



**Australian Government**

# **ACMVET502A Carry out post-operative nursing routines**

**Release 2**

## ACMVET502A Carry out post-operative nursing routines

### Modification History

Release	TP Version	Comments
2	ACM10v3	Reference to OHS legislation replaced with generic terminology
1	ACM10v1	Initial release. Supersedes and is equivalent to RUV5602A

### Unit Descriptor

This Unit of Competency covers the process of maintaining patient (animal) fluid therapy and nutritional requirements, monitoring wounds or surgical sites post-operatively, monitoring patients including recumbent patients post-operatively, and discharging patients that have undergone specialised surgical procedures into the care of clients (owners).

### Application of the Unit

This Unit is specifically designed for nurses who work in a veterinary clinic or hospital where registered specialists perform specialised surgical procedures. Carrying out post-operative nursing routines requires access to a veterinary clinic or hospital where specialised surgical procedures are performed; veterinary surgeons that perform specialised surgical procedures; patients and clients requiring specialised surgical procedures; and the equipment, instruments and resources required to perform specialised surgical procedures.

In addition to legal and ethical responsibilities, all Units of Competency in the ACM10 Animal Care and Management Training Package have the requirement for animals to be handled gently and calmly. The individual is required to exhibit appropriate care for animals so that stress and discomfort is minimised.

### Licensing/Regulatory Information

Licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements may apply to this Unit. Therefore, it will be necessary to check with the relevant state or territory regulators for current licensing, legislative or regulatory requirements before undertaking this Unit.

## Pre-Requisites

Nil

## Employability Skills Information

This Unit contains employability skills.

## Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

<p>Elements describe the essential outcomes of a Unit of Competency.</p>	<p>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where bold italicised text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge section and the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.</p>
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## Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Maintain patient fluid requirements	1.1. <i>Intravenous catheters</i> are placed and <i>maintained</i> in accordance with clinic policies. 1.2. Patient <i>fluid output</i> is monitored in accordance with <i>workplace health and safety</i> and clinic policies and procedures. 1.3. <i>Intravenous fluid therapy is maintained</i> in accordance with clinic policies.
2. Maintain patient nutritional requirements	2.1. <i>Specific nutritional requirements</i> are met according to individual patient needs. 2.2. <i>Energy requirements</i> are calculated according to individual patient needs. 2.3. <i>Assisted feeding</i> procedures are carried out in accordance with clinic policies.
3. Monitor wound or surgical site post-operatively	3.1. Dressings and bandages are managed post-operatively in accordance with clinic policies. 3.2. <i>Indwelling surgical drains</i> are managed in accordance with clinic policies. 3.3. Open wounds are managed post-operatively in accordance with clinic policies.
4. Monitor recumbent patients post-operatively	4.1. <i>Housing and bedding</i> are selected in accordance with specific patient needs. 4.2. Specific nursing techniques are used to prevent and treat <i>complications associated with recumbent patients</i> . 4.3. Positioning aids and techniques are used in accordance with surgical procedure, disease process and individual patient needs.
5. Monitor patients post-operatively	5.1. <i>Vital signs and observations</i> are recorded and abnormalities are reported to the surgeon. 5.2. Patient care plans are prepared and implemented in consultation with the surgeon. 5.3. Recognised <i>physical therapy techniques</i> are applied according to patient needs.
6. Discharge patients into the care of clients	6.1. Specific <i>home-nursing requirements</i> are communicated to clients in accordance with surgeons' instructions. 6.2. Instructions on patients' physiotherapy and exercise are communicated to clients as required in accordance with veterinarians' instructions. 6.3. Follow up appointments are organised as required.

## Required Skills and Knowledge

This section describes the skills and knowledge required for this Unit.

