SOP considerations

Title : Daily care and welfare monitoring of animal holding rooms

Hazards :

* Lab animal Allergy
* Bites, scratches, trample, and Zoonosis
* Manual Handling
* Chemical exposure, dust, and water

General Info

* Animals housed are checked once/twice daily, including weekend and public holiday
* Breeding and experimental animals (MAY HAVE ADDITIONAL CHECKS ACCORDING TO SOP’S)
* Weekend/Bank holiday 1 Competent qualified Technician will be responsible for the checks.
* Out of Hours (will be addressed in SOP)

Procedure

* Wearing of Additional PPE if required
* Bio-security equipment initialised, check of AHU, Aquatic parameters
* Entering the room the technician will be observant for
  + Light, temp, humidity, noise, and odours
  + Update themselves with prior checks and observations noted in record (Traffic light system if used should prioritise checks)
    - Red = Urgent
    - Amber = increased checks
    - Green = under treatment
  + Visual check of water & food hoppers, bowls, drinking nipples etc
  + Visual check of substrate, urine, faecal amounts, colour and odour any additional body fluids such as blood, tissue and mucus
  + If applicable nesting, enrichment, and housing
  + Behaviour shoaling, isolating, aggression, vocalising, and other abnormal behaviour
* Cage/pen/tank details PPL, PIL, Procedure number and number of animals housed

Husbandry

* Top up/change water if low or will not cover the period until changed
* Food offered if hopper/tank/bowls are low or will not cover feeding period (record observation)
* Conductivity, nitrate, nitrite levels (aquatics)
* Sodden cages/pens will be changed, check animal is not suffering cold, wet skin/fur or feet (record observations)
* Check if additional enrichment, substrate, or nesting is required
* Record of additional duties carried out
  + Floors
  + Filters
  + Changing of cages/pens/tanks
  + Changing of cage tops/forage trays/enrichment
  + Routine adjustment to Aquatic system

Actions and reporting lines

Senior Staff, NACWO’s and Pil holder (NVS if applicable to facility)

* Report any abnormal environmental conditions to senior staff
* Report immediately any animals of concern to senior staff (follow reporting and recording animal health and welfare concerns SOP)

(NACWO and Pil holder)

* Report and record any Deaths with all details from the cage/pen/tank
* Use of score sheets (SOP)
* Use of Daily record
  + Written
  + Computer system