

GUIDELINE 1

STANDARDS OF VETERINARY PREMISES

Registered veterinary practitioners should ensure they are familiar with the contents of this Guideline. The Board considers this Guideline to be the minimum standard expected from a registered veterinary practitioner exercising reasonable skill and care in the course of providing treatment to animals.

Practitioners should read this Guideline in conjunction with the Definitions listed in the introductory pages.

1.1 PREAMBLE

For the purpose of this guideline the definition of a veterinary premises is any building or place where veterinary procedures are performed. This includes all fixed premises from large hospitals to consulting rooms as well as mobile clinics and house call practices, and includes rooms embedded in other business premises. Whilst veterinary premises may be owned by any person or company, the Veterinary Practitioners Registration Board of Victoria considers that it is the responsibility of registered veterinary practitioners employed in or by the practice to ensure that the premises meet certain minimum standards. All veterinary practitioners should be vigilant with regard to biosecurity. Refer to Guideline 18.

1.2 GENERAL STANDARDS

All veterinary premises, including consulting rooms, clinics and hospitals shall:

- (A) be clean and hygienic at all times;
- (B) have on prominent display the name, telephone number and days and hours of attendance of the registered veterinary practitioner or practitioners usually in attendance and arrangements for obtaining after hours services;
- (C) have a separate area for use as a waiting room and for the purpose of client reception;
- (D) have internal floor and the walls, to a height of 1.5 metres, constructed from an impervious and easily cleaned material in any area or room used for animal accommodation, surgical procedures, medical treatment, other procedures or client waiting rooms;
- (E) provide facilities to weigh small animal patients;
- (F) provide for the maintenance of patient records including details of body weights, examinations, procedures, tests and treatment (see Guideline 11), and including options for treatment (see Guideline 8);
- (G) provide in the consulting area:
 - (i) an examination table with impervious surfaces and;

- (ii) a basin with hot and cold running water and fixed drainage;
- (H) have storage for veterinary instruments and facilities for their sterilisation;
- (I) have secure storage for drugs as required by the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2006 and any subsequent amendments to these regulations;
- (J) have facilities for any excreta, putrescible waste, soiled bedding and carcasses to be stored in such a way and disposed of at intervals sufficient to avoid:
 - (i) the generation of offensive odours;
 - (ii) offensive appearance; and
 - (iii) those materials becoming hazard to health;
- (K) provide facilities that allow for the prevention of spread of contagious disease between patients;
- (L) have a trained assistant present during sterile procedures for the purposes of anaesthetic monitoring and as an aid in maintaining sterility;
- (M) where general anaesthetics are administered, provide facilities for resuscitation of patients;
- (N) meet the requirements of local authority by-laws or other regulations applicable to veterinary premises;
- (O) provide for the veterinary care of any hospitalised animals; to be made in accordance with the general standards described in Guideline 4.
- (P) provide facilities for correct collection and disposal of sharps

1.3

VETERINARY CONSULTING ROOMS

“Veterinary Consulting Room” means a premises wherein examination, diagnostic, prophylactic and medical services for animals are provided. A veterinary consulting room shall not be used for the purpose of surgical procedures (other than minor surgery), or the hospitalisation of animals. Minor surgery does not include procedures involving the opening of body cavities or orthopaedic procedures. The general standards which apply to all veterinary premises shall be met.

1.4

VETERINARY CLINICS

“Veterinary Clinic” means premises wherein examination, diagnostic, prophylactic, medical and surgical services for animals are provided.

1.4.1**Standards**

In addition to the general standards which apply to all veterinary premises, a veterinary clinic shall:

- (A) provide for laboratory diagnostic services;
- (B) provide for radiographic investigation which complies with all Occupational Health and Safety requirements and any other regulations as may be in force;
- (C) provide a room or rooms separate from any examination or consulting room for surgical procedures, the sterilisation of instruments, the anaesthesia and resuscitation and recovery of patients;
- (D) provide a separate room or rooms for housing of animals in which any kennel, cage or stall is of a size appropriate to the animal housed and is constructed of impervious and easily cleaned materials;
- (E) have adequate facilities for cooling, heating and ventilation of any area in which any kennel, cage, or stall is situated – individual cage heating is acceptable;
- (F) provide an area separate and apart from any animal accommodation facilities for the hygienic preparation and storage of food;
- (G) provide equipment for inhalation anaesthesia and the resuscitation of patients.

1.5**VETERINARY HOSPITALS**

A "Veterinary Hospital" or "Animal Hospital" means any premises wherein veterinary examination, diagnostic, prophylactic, medical & surgical services are provided and where an extended and superior range of services for animals under treatment are provided.

1.5.1**Standards**

In addition to all the above standards, a veterinary hospital shall:

- (A) provide for a registered veterinary practitioner to be readily available at all times - this does not necessarily require a registered veterinary practitioner to be on the premises at all times;
- (B) have a business information sign containing specific information regarding the provision of emergency veterinary services;
- (C) provide at least two examination rooms or, in the case of a large animal hospital, a covered area with suitable loading and unloading facilities and crush and/or stocks for restraint during examination and other procedures;
- (D) provide for laboratory diagnostic services in which microscopic, routine haematology, faecal and urinary examination would normally be

undertaken on the premises;

- (E) provide equipment and facilities for radiographic investigations;
- (F) provide an operating theatre used solely for the purpose of "aseptic" surgical procedures and a separate treatment area for performing "contaminated" surgical procedures;
- (G) provide a separate area for the preparation of patients for surgery;
- (H) provide for the non-chemical sterilisation of surgical instruments and packs;
- (I) in the case of a veterinary hospital for small animals, provide kennels or cages that comply with 1.4.1(d);
- (J) in the case of a veterinary hospital for large animals, provide stalls under cover that comply with 1.4.1(d);
- (K) have an area or areas for the exercise of animals appropriate to the number and size of the animals hospitalised;
- (L) if performed, have an area for the bathing and grooming of animals separate and apart from the surgical and examination areas.
- (M) Provide appropriate isolation facilities for:
 - i. animals with suspected infectious diseases
 - ii. animals treated with chemical or radioactive substances that may be harmful to staff