Day 1 Skills for Veterinarians

Professional Skills

Communication
1. Communicate effectively with people:
   a. Owners
   b. Veterinary colleagues
   c. Interprofessional colleagues
   d. General public
2. Communicate in writing for different audiences:
   a. Owners
   b. Veterinary colleagues
   c. Interprofessional colleagues
   d. General public
3. Prepare and maintain clear and accurate records for different purposes:
   a. Patient records and reports
   b. Referral letters
   c. Insurance reports
   d. Academic and scientific articles
   e. Accounts
4. Adapt language forms and styles to the audience and the context
5. Actively listen to people, taking account of non-verbal cues—this is a learned skill that is generally not assessed at varsity level.
6. Take account of any communication differences that people might have:
   a) Disabilities
   b) Sensory Impairment
   c) English as a second language
   d) Different Cultures
   e) Different Religions
Convey appropriate sympathy and empathy in verbal and non-verbal communications with people
Contribute to the facilitation of clearer communication between people
Have an understanding on how to handle conflictual situations through negotiation
Communicate Health and Safety risks to people, verbally and by displaying notices
Record, store and retrieve information using appropriate information technology systems
7. Provide information in a manner and at a pace that enables clients to make informed decisions
8. Obtain written and verbal informed consent

Legal, Professional, Ethical Practice
1. Ensure that your conduct is aligned with professional, moral and ethically accepted standards
2. Comply with the legal requirements of practising veterinary science in terms of the various acts and laws that govern:
   a) Veterinary and Para-Veterinary professions Act (Act 19 of 1982)
   b) Medicine Control Act (Act 101 of 1965)
   c) Stock Remedies Act (Act 36 of 1947)
   d) Animals Protection Act (Act 71 of 1962)
   e) Animal Diseases Act (practicing veterinarians outside state have obligations to disease reporting as an example (Act 35 of 1984)
3. Inform people where necessary, that action is outside your legitimate competence boundaries.
   a) Be able to advise people on appropriate referral.
Continued Professional Development

1. Demonstrate a commitment to maintaining your professional competence in response to the developing scientific field and professional demands.
   a) Have the basic understanding of self-audit activities using peers and other people
   b) Be able to identify your limitations in competence and take appropriate action, maintain and update knowledge and skills
   c) Gather and maintain evidence of professional development as part of lifelong independent learning
   d) Record continued professional development.

2. Recognise and work within personal limitations
   a) Seek advice, assistance and support when required
   b) Have an understanding for balancing personal and professional life
   c) Understand and use time management principles
   d) Understand the personal and emotional factors on your professional practice
   e) Recognise and work within economic limitations

Professional Practice

1. Management of Veterinary Environment
   a) Familiarise self with and work within Health and Safety requirements and local risk factors
   b) Contribute to maintenance of workplace hygiene

2. Work collaboratively with others to promote a problem-solving approach to issues within the veterinary environment

3. Undertake appropriate infection-control procedures

4. Prepare, clean and maintain housing and kennelling that maximises the welfare of hospitalised animals

5. Calculate and make up effective and appropriate dilutions of disinfectant solutions

6. Dispose of hazardous and non-hazardous waste safely and correctly

7. Have an understanding of occupational safety to the extent given by health and safety requirements of Department of Labour

