VETERINARY TECHNICIAN II

This is technical work in the performance of a variety of specialized veterinary procedure and/or supervision of lower level Veterinary Technician positions. These procedures are performed in relatively stable or critical surgical, research, and experimental animals in an academic medicine unit, research laboratory, zoological park, or veterinary teaching hospital. Employees independently coordinate all activities related to the management of critically ill and research animals to include performing diagnostic procedures and animal treatments; preparing the operating rooms for surgery, circulating and acting as a scrub assistant during surgery; and anesthetizing and monitoring animals. Employees assist the faculty in teaching and supervising lower level veterinary technicians, veterinary students, interns, research technicians and others in the performance of techniques and procedures. Employees may spend a small percentage of time performing work characteristic of a lower level technician. Work in distinguished from the I level in the performance of specialized procedures, the amount of time spend on routine procedures, and the supervision of Veterinary Technicians and Laboratory Animal Technicians. Work is performed under the general supervision of a higher level Veterinary Technician, a veterinarian, medical doctor, or research investigator. This work is being performed in the University System and the N.C. Zoological Park.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Complexity - Employees monitor all critically ill and post-surgical animals recognizing and recording subtle changes in conditions and vital signs, evaluate findings, and respond appropriately. Work includes communicating conditions and results to the clinician; initiating treatments such as medication administration; regulating I.V. fluids; monitoring central versus pressure; performing ECG's and intravenous and urinary catheterizations; and operating and adjusting equipment based on knowledge of the animal condition and disease. Employees determine priorities and procedures based upon the severity of the animal's condition and availability of assistance from staff, students, and clinicians. In the operating room, employees serve as a circulating or scrub assistant, anesthetize and monitor animals during surgery; and aid the recovery of animals from anesthesia. Employees must be familiar with the animal's physical status; a variety of anesthetic drugs and inhalant gases; and monitoring equipment such as electrocardiographs, dinamap, oximeters and ventilators. Employees develop accurate anesthesia records in order to document anesthetic management; place peripheral catheters; perform orotrachael intubation to assure airway; and manage arterial lines. Teaching responsibilities include demonstration of technical procedures and operation of a variety of equipment (electrocardiographs, defibrillators, fluid pumps, lavage pressure units, nerve stimulator, oxygen cage, incubator, anesthesia machines, respirators). Supervisory and duties include training of lower level veterinary and laboratory animal technicians, reviewing work of lower level technicians; coordinating work schedules; participating in hiring, discipline and performance appraisal; and ordering supplies and equipment. Employees maintain records and files on animal symptoms, illnesses, treatment, and general health as required. Employees may spend a small percentage of time in performing routine procedures.

Guidelines - Administrative unit and safety policies and procedures are available for review. Drug utilization records are maintained according to State and Federal laws. Technical procedures are defined in the animal care protocols and in the NIH Guide for the care of laboratory animals, but decisions made in emergency situations are based on technical knowledge and expertise. Equipment manuals are available for reference. Specific instructions as to patient care and procedures are given by faculty.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Accountability - Employees may be the only technical person assigned to a shift in a veterinary hospital and may be responsible for up to thirty animals at any given time. Employees may be assigned surgery cases in small animal, equine and food animal areas.
In an academic research or comparative medicine unit setting, employees may be the only technical person on call for evening hours, weekends, or holidays and maybe responsible for the evaluation and care of animals of various species. Employees may independently initiate treatments and can have a significant effect on overall animal treatment outcome.

Consequence of Error - Work affects the health of the animals. Decisions can often make the difference between life and death. Failure to be able to act as the key figure directing and coordinating all activities could be severely detrimental to the overall operation. Errors could result in minor health problems or death of an animal. In a research atmosphere, errors in judgment or action could result in the loss of valuable research animals, and/or disrupt research projects.

Review - Completion of treatment and procedure are reviewed by the supervisor when examining animals and charts on daily rounds.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:
Subject Matter - Personal contact is extensive as work involves interaction with students, faculty, researchers, interns, residents and staff. Communication concerning charges in treatment and status of animals is essential.

Purpose - Work with animal owners includes the explanation of procedures or tasks and/or providing informal support. With professional and support staff, employees relay information regarding the patient care, treatments or status, appropriateness of procedures, or employees seek explanation of the supervisors’ orders and/or animal care plan. Communication with students include explaining animal care procedures and techniques. Communication in a research institution also includes discussion of the effects of prescribed treatments or interventions and the validity of experimental design and results.

IV. WORK ENVIRONMENT:
Nature of Working Conditions - Work is performed in the College of Veterinary Medicine, academic medicine units, academic research laboratories, and the zoological park. Work can be stressful or hazardous due to an animal’s size, conditions or diagnosis.

Nature and Potential of Personal Hazards - Employees are exposed to animals that may carry infectious agents transmissible to humans. The animals may also kick, bite, or scratch when being restrained, treated, or transported. Exposure to anesthetic gases is potentially dangerous if adequate gas scavenager systems are not in use.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:
Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Considerable knowledge of animal anatomy, physiology, diseases, treatments and restraint techniques. Considerable knowledge of signs of common diseases of animals. Considerable knowledge of medications and surgical instruments. General knowledge of patient monitoring equipment. Knowledge of Federal and State regulations and NIH guidelines. Considerable knowledge of aseptic techniques. Ability to manage emergency situations efficiently and effectively by determining priorities in a highly active and stressful environment. Ability to help move, lift, and restrain large animals. Ability to administer medication and injections to animals and to carry out specialized treatments under veterinary supervision.

Minimum Training and Experience - Graduation from an accredited two year American Veterinary Medical Association program with one year of related veterinary work experience; or completion of high school and four years of animal care, veterinary or closely related research experience; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.