

# FECAVA Key Recommendations for Hygiene and Infection Control in Veterinary Practice



## PREVENT INFECTION

Effective implementation of hygienic measures is essential to prevent and contain the transmission of nosocomial infections to animals and humans both within veterinary settings and in the community.

### CLEAN & DISINFECT HANDS

The most important activity in the control of nosocomial infections in practice.

#### WASH HANDS

- At the start & end of the working day.
- After visiting the toilet.
- Before & after eating or smoking.
- When visibly soiled.
- After handling animal fluids & excretions.
- Before aseptic or invasive procedures in combination with disinfection.

#### DISINFECT HANDS

(use alcohol-based hand sanitizers 70-90%)

- That are dry & clean.
- Before & after handling each patient.
- Before & after gloving.
- Before touching equipment, door handles & keyboards.

*No jewelry (rings, bracelets), wristwatches, nail polish or fake nails should be worn. Nails should be kept short and clean.*



### USE GLOVES

- When handling diseased or carrier animals of known or suspected contagious disease, including parasitic infestations.
- When handling animals with known or suspected antimicrobial resistant infections.
- When handling all wounds.
- When contact with blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions and mucous membranes is possible.
- During surgery or when asepsis is required (sterile gloves).
- Change gloves between each individual patient & when visibly contaminated.
- Change gloves when moving from dirty to clean procedures on the same patient.
- Change gloves before touching equipment, door handles & keyboards.

Wearing gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene!



### TRAIN STAFF

Train & encourage all staff to understand & comply with good hygiene practices. Correct hygiene is not difficult if everyone is aware of its importance.

- Develop written hygiene protocols (display prominently) & appoint a member of staff with responsibility for promoting & enforcing hygiene practices.
- Establish thorough in-house training of staff & encourage attendance at continuing education courses on hygiene.



### MANAGE WASTE

Divide clinical waste according to risks to animal and human health. Always use a United Nations approved waste container, carrier or treatment facility.

- **Sharps** – rigid container, no free liquids.
- **Infectious waste** - bags (yellow) for soft contaminated items, gloves, gowns, bandages, swabs & tissues.
- **Hazardous (cytotoxic)** – (purple) lidded rigid container.
- **Animal cadavers & animal by-products** – place in plastic bags to avoid leakage of liquid. Store in a cold room or freezer.
- **Domestic waste** (non-risk waste) – e.g. clean recyclables. Follow local legislation for removal.



### CLEAN & DISINFECT PREMISES

Use approved cleaning products & disinfectants for veterinary premises & follow label instructions. Use gloves. For equipment, follow the recommendations from the manufacturers.

#### SURFACES & EQUIPMENT

- Clean & disinfect before & after each patient & when visibly soiled or contaminated.
- Clean & disinfect door handles, keyboards, light switches & telephones on a daily / regular basis.

#### COMMON AREAS (ENTRANCES, RECEPTION, WAITING ROOMS & CORRIDORS)

- Clean & disinfect daily & when visibly soiled or contaminated.

#### WARDS, ISOLATION & INTENSIVE CARE UNITS

- Clean & disinfect before & after each patient & when visibly soiled or contaminated.



### WEAR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

To ensure that hands & forearms can be kept clean short-sleeved lab coats or scrubs should be worn at all times when handling patients. Protective clothing should not be worn outside the working environment.

#### ADDITIONAL PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

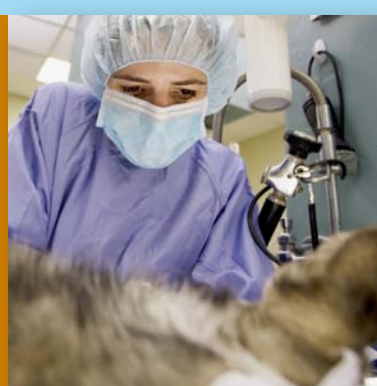
**Masks, hair caps, sterile gowns & gloves** should be used for surgical & invasive procedures.

**Plastic aprons, gloves & masks** are required when handling:

- Patients with known or suspected contagious disease.
- Potentially contaminated fluids & secretions.

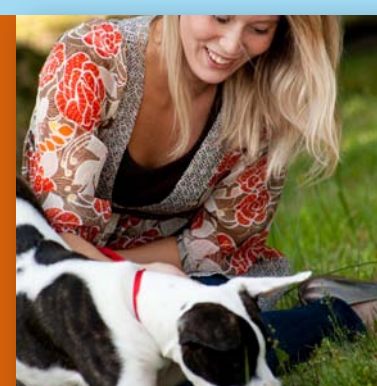
#### Change the additional protective clothing:

- Between patients.
- When moving between wards, isolation & intensive care units.



### EDUCATE PET OWNERS

- To ensure good hygiene practices during clinical visits & following contact with their animal in their homes.
- To support veterinary efforts in improving hygiene & responsible use of antimicrobials with good adherence to prescribed therapies.
- To convey better understanding of the public health implications of zoonotic & antimicrobial resistant infections in pets.



### LAUNDRY CLOTHING & BEDDING

- Scrubs & lab coats – daily & when visibly soiled or contaminated.
- Bedding & animal blankets – between each patient & when visibly soiled or contaminated.
- Remove any gross visible soiling contamination prior to washing (use gloves).
- Wash at 60°C & dry at high temperature to eliminate infectious organisms.
- Maintain clear separation between dirty & clean areas in laundry room to avoid cross-contamination.

