

Policy on the use of animals for research.

Veterinary Ireland is sensitive to those members of the public and the profession who hold views concerning this subject.

Veterinary Ireland is of the opinion that the use of animals in scientific research is still necessary and will continue to be so.

It should only be done under strict legal and ethical control.

It should always respect and value the life and welfare of animals used.

It should endeavor to obtain the maximum of high quality data from the minimum no of animals at the lowest welfare cost.

Veterinary Ireland is of the opinion that the use of animals is only justified after an honest and informed effort has been made to find an alternative method of finding the information sought, which does not require the use of animals.

Veterinary Ireland is aware of the very stringent legal and ethical controls which apply to such use. These all embrace the concepts of 3 Rs:

- **Refinement**, of the experiment so as to ensure the maximum information is obtained at the least welfare cost to the animal involved
- **Replacement** of the sentient animals with invitro techniques .
- **Reduction** of the number of animals used and in the welfare cost.

Veterinary surgeons who are charged with responsibilities of care for such animals have legal, professional and ethical responsibilities.

Legal: as set down in SI/566/02 and animal remedies act.

Professional; as advised in the guide to professional conduct drawn up and amended from time to time by the Veterinary Council of Ireland.

Ethical; as a veterinarian he/she as an enhanced duty to care for all animals. This would include using his/her influence in such area to value the animals' life and welfare.

Ref.

- SI 566/02
- EC 86/609
- ETS 123
- Cruelty to animal's act (amended) 1876
- 'The humane experimental technique' Russel & Burch 1959 2ed1999
- Veterinary Ireland document 'Obligations [of a veterinary surgeon for research animals under his care](#)'
- *Veterinary Council of Ireland Guide to professional conduct
- FELASA guidelines for education of specialists in laboratory animal science (Category D) <http://www.lal.org.uk/pdf/LAfel3.pdf>
Laboratory Animals Ltd. Laboratory Animals (1999) 33, 1±15
- FELASA guidelines for education of specialists in laboratory animal science (Category A C) <http://www.lal.org.uk/pdf/LAfel7.pdf>

- Ethical Guidelines [hrb ethical review.pdf](#)
- FELASA guidelines for education of specialists in laboratory animal science (Category B)<http://www.lal.org.uk/pdf/files/lafel6.pdf>

***The Veterinary Council of Ireland ‘Guide to Professional Behaviour’ (1998)**

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‘Veterinary surgeons involved in experimental research using animals shall ensure this research is conducted observing the terms and conditions of a licence issued pursuant to the European Communities (Amendment of Cruelty to Animals Act 1876)Regulations 1994.

Named veterinary surgeons and veterinary surgeons involved in research are responsible for providing sound advice to their employers or co-workers on all animal welfare aspects of any procedure involving animals.

Veterinary surgeons should actively discourage research work which is unnecessarily repetitive or has ill-defined goals.

Veterinary surgeons should ensure that all research projects which involve the use of animals are well planned and include appropriate biometrical assessment of the number of animals to be used. The use of alternative research procedures, which do not involve the use of live animals, should be assessed during the planning of all research projects.

Veterinary surgeons involved in experimental surgery or other skilled procedures on animals must ensure their own techniques and those of their co-workers are of high standard, and furthermore ensure best welfare practices for animals concerned.