8. Understand how to deal with and work with people’s disabilities and special requirements

9. Use and maintain protective clothing and equipment

Evaluation of Animals and their Care

1. Handling and Restraint
   a. Assess animal behaviour and environmental factors when approaching and handling animals
   b. Ensure appropriate hygiene procedures are followed before and after handling animal(s)
      i) Follow appropriate hand washing protocol
      ii) Shower in and shower out appropriate to situation
      iii) Use and dispose of protective clothing
   c. Restrain, move and lift animal(s) using approved manual handling and lifting techniques
   d. Select and wear protective clothing to defend oneself and others from injury
   e. Restrain animals for a range of situations balancing safety of self and others with welfare of animal(s)
      i) Clinical examination
      ii) Blood sample collection: jugular, cephalic, tail vein (cows), ear vein (pigs)
      iii) Urinary catheterisation
      iv) Administration of medication (oral, topical, parenteral, opthalmic, aural)
      v) Carry out procedures/treat
      vi) Apply dressings & bandages
   f. Instruct others in the techniques for safe handling and restraint of animals
   g. Lead and move animals - using a range of aids
      i) Leads, head collar, halter, chinney bit
   h. Safely use a range of restraining devices
      i) Muzzles, catchers, crush cages, cast cow, halter, tail, nose, udder cinch, kick bar, gloves, twitch
   i. Take account of species and environmental factors when handling neonates

2. Gathering Information
   a. Identify reason/s for the consultation
   b. Establish rapport with client and animal taking account of particular communication needs
   c. Structure the consultation into a logical sequence
d. Gather relevant information on animals

e. Gather relevant information on husbandry practices

f. Use appropriate questions to focus history-taking and obtain full and accurate information

g. Use a range of sources of information to obtain a full and accurate case history
   i) Records, colleagues, third parties, client advocates

h. Summarise the consultation ensuring that the client understands the conclusions you have reached and the next action to be taken
   i. Summarise and record relevant case details and history for storage and retrieval by others

3. General Examination / Evaluating Care of Animals

a. Evaluate the emergency patient - triage and re-assess other current priorities accordingly

b. Recognise common breeds of animals

c. Determine sex of animal(s)

d. Assess approximate age by teeth in farm animals and horse

e. Examine and evaluate general behaviour

f. Use knowledge of normal and abnormal presentations to determine animal(s) health and development
   i) Condition of animal(s)
   ii) Nature of presenting problem
   iii) Selection of further system specific examinations
   iv) Quality and appropriateness of husbandry practices

g. Recognise clinical signs associated with a range of conditions and take action if animal(s) appears to be at ongoing risk due to neglect
   i) Dehydration
   ii) Poor nutrition
   iii) Welfare problems

h. Obtain and evaluate vital measurements: temperature, pulse and respiratory rate

i. Accurately score body condition using appropriate systems

j. Recognise clinical signs associated with notifiable diseases and take appropriate action

4. System Specific Examinations

a. Perform an examination of the lymphatic system
   i) Palpate peripheral lymph nodes
   ii) Evaluate peripheral lymph nodes

b. Perform ophthalmic examination
   i) Perform general ophthalmic examination
   ii) Perform indirect and direct ophthalmoscopy
   iii) Perform Schirmer tear test when indicated
   iv) Measure intraocular pressure using tonometer
   v) Perform fluorescein staining when indicated
   vi) Evaluate findings of ophthalmic examinations

c. Perform an aural examination
   i) Perform a general aural examination
   ii) Use otoscope
   iii) Evaluate findings of aural examinations

d. Perform examination of cardiovascular system
   i) Auscultate heart
   ii) Palpate and percuss thoracic wall
   iii) Palpate arterial pulse
   iv) Assess colour of mucous membranes and capillary refill time (CRT)
   v) Evaluate findings of cardiovascular examinations

e. Perform examination of the musculoskeletal system
   i) Analyse gait
   ii) Palpate bones muscles and tendons
   iii) Perform examination of joints
   iv) Evaluate findings of musculoskeletal system examinations

f. Perform examination of the nervous system
   i) Perform general examination of the nervous system
   ii) Perform cranial nerve examination
   iii) Perform spinal reflex examination
iv) Evaluate findings of nervous system examinations

g. Perform examination of respiratory system
i) Observe respiratory pattern
ii) Palpate and percuss thoracic wall
iii) Auscultate thoracic cavity and tract
iv) Evaluate findings of respiratory examinations

