mention of Certificate IV qualified veterinary nurse.  Licensing and regulatory requirements identified explicitly. |
| ACMVET4X09 Nurse animals | ACMVET408 Provide nutritional advice and support for animals | Not equivalent | Unit merged with ACMVET202 Carry out daily practice routines, AMCVET406 Nurse animals and ACMVET407 Carry out medical nursing routines  Element 3 re nutritional needs of hospitalised patients and knowledge evidence of assisted feeding methods, excluding feeding tubes, included in this unit.  Mandatory Workplace requirements clarified.  Assessment conditions remove mention of Certificate IV qualified veterinary nurse.  Licensing and regulatory requirements identified explicitly. |

### 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:**   
Mandatory workplace requirements apply to this unit of competency and are specified in the Performance Evidence and Assessment Conditions of the Assessment Requirements*.*