### Required skills

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#### Ability to:

- calculate patient nutritional requirements
- complete relevant work-related documentation
- employ safe and environmentally responsible organisational systems and procedures when working with and handling animals
- maintain the highest standards of hygiene and infection control at all times to reduce the risk of infection and cross-infection
- observe accurately and report animal condition and vital signs
- recognise, respond to and assist with emergencies
- use literacy skills to read, select and implement policies and procedures, including workplace health and safety, infection control and other clinic policies and procedures; coordinate patient admission and discharge; implement sequenced written and oral instructions; and record patient details accurately and legibly
- use interpersonal skills to relate to people from a range of social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds and with a range of physical and mental abilities
- use oral communication skills/language required to fulfil the job role as specified by the clinic, including negotiating and questioning techniques, active listening, asking for clarification from veterinarian, and acknowledging and responding to a range of views
- use numeracy skills to monitor patients' vital signs and surgical equipment
- use problem-solving skills to use available resources, prioritise tasks and anticipate surgeon and patient requirements
- use safe manual handling techniques and/or equipment
- use safe waste handling and disposal procedures.

### Required knowledge

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#### Knowledge of:

- anaesthesia, fluid therapy and radiographic and imaging routines relating to specialised surgical routines
- animal anatomy and physiology related to post-operative nursing routines
- fluid therapy
- nutritional requirements after specialised surgical procedures
- pain management techniques
- principles of animal welfare and ethics
- recognition of emergencies
- relevant state or territory legislation and regulations relating to the practice of veterinary science, workplace health and safety and animal welfare
- relevant state or territory legislation covering the use of therapeutic and controlled

substances

- safe work practices
- specialised surgical procedures, including thoracotomy, enterotomy, gastrotomy, cystotomy, spinal surgery, orthopaedic surgery and ophthalmic surgery
- therapy strategies for recovering patients
- use and recording of chemicals and medicines in the clinic according to relevant legislative requirements
- workplace hygiene standards, disinfectants and sterilisation, cleaning agents, cleaning techniques and cleaning equipment and materials.

## Evidence Guide

<b>EVIDENCE GUIDE</b>	
<p>The Evidence Guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, range statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Training Package.</p>	
<b>Overview of assessment</b>	
<p>Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this Unit</p>	<p>The evidence required to demonstrate competence in this Unit must be relevant to workplace operations and satisfy all of the requirements of the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge and the range statement of this Unit. Assessors should ensure that candidates can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apply an advanced working knowledge of animal anatomy and physiology whilst managing wounds or surgical sites post-surgery</li> <li>• communicate effectively with the surgeon on all aspects of patient care</li> <li>• provide clear and concise directions to clinic personnel</li> <li>• maintain patient fluid and nutritional requirements post-surgery in accordance with patient care plans</li> <li>• nurse animals with care and empathy and in accordance with individual patient requirements</li> <li>• implement a physical therapy program for recovering patients</li> <li>• observe and report on animals' condition and vital signs in an accurate manner</li> <li>• record and complete patient records accurately</li> <li>• recognise, respond to and assist with emergencies</li> <li>• communicate with clients on patients' progress and home-nursing requirements.</li> </ul>
<p>Context of and specific resources for assessment</p>	<p>Assessment of this Unit is to be practical in nature and must be assessed in a clinic or hospital where registered specialists are performing specialised surgical procedures.</p> <p>There must be access to the appropriate equipment and/or resources relevant to the specialised surgical procedures taking place in the clinic and the postoperative nursing requirements to enable one to demonstrate competence.</p>
<p>Method of assessment</p>	<p>To ensure consistency of performance, competency should be demonstrated by carrying out postoperative</p>

<b>EVIDENCE GUIDE</b>	
	<p>nursing routines for an extensive range of patients recovering from specialised surgical procedures on a regular basis over a period of time.</p> <p>The assessment strategy must include practical skills assessment. Suggested strategies for this Unit are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• written and/or oral assessment of candidate's required knowledge</li> <li>• observed, documented and first-hand testimonial evidence of candidate's application of practical tasks</li> <li>• simulation exercises that reproduce normal work conditions</li> <li>• case study analysis</li> <li>• third-party evidence</li> <li>• workplace documentation</li> <li>• portfolio.</li> </ul> <p>This Unit may be assessed in a holistic way with other Units of Competency relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role.</p>
Guidance information for assessment	<p>Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands (e.g. literacy and numeracy demands) and the needs of particular target groups (e.g. people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, people with a language background other than English, youth and people from low socioeconomic backgrounds).</p>



## Range Statement

### RANGE STATEMENT

The range statement relates to the Unit of Competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Bold italicised wording, if used in the performance criteria, is detailed below. Essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) may also be included.