h. Perform examination of alimentary system
i) Perform examination of oral cavity and teeth
ii) Palpate abdomen
iii) Perform rectal examination to assess alimentary system
iv) Auscultate gastro-intestinal system
v) Pass nasogastric tube in animals
vi) Evaluate findings of alimentary system examinations

i. Perform examination of urogenital system
i) Perform rectal examination to assess urinary system
ii) Perform rectal examination to assess reproductive tract
iii) Palpate and assess mammary glands/udder
iv) Palpate and assess testicles and penis
v) Palpate and assess vagina and cervix
vi) Assess parturition process
vii) Evaluate findings of urogenital system examinations

j. Perform examination of the equine hoof
i) Remove a shoe
ii) Pare sole and trim a hoof
iii) Administer palmar digital and abaxial sesamoid nerve blocks
iv) Apply hoof testers
v) Evaluate findings of foot examination

k. Perform dermatological examination
i) Perform general examination of skin
ii) Perform a Wood’s lamp examination
iii) Evaluate findings of examination of skin

Clinical Testing

1. Obtaining and Handling Samples for Diagnosis
a. Design and implement an appropriate sampling strategy
i. Individual Animals
ii. Groups of Animals

b. Obtain venous blood sample from appropriate site
i. Jugular vein
ii. Cephalic vein
iii. Saphenous vein
iv. Marginal ear vein

c. Obtain urine sample using appropriate technique
i. Cystocentesis
ii. Urinary catheter
iii. Free-catch
iv. Manual bladder expression

d. Obtain skin samples using appropriate technique
i. Skin scrape
ii. Wet paper test for flea droppings
iii. Tape strips
iv. Coat brushings
v. Impression smears
vi. Hair plucks
vii. Fungal Elements
viii. Excision and punch biopsies
ix. Ear Swabs

e. Obtain tissue and fluid samples for diagnostic purposes using appropriate technique
i. Fine Needle Aspirate Biopsy (FNAB) from small peripheral mass
1. Collecting samples

   ii. Vaginal swab
   iii. Swabs for microbiological analysis
   iv. Abdominocentesis
   v. Collect faecal sample
   vi. Collect milk sample (plain & sterile)
   vii. Carcass sample(s) from groups of animals

f. Handle and label collected samples safely and correctly

g. Select sample tubes and transport methods appropriate for purpose

   i. Fluid & blood: EDTA, Heparin, Fl. Oxalate, Sodium citrate, plain tubes, blood culture bottles
   ii. Urine: plain, boric acid
   iii. Skin: liquid paraffin, potassium hydroxide, Mackenzie brush, ear swabs, hair plucks, microscope slides
   iv. Microbiology - plain, culture swabs
   v. Tissue: formal saline

2. Using Laboratory Equipment and Performing Standard Tests

   a. Pack and send samples securely
   b. Set up and use a microscope correctly
   c. Set up and use other laboratory equipment as required
   d. Perform standard tests on blood
      i. Prepare a blood smear
      ii. Read a PCV
      iii. Perform biochemistry tests (On in house laboratory equipment)
   e. Perform standard tests on urine
      i. Urine specific gravity
      ii. Reagent strips
      iii. Sediment examination
   f. Perform microscopic examination on skin samples to identify range of pathogens
      i. Ectoparasites
      ii. Dermatophytes
      iii. Bacteria
   g. Prepare and stain bacterial smears for microscopic examination
   h. Perform and interpret results from Enzyme - Linked Immunoabsorbent Assay (ELISA) tests (Snap Tests)
      i. Perform California Mastitis Test (CMT) on milk sample

