



## Guidance on Clinical Health Records for Non-Mammals and Mice and Rats Bred for Research\* Used in Research and Instruction

### Background

In accordance with federal regulations, the UGA IACUC policy, “Clinical Health Records Requirements for Animals Used in Research and Instruction” requires that adequate Clinical Health Records (CHRs) are maintained. This document describes the expectations for adequate CHRs. Species included in non-mammals and mice and rats bred for research:

Non-mammals: e.g., birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians

Mice and Rats bred for research: genera *Mus* and *Rattus* bred for research

\* For mammals other than mice and rats bred for research, see *Guidance on Clinical Health Records for Mammals other than Mice and Rats Bred for Research Used in Research and Instruction*

### Acceptable Record Formats

- A. Group Clinical Health Records
  - a. Acceptable **ONLY** when all of the animals in the group have identical events, with similar diagnoses, procedures and treatments.
    - e.g., if all animals in the group/subgroup have the same surgical procedure on the same date, a single surgery form and post-op monitoring form may be used for that group/subgroup.
  - b. Format options
    - URAR Animal Facilities:
      1. URAR or VTH/CPC provided paper forms
      2. URAR pre-approved, accessible, and backed-up electronic records
    - Non-URAR Animal Facilities
      1. Forms provided/approved by facility management
- B. Individual Clinical Health Records
  - a. **MUST** be initiated for an animal(s) when there is a condition diagnosed, treated, or managed differently from the rest of the group (e.g. in the case of illness, injury, adverse outcomes to experimental manipulations).
  - b. Format options
    - URAR Animal Facilities:
      1. “Animal Observation Card” (teal blue) [usually adequate]
      2. URAR or VTH/CPC provided paper forms
      3. URAR pre-approved, accessible, and backed-up electronic records
    - Non-URAR Animal Facilities
      1. Forms provided/approved by facility management

## **Clinical Health Records - General Standards**

- A. Animal Identification required:
  - a. Animal's official UGA Identification
    - For mice, this is the click card number
  - b. PI
  - c. Location
    - Rack, cage location (slot) for mice on IVC racks
- B. EACH entry must:
  - a. Include a date, AND signature or initials
  - b. Time is also required for activities on a schedule, such as treatments or monitoring every X hours.
  - c. Be in black or blue Ink, and legible
  - d. Be reasonably comprehensive; *convey adequate information to allow the reader to understand the condition of the animal and any current treatments well enough to reconstruct the events of the case and make appropriate intervention decisions if necessary.*
  - e. Document that a veterinarian is notified/consulted on the condition
    - URAR Animal Facilities/Facilities for which URAR provides veterinary care:
      - 1. The URAR veterinary staff is consulted on all medical decisions, even if the PI is a veterinarian. The consultation must be documented
    - Non-URAR Animal Facilities:
      - 1. The facility veterinarian is consulted on all medical decisions. The consultation must be documented.
      - 2. Exception: If the facility veterinarian has approved a written SOP for handling specific, common/routine conditions, the facility personnel can follow the SOP rather than consult the veterinarian for each specific case.
  - f. Be easily collated to other referenced documents (e.g., procedure records, anesthesia records) by providing a specific date or identification number.
- C. Events that must be documented
  - a. Veterinary clinical interventions
    - Unexpected adverse effects/complications of research procedures – e.g., illness after infection when no illness was expected, infected incision post-surgery
    - Spontaneous medical conditions – e.g., dermatitis, injuries

## **Acceptable Record Location**

- A. Default: Animal Room
- B. Other designated location: With prior URAR (or facility management for Non-URAR facilities)

## **Disposition of Records**

- A. URAR Animal Facilities:
  - a. Only the URAR veterinary staff, or their designee on a case by case basis, may remove the blue Animal Observation Card from a cage
    - The 1 exception is if the animal is euthanized.
      - 1. When an animal is euthanized, leave the blue Animal Observation Card on the cage unless the entire cage is depopulated.

2. When the entire cage is depopulated, then the blue card should be turned in to the URAR staff.

*NOTE: Animals on NIH funding and some other funding agencies require animal records to be maintained for 1 year after the end of the project. Maintaining these records for non-USDA AWAR covered animals (i.e., rats, mice, non-mammals) is part of the grant agreement, and is the responsibility of the investigator.*