## ACMVET4X18 Provide intensive foal care and nursing

#### Application

This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required to provide intensive care of compromised newborn foals during hospitalisation in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

The unit applies to veterinary nurses who work under the supervision and direction of a registered veterinarian in a veterinary practice.

**Licensing, legislative, regulatory requirements**

Legislative and regulatory requirements apply to the permitted scope of veterinary nursing practice and vary according to state/territory jurisdictions. Users of this unit must confirm current requirements with the relevant regulatory authority before delivery.

#### Pre-requisite unit ACMEQU212 Handle horses safely

#### 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. Admit foals to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) | 1.1 Prepare the NICU and admit foals according to practice procedures  1.2 Place foals for required care using correct handling and moving techniques  1.3 Conduct preliminary general clinical examination  1.4 Record relevant history, identification data and clinical findings on appropriate forms  1.5 Maintain patient records |
| 2. Provide nursing care for recumbent foals | 2.1 Use safe handling techniques when assisting foal to rise  2.2 Perform regular monitoring of patient’s health parameters according to veterinarian directions  2.3 Use specialised monitoring equipment according to manufacturer instructions |
| 3. Provide respiratory support and perform emergency ventilation for foals | 3.1 Assist respiration in recumbent foals  3.2 Maintain oxygen supplementation  3.3 Follow work health and safety (WHS) procedures when handling oxygen equipment  3.4 Assist with emergency resuscitation  3.5 Provide emergency ventilation for foals |
| 4. Assemble crash kit equipment and materials | 4.1 Identify crash kit items from inventory list  4.2 Check and restock pharmacy inventory |
| 5. Prepare and administer enteral and parenteral nutrition to impaired foals in NICU | 5.1 Prepare enteral and parenteral nutrition  5.2 Feed impaired foals according to instruction  5.3 Monitor enteral and parenteral therapies |
| 6. Prepare and administer parenteral medications | 6.1 Prepare medications aseptically  6.2 Administer medications according to veterinarian instructions and within scope of practice  6.3 Monitor and maintain intravenous fluids and intravenous catheters  6.4 Operate and maintain infusion pump  6.5 Monitor and maintain plasma and blood transfusions |
| 7. Implement routine industry standard precautions for infection prevention and control (IPC) in a foal NICU | 7.1 Apply aseptic techniques and maintain strict hygiene protocols for the NICU  7.2 Perform regular, ongoing, hygienic maintenance of the floor, counter, cabinets and stalls  7.3 Complete routine daily checks of specialist equipment  7.4 Isolate critically ill and infected foals and observe strict sanitary procedures |
| 8. Provide routine care for mare in NICU | 8.1 Carry out routine tasks involving hospital care of the dam (brood mare)  8.2 Milk out mares according to practice procedures and veterinarian instructions |
| 9. Discharge foals from NICU | 9.1 Discharge foals according to practice procedures  9.2 Prepare facilities for incoming patient |

#### Foundation skills

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

* provided intensive foal care and nursing in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) for a minimum of two foals and
* demonstrated simulated foal resuscitation techniques at least once.

Performance must be demonstrated in an equine NICU or an environment that accurately reflects an equine intensive care veterinary practice and where nursing procedures are carried out on real animals.

**Knowledge evidence**

An individual must be able to demonstrate the knowledge required to perform the tasks outlined in the elements and performance criteria of this unit. This includes knowledge of:

* normal health parameters for foals
* handling techniques for compromised newborn foals
* nutritional requirements and options for compromised newborn foals
* principles and practices of infection prevention and control and biosecurity risks related to nursing newborn foals
* principles and practices of routine care and nursing techniques for compromised newborn foals, including:

specialised nursing techniques

safely assisting foals to stand and support

rotating foal position regularly between left to right sternal recumbency

close monitoring of all vital signs and body functions, including pressure points (bed sores)

* use of monitoring equipment, including:

blood pressure (BP) monitor

glucometer

lactate monitor

refractometer

electrocardiograph (ECG)

pulse oximeter

iSTAT or IDEXX machines (haematology analysers)

* function and use of equipment, including:

crash kits

intravenous catheters

ventilators

infusion pumps

milkers

* crash kit components and uses, including:

oxygen tank, regulator and flow meter

oxygen tubing

endotracheal tubes

self-inflating bag-valve resuscitator

syringes and needles

fluid-giving sets

catheter placement kit

fluid pump

pharmaceuticals as specified by hospital policy and procedures and/or veterinary directions

chart of drugs and doses

* resuscitation techniques and equipment
* purpose and use of medications and treatments used in intensive foal care
* workplace hygiene standards and biosecurity procedures, including:

cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising agents, equipment and application techniques

isolation of critically ill or infected animals

personal protective equipment

aseptic techniques

* legislation, regulations and codes of practice, including WHS, animal welfare and ethics, veterinary practices and waste disposal related to compromised newborn foals.

**Assessment conditions**

Skills must be demonstrated in a in an equine NICU or an environment that accurately reflects an equine intensive care veterinary practice where nursing procedures are carried out on real animals, unless specified in the Performance Evidence.

Assessment must ensure access to:

* foal patients and nursing mares
* equipment and resources typically available in an equine NICU
* organisational policies and procedures, current legislation, regulations and relevant codes of practice relating to veterinary nursing of equines
* workplace procedures relevant to caring for and nursing foals in NICU.

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** |
| ACMVET4X18 Provide intensive foal care and nursing | ACMVET415 Provide intensive foal care and nursing | Not equivalent | Unit re-templated to 2025 template  Changes to wording of Application  Legislative and regulatory statement revised to more accurately reflect requirements.  Remove Nurse foals (and subsequent pre-requisite chain) from pre-requisite requirements. Include ACMQUE212 Handle horses safely as pre-requisite to ensure safety working in an equine environment (esp mares).  E1: change from ‘ Admit new arrivals to a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU)’ to ‘ Admit foals to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU)’  PC1.1 minor change ‘Prepare the NICU and admit foals’  PC1.2 reword from ‘Place foals correctly’ to ‘Place foals for required care using correct handling and moving techniques’ to reflect correct positioning (for the required care) and correct handling to place the foal.  Delete PC2.2 as ‘apply aseptic techniques’ in PC7.1 for whole unit generally  (new) PC2.2 reworded from ‘carry out regular monitoring’ to ‘perform regular monitoring of patient’s health parameters’  PC3.4 ‘Assist with initial resuscitation according to industry practice’ reworded to ‘Assist with emergency resuscitation’  Minor change E4 from ‘Assemble crash kit items’ to ‘Assemble crash kit equipment and materials’  E6 add ‘and administer’  PC6.2 add ‘according to veterinarian instructions and within scope of practice’  PC7.1 change ‘Maintain aseptic techniques and strict hygiene protocol’ to ‘Apply aseptic techniques and maintain strict hygiene protocols’  Wording of PE changed to simply and remove duplication and repetition of PC  KE: minor movements and rewording for clarity  Added ‘resuscitation techniques and equipment’  Added ‘aseptic techniques’  Added ‘isolation of critically ill or infected animals’ in knowledge of biosecurity procedures.  Mandatory workplace requirements noted as applicable to this unit due to skills needing to be demonstrated in a NICU (or an environment that accurately reflects an equine veterinary practice NICU) with real animals and all necessary equipment. |

### 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.