3. Using Diagnostic Imaging Equipment and Ancillary Diagnostic Tools

   a. Position animal and area of interest to obtain diagnostic radiograph
      i. Appendicular skeleton
      ii. Axial skeleton
      iii. Thorax
      iv. Abdomen
   b. Prepare and use radiography imaging equipment
   c. Observe safe practice of self and others during radiographic procedures, in particular high-risk groups
   d. Administer and use appropriate contrast media and techniques
      i. Barium studies
      ii. Intravenous Urography
      iii. Cystography
   e. Identify film faults and take appropriate action to correct
   f. Process radiographic films
   g. Set up ultrasound equipment
   h. Prepare patient for ultrasound examination
      i. Set up ECG machine and obtain reading
      j. Set up equipment and obtain results for indirect blood pressure

4. Evaluating Findings from Diagnostic Tools

   a. Evaluate findings from in-house laboratory tests
      i. Haematology
      ii. Biochemistry
      iii. Urinalysis
iv. Skin
v. Microbiology
vi. Faeces
vii. Virology
viii. Miscellaneous body fluids
b. Evaluate radiographs and interpret common disease processes
c. Evaluate ECG trace
d. Evaluate results from indirect blood pressure readings

5. Reaching Diagnosis and Formulating Treatment Plan
a. Have a clear, logical and appropriate diagnostic and therapeutic approach to the common clinical signs that occur in practice
b. Formulate a rational approach to further investigation taking into account owner preferences and any financial constraints
c. Formulate a treatment plan that takes account of the inter-relationship of animal specific, financial and any other significant factors
d. Make appropriate referrals supported by evidence

6. Conducting Post Mortem Examination
a. Perform a necropsy examination
b. Recognise normal and common abnormal changes in tissues & organs
c. Collect samples and make arrangements for subsequent analysis
d. Prepare a report of the gross findings

Care and Treatment
1. Emergency Care and Treatment
a. Provide first aid treatment
   i. For animals in emergency situations
   ii. For human beings in emergency situations
b. Recognise common life-threatening and serious conditions and initiate appropriate treatment
   i. Unconsciousness
   ii. Shock
   iii. Wounds
   iv. Haemorrhage
   v. Ophthalmic emergencies
   vi. Obstetrical emergencies
   vii. Vaginal/uterine prolapse
   viii. Acute toxic mastitis
   ix. Colic in the horse
   x. Bloat in cattle and sheep
   xi. Gastric dilatation in the dog
c. Undertake emergency procedures
   i. Perform basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation
   ii. Administer oxygen therapy
   iii. Perform thoracocentesis in cats and dogs
   iv. Administer fluid therapy - Parenteral routes
   v. Pass orogastric tube in dog
   vi. Perform trocharization
   vii. Pass nasogastric tube in horse
   viii. Resuscitate neonate (following natural and caesarean birth)

2. Drug and Fluid Administration
a. Administer medication by appropriate route
   i) Oral
   ii) Topical
   iii) Subcutaneous
   iv) Intramuscular
   v) Intravenous
vi) Intraperitoneal
vii) Intra-vaginal

b. Select and prescribe drugs according to need of individual case (using data sources if necessary)
   i) Select appropriate dosage, timing, frequency and route
   ii) Prescribe drugs in compliance with legislative requirements
   iii) Write prescription in compliance with current legislative requirements
   iv) Obtain informed consent when prescribing off-label drugs
   v) Make up and draw up drug solutions and instruct others in these procedures

   c. Ensure safe and legal handling and management of drugs
   i) Manage risk to self or others associated with particular substances
   ii) Store drugs in accordance with special requirements
   iii) Calculate drug dosages - using technology as necessary
   iv) Dispense medications in accordance with legal requirements
   v) Dispose of drugs in line with legislative guidelines

   d. Administer fluid therapy
   i) Select most appropriate route
   ii) Select appropriate fluids
   iii) Calculate amount and rate of fluid to administer
   iv) Place catheters into appropriate veins according to species
   v) Prepare and set up administration equipment
   vi) Observe and monitor patient receiving fluids

