



Australian Government

ACMVET415A Provide intensive foal care and nursing

Release: 1

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Modification History

Release	TP Version	Comments
1	ACM10v3	Initial release. Based on NSW accredited course unit NSWTEQU401A.

Unit Descriptor

This Unit of Competency covers the skills and knowledge required to provide intensive care of compromised newborn foals during hospitalisation in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

Application of the Unit

The work functions in this Unit are likely to be carried out under minimal supervision within industry guidelines. Candidates undertaking this Unit will require access to work experience and/or employment within an equine NICU.

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

There is a direct link between this Unit of Competency and approval to perform veterinary nursing duties under the Western Australian (WA) Veterinary Surgeons Act 1960 as amended. The WA Veterinary Surgeons Board must approve qualified persons to carry out the duties of veterinary nurses and must authorise persons enrolled in approved courses to perform the duties of trainee veterinary nurses. Candidates should confirm the regulatory requirements that apply in their relevant state or territory.

Pre-Requisites

ACMVET414A	Nurse foals
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Employability Skills Information

This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements describe the essential outcomes of a Unit of Competency.

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.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Admit new arrivals to a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU)	1.1 New arrivals are prepared and admitted. 1.2 Foals are correctly placed in intensive care unit. 1.3 Preliminary general clinical examination is conducted. 1.4 Relevant history and identification data is recorded on appropriate forms. 1.5 Patient records are maintained.
2. Provide <i>nursing care for recumbent foals</i>	2.1 Safe handling techniques are applied when assisting foal to rise. 2.2 Aseptic techniques and nursing care is provided. 2.3 Regular monitoring is carried out in accordance with veterinary directions. 2.4 Specialised monitoring equipment is used.
3. Provide <i>respiratory support</i> and perform emergency ventilation for foals	3.1 Respiration in recumbent foals is assisted. 3.2 Oxygen supplementation is maintained. 3.3 Safe work practices are carried out when handling oxygen equipment. 3.4 Emergency ventilation for foals is provided.
4. Assemble crash kit items	4.1 <i>Crash kit</i> items are identified. 4.2 <i>Pharmacy</i> inventory is checked and restocked.
5. Prepare and administer enteral and parenteral <i>nutrition to impaired foals</i> in NICU	5.1 Enteral and parenteral nutrition is prepared. 5.2 Impaired foals are fed according to professional instruction. 5.3 Parenteral and enteral therapies are monitored.
6. Prepare <i>parenteral medications</i>	6.1 Medications are prepared aseptically. 6.2 Medications are administered according to instructions. Intravenous fluids are monitored and maintained. 6.3 Intravenous catheters are monitored and maintained. 6.4 Infusion pump is operated and maintained. 6.5 Plasma and blood transfusions are monitored and maintained.
7. Implement routine industry standard <