



**VETERINARY IRELAND**

**POLICY DOCUMENT**

**ON**

**THE USE OF ANIMALS**

**FOR RESEARCH**

**2014**

**RATIFIED BY**  
**VETERINARY IRELAND NATIONAL COUNCIL**  
**4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2014**



## **Veterinary Ireland Policy Document on the Use of Animals for Research**

Veterinary Ireland recognises that the use of animals in research is a sensitive subject on which members of both the profession and the public may hold views that are at variance with this policy.

Veterinary Ireland is of the view that limited use of animals for research purposes is currently, for specific cases, a medical and scientific necessity and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future.

Veterinary Ireland is also of the view 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, and it is certain that no previous testing results already exist that can be analysed for the subject area in question.

### **All research involving animals must:-**

1. Be done under strict legal and ethical control.
2. Always respect the life and welfare of any animals used.
3. Endeavour to obtain the maximum amount of high quality data from the minimum number of animals at the lowest welfare cost.

Veterinary Ireland supports the application of very stringent legal and ethical controls, which should be founded on the concept of the 3 Rs **and which should be applied universally:**

1. Replacement of sentient animals with in vitro and other techniques.
2. Reduction in the number of animals used.
3. Refinement of the experiment so as to ensure the maximum amount of information is obtained at the minimal welfare cost to the animals involved.

Veterinary surgeons who are given responsibility for the care of animals used for scientific purposes have legal, professional and ethical responsibilities:-

1. Legal - as set down in SI 543 of 2012 and relevant medicines legislation.
2. Professional - as advised in the current Guide to Professional Conduct.
3. Ethical - veterinarians are charged with an enhanced duty of care towards all animals. Veterinarians with research animals under their care must be particularly aware of this duty and at all times use their influence and expertise to minimise suffering and to enhance welfare.



**REFERENCES:**

1. Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010:  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:276:0033:0079:en:PDF>
2. European Union (Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 543 of 2012), as amended by the European Union (Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 434 of 2013) and the European Union (Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 174 of 2014) (collectively known as the European Union (Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes) Regulations 2012-2014):  
<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/pdf/2012/en.si.2012.0543.pdf>
3. Russell, W. M. S. and Burch, R.L. 1959. The Principles of Humane Experimental Technique. London: Methuen & Co. 238 pp. (Reprinted as a Special Edition in 1992 by the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare.):  
[http://altweb.jhsph.edu/pubs/books/humane\\_exp/het-toc](http://altweb.jhsph.edu/pubs/books/humane_exp/het-toc)
4. Veterinary Ireland 2014. Guidelines for Veterinary Practitioners who are undertaking duties as a Designated Veterinarian under the European Union (Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes) Regulations 2012 (SI No 543 of 2012):  
<http://www.veterinaryireland.ie>
5. Veterinary Council of Ireland, 2012. Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Practitioners:  
<http://www.vci.ie/Documents/CodeOfConduct/05OCT12%20CPC%20VP%20Booklet%20Format.pdf>.



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