3. Anaesthesia
   a. Prepare for anaesthesia
      i. Perform a pre-anaesthetic evaluation
      ii. Prepare patient
      iii. Select and prepare drugs
      iv. Check and prepare anaesthetic machine
      v. Select and prepare breathing system / circuit / pollution control
      vi. Select and prepare monitoring equipment

   b. Perform anaesthesia
      i. Administer premedication
      ii. Administer induction agent
      iii. Perform endotracheal intubation
      iv. Administer inhalation agents
      v. Calculate and administer fresh gas flow rates
      vi. Perform manual intermittent positive pressure ventilation (IPPV)

   c. Maintain and monitor the patient during anaesthetic process
      i) Measure temperature, check heart rate, central and peripheral pulse, respiratory rate and depth (including oesophageal stethoscope)
      ii) Evaluate findings from pulse oximetry, ECG, respiratory monitors
      iii) Assess depth of anaesthesia
      iv) Complete anaesthetic monitoring records
      v) Ensure general health and well-being of the anaesthetised and recovering patient
      vi) Understand how to use advanced monitoring equipment (pulse oximetry, non-invasive blood pressure, capnography, invasive blood pressure)

   d. Perform local anaesthesia
      i) Local infiltration
      ii) Topical application
      iii) Nerve blocks for dehorning and castration in farm animals
      iv) Nerve blocks for local surgery in horses

   e. Recognise and manage pain during the anaesthetic process

   f. Respond to complications and emergencies during the anaesthetic process

4. Surgery
   b) Prepare for aseptic surgery
      i) Prepare and sterilise surgical instruments and equipment
      ii) Scrub hands/arms
      iii) Gown and glove using open and closed methods
iv) Prepare surgical site
v) Position and drape the patient
vi) Open surgical packs and layout surgical kits
c) Undertake surgical techniques
   i) Ensure principles of handling surgical instruments are applied
   ii) Debride a wound
   iii) Drain an abscess
   iv) Make a skin incision
   v) Place a surgical drain
   vi) Remove a simple skin mass
   vii) Carry out haemostasis in the event of superficial haemorrhage
d) Suture and ligate tissues
   i) Select and use suture materials appropriately
   ii) Perform simple interrupted skin sutures
   iii) Perform simple continuous sutures
   iv) Perform horizontal and vertical mattress sutures
   v) Perform intestinal suturing (Cushing and Lembert)
   vi) Perform instrument and hand knot-tying
e) Undertake surgical procedures
   i) Obtain incisional / exisional biopsy from superficial tissues (not involving internal organs)
   ii) Perform ovariohysterectomy in dog and cat
   iii) Perform castration in horse, farm animal, dog, cat, rabbit
   iv) Apply external splints and casts in appropriate situations
   v) Assist with orthopaedic procedures
   vi) Perform disbudding
   vii) Perform laparotomy in dog and cat
   viii) Treat vaginal prolapse in farm animals
   ix) Repair umbilical hernia in dog, cat, farm animal
   x) Retrieve aural foreign body
f) Undertake dental care and treatment
   i) Prepare and operate dental machinery
   ii) Prepare and set up patient for dental treatment
   iii) Scale and polish teeth
   iv) Rasp equine teeth
g) Advise clients with regard to surgical after-care
   i) Healing processes
   ii) Feeding and nutrition
   iii) Exercise and rehabilitation
   iv) Physical and environmental conditions

5. Euthanasia
   a. Assess clinical factors to determine appropriateness of euthanasia
   b. Ensure ethical and welfare factors are taken into account
   c. Convey appropriate sympathy and empathy in verbal and non-verbal communications
   d. Maintain and adapt professional approach to the circumstances
   e. Handle animals and equipment safely for euthanasia
   f. Administer intravenous euthanasia drugs
   g. Dispose of cadavers appropriately