<p><b><i>Specialised surgical procedures</i></b> may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cystotomy</li> <li>• enterotomy</li> <li>• gastrotomy</li> <li>• orthopaedic surgery</li> <li>• ophthalmic surgery</li> <li>• spinal surgery</li> <li>• thoracotomy.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Maintenance of intravenous catheter</i></b> sites may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changing dressings</li> <li>• flushing wounds with heparinised saline</li> <li>• maintaining catheter asepsis</li> <li>• monitoring the insertion site of a peripheral or central catheter for signs of:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cellulitis</li> <li>• discharge</li> <li>• phlebitis</li> <li>• thrombosis.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Patient <b><i>fluid output</i></b> may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• faeces</li> <li>• fluid from thoracic, abdominal or wound drainage</li> <li>• saliva</li> <li>• urine</li> <li>• vomitus.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Workplace health and safety</i></b> risks when working with animals may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• animal bites, kicks, scratches and crush injuries</li> <li>• biological hazardous waste and sharps disposal</li> <li>• handling of chemicals and medicines</li> <li>• gas leakage</li> <li>• inhalation of aerosol particles</li> <li>• intraocular contamination</li> <li>• manual handling, including carrying, lifting and shifting</li> <li>• needle pricks and cuts from other sharps</li> <li>• release of infective agents (animal and human)</li> </ul>

**RANGE STATEMENT**

- slippery or uneven work surfaces
- zoonoses.

<b>RANGE STATEMENT</b>	
Equipment to <i>maintain intravenous fluid therapy</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• drip rate flow regulators</li> <li>• fluid administration sets and extension tubing</li> <li>• fluid pumps</li> <li>• syringe drivers.</li> </ul>
<i>Specific nutritional requirements</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• diets for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• growth</li> <li>• hepatic, renal, pancreatic or cardiac disease</li> <li>• intestinal or urinary tract disorders</li> <li>• weight loss</li> <li>• optimum healing.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Calculating <i>energy requirements</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• multiplying the basal energy requirement by the illness factor taking into account the calorific content of the food.</li> </ul>
<i>Assisted feeding</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hand feeding</li> <li>• preparation of suitable diets</li> <li>• tube feeding.</li> </ul>
<i>Indwelling surgical drain</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• abdominal</li> <li>• intrathoracic</li> <li>• wound.</li> </ul>
<i>Housing and bedding</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• housing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cots</li> <li>• heated kennels</li> <li>• incubators</li> <li>• kennels</li> <li>• runs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• bedding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• blankets</li> <li>• dry bedding</li> <li>• heated waterbeds</li> <li>• padded beds</li> <li>• towels.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>Complications associated with recumbent patients</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decubitus ulcers</li> <li>• depression</li> <li>• hypostatic pneumonia</li> <li>• urine and faecal scalding.</li> </ul>
<i>Vital signs and observations</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assessment of temperament</li> <li>• capillary refill time</li> <li>• evaluation of pain</li> </ul>

<b>RANGE STATEMENT</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fluid and food intake</li> <li>• heart rate</li> <li>• mucous membrane colour</li> <li>• pulse rate and quality</li> <li>• rectal temperature</li> <li>• respiratory rate and effort</li> <li>• urine, faecal and fluid output.</li> </ul>
<i>Physical therapy techniques</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• active assisted exercise:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assisted standing</li> <li>• assisted walking</li> <li>• hydrotherapy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• massage:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effleurage (stroking)</li> <li>• petrissage (squeezing)</li> <li>• friction (circular movements)</li> <li>• the application of warm and cold compresses to the affected area</li> </ul> </li> <li>• passive exercise therapy:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• manipulation and movement of joints and limbs by the nurse through a range of motions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>Home-nursing advice</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specialised surgical operations may have life-threatening consequences even during the home recovery period</li> <li>• client advice on discharge:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specific home-nursing requirements detailed by the surgeon</li> <li>• administration of prescribed medications</li> <li>• bladder and bowel movements</li> <li>• management of surgical wounds and drains</li> <li>• cast management</li> <li>• diet and/or exercise and physiotherapy.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• advice and contact numbers for potential emergency situations and follow-up appointments.</li> </ul>

## **Unit Sector(s)**

Veterinary nursing