# Guideline for Animal Medical Record Keeping and Transfer of Records Between NIH Intramural Animal Facilities

**Purpose:** To fulfill record keeping requirements set forth in the PHS Policy and regulations issued under the Animal Welfare Act while setting forth the minimum requirement for records to be sent with animals being transferred between NIH animal facilities. It is essential that research and veterinary procedures performed on an animal be adequately described so that veterinary staff, husbandry personnel, and research staff can provide follow-up care and treatment and/or allow appropriate future research use of the animal.

**Record Keeping:**

- This guideline specifically refers to records maintained for all USDA regulated species with emphasis on non-rodent species. It is expected that individual animal health records will be maintained as mandated by USDA's Animal Care Policy #3, Veterinary Care, July 17, 2007 http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/policy.shtml Records for non-regulated species including rodents, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and birds, and regulated rodents may be a group record or detailed treatment sheet.

- Individual animal records are established for regulated, non-rodent, species on receipt or weaning. Records may be maintained either electronically or in hard copy. Scanned documents with signatures are considered official.

- Different parts of a medical record may be kept in different locations as long as all parts are readily retrievable and reviewable by the veterinary staff, as well as for internal or external oversight uses.

- All medical records for non-rodents will be maintained in a manner that adequately communicates pertinent medical information to any veterinarian receiving the record. It is strongly encouraged that all animal facilities maintain their medical records using a standardized format (e.g. as discussed in the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine described position statement: Veterinary Medical Records (ILAR J. 2007. 48(1):37-41. http://www.aclam.org/print/position_medrecords.pdf )

- At a minimum, individual animal records will include a general information sheet, import documents, regulatory and vendor information sheets, and a Master Problem Sheet (see sample template 1*). When applicable, a chronological history of preventive medical procedures (e.g. vaccinations, TB tests, serological testing, etc.), behavior abnormalities, laboratory reports, surgery reports, anesthesia reports, special procedures (e.g. radiological procedures, MRI procedures), and therapeutic and research procedures (compounds administered, the nature of and amount of biological material removed) are included. Therapeutic and research procedure details are recorded on a Health Progress Sheet (see sample template 2*).

    - The general information sheet will contain such information as species, DOB/age, institute, sex, owning institute and investigator, and major medical concerns. The Master Problem Sheet may be combined with the general information.

- The record will contain relevant husbandry information (e.g. socialization records, special feeds), medical and research procedures (and outcomes) and medical treatments. The addition of detailed excerpts from the ASP regarding surgical or medical manipulations, in the progress section of the record, is strongly encouraged. Each entry describing a medical or research procedure or treatment will be signed or initialed by the appropriate personnel. Personnel typically responsible for making entries in medical records include veterinary staff, animal husbandry staff, and research staff.

- All entries made on the Master Problem Sheet should be short and concise. Details of a research procedure or a condition's progress or treatment are described on a Case Progress Sheet in another section of the record. Examples of items to note on the Master Problem Sheet follow. List research procedures chronologically by name only (i.e. do not give details). This listing will include the dates, which can be a range to encompass those procedures performed every day for a specified time period. List research drugs by name and period of administration. Record any exposure to *Mycobacterium* through adjuvants. List spontaneous and research-related illnesses, adverse drug reactions, and surgeries; note any catheters, pumps, tissue transplants, etc.

**Transfer of Records:**

- The original record or a complete, legible copy (paper or electronic) will be sent with the animal to the receiving facility. Copies of the record should be organized as delineated above in point 4 of the record keeping portion of this guideline.

- The originating facility is responsible for implementing a system to indicate that the record/animal in question has left the facility and if it is expected to return, by what date. If the animal is not to return to the facility (due to permanent transfer or death) or the return date is unknown, documentation that the animal has been removed from the facility is placed into the animal's record. The original record (or a copy) is signed by the Facility Veterinarian, the Facility Manager, or their designated representative and then placed into a transferred or dead file. The original or a copy of the record is maintained on file for a minimum of three years after the animal's disposition or death.

- If the receiving facility received what it considers to be an incomplete animal record, it is their responsibility to contact the sending facility to obtain missing documents.

**Archiving Medical Records:**

- When an animal is euthanized (or dies) while on study, the animal's complete medical record (original or copy) will be sent upon request to the IC Animal Program Director (or designee) by the Facility Veterinarian or Facility Manager, with the facility keeping the original or a copy (paper or electronic) for 3 years.

- All records pertinent to an animal study must be maintained by the IC for the duration of the animal study plus three years after the animal's final disposition per federal regulation.

- For record keeping, the end of an animal study equates to reaching the 3-yr expiration date of the ACUC approved animal study protocol (ASP). Hard copies of records only need to be maintained for the first year. For subsequent years, all hard copy records may be scanned in and stored in an unchangeable electronic format e.g. pdf or tif file. A method for retrieving electronic records should be in place.

Approved – 05/11/2011

# General Information and Master Problem Sheet

(*This is a sample template, and therefore, the format shown is not required*)

Owning Institute: _____ Holding Institute: _____ Bldg: _____ Room #:_____

PI: _____ Contact Investigator: _____ ASP#: _____

Animal ID or Cage Card #:_____ Animal Name: _____ Sex: _____

D.O.B.:_____ Rec'd Date: _____Description:_____

Adverse Drug Reactions: _____

Critical Problems: _____

| MASTER PROBLEM LIST | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Date Entered** | **Initials** | **PROBLEM/EVENT** | **Date Resolved** | **Initials** |
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Rev. 4/07 Maintain 1 calendar year on-site, archive for 2 calendar years

# HEALTH PROGRESS SHEET

**(Template 2** - This is a sample template, and therefore, the format shown is not required.)

Owning Institute: _____ Holding Institute: _____ Bldg: _____ Room #:_____

PI: _____ Contact Investigator & ph#: _____ ASP#: _____

Animal ID or Cage Card #:_____ Animal Name: _____ Sex: _____

D.O.B.:_____ Rec'd Date: _____Description: _____

| Date & Time | Notes | Initials |
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