6. Husbandry and Welfare
   a. Develop collaborative relationships with clients to encourage good husbandry practice
   b. Collaborate with client to identify and resolve husbandry issues
   c. Ensure clients are aware of the principles of animal welfare and good husbandry practice
      i) Advise on appropriate environmental and housing conditions
      ii) Advise on behavioural needs of animals
      iii) Advise on prevention of disease and promotion of well-being
      iv) Advise on feeding and nutritional needs of animals
      v) Advise on management of common parasite infestation and control
vi) Advise on cost effectiveness and management of disease prevention and well-being procedures
vii) Advise on productivity of animals
d. Ensure animal(s) have freedom from distress and pain
e. Ensure clients are aware of relevant legislative frameworks
f. Examine herd-health records for evaluation of health and welfare of animals
g. Support good husbandry practice
h. Calculate energy needs and food quantities from basic principles
i. Advise on selection of specialist dietary requirements
   i) For nutritional deficiencies
   ii) During particular life-stages
   iii) For specific conditions
j. Provide veterinary certificates and signatures within legislative requirements
   i) For Vaccination Records
   ii) For movement permits
   iii) For horse passports
   iv) For emergency slaughter
k. Comply with reporting procedures for
   i) Notifiable diseases
   ii) Reportable diseases
   iii) Zoonotic disease
l. Advise clients with regard to medical after-care of animal(s)
   i) Safe and effective administration of medications by others
   ii) Potential side effects of medications
   iii) Health and safety risks associated with medications
   iv) Withholding times for meat and milk
   v) Safe storage and handling requirements for medications
m. Perform basic husbandry techniques
   i) Put on stable rug, horse boots
   ii) Use a milking machine
   iii) Tail dock - lambs
   iv) Assemble and fit Elizabethan collar
   v) Implant microchip and check function

7. Nursing
   a. Apply and manage bandages
      i) Forelimb, hind limb, Robert-Jones, ear, splint, stable, exercise
   b. Advise clients on re-application of bandages
   c. Apply and manage dressings and drains
      i) Select materials for post-surgical wounds
      ii) Select materials for non first-intention healing wounds
      iii) Manage a surgical drain
   d. Undertake grooming appropriate to species
      i) Clean ears
      ii) Clean out hooves with hoof pick or hoof knife
      iii) Trim claws and nails
      iv) Use basic grooming kit
      v) Trim beak (budgerigars & canaries)
      vi) Remove hair mats
         i. De-maggoting rabbits and sheep
   e. Manage assisted feeding
      i) Identify the need for and provide assisted feeding
      ii) Manage and maintain assisted feeding tubes in all species
      iii) Place naso-oesophageal feeding tube in dogs and cats
      iv) Place orogastric feeding tube in neonates, reptiles, chelonia
      v) Calculate energy needs and food quantities from basic principles
   f. Perform basic physiotherapy
      i) Efflurage, petrissage, passive movement
Preventive Medicine and Primary Health Care

1. Formulate a vaccination, deworming and ecto-parasite control program for:
   a) Cattle, sheep, goats
   b) Pigs
   c) Horses
   d) Dogs
   e) Cats

2. Advise on the nutrition and housing of:
   a) Cattle, sheep, goats
   b) Pigs
   c) Horses
   d) Dogs
   e) Cats

3. Give practical advice for common conditions in the following species:
   a) Cattle, sheep, goats
   b) Pigs
   c) Horses
   d) Dogs
   e) Cats

4. Be able to indentify controlled animal diseases and institute the correct procedures in respect of these diseases as controlled in the various regulations.

5. Be able to apply the principles and practice in respect of:
   a) Meat Hygiene
   b) Meat Inspection
   c) Milk Hygiene

6. Be able to give practical advice on zoonotic diseases.

7. Be able to apply basic epidemiological principles when identifying an outbreak of disease in a group of animals or geographical area.

Research, Industry and Science

1. Understand the basic requirements of structured research and the process involved in setup a trial.
2. Be able to read, understand and formulate questions after reading a journal article.
3. Be able to formulate a concept of humane treatment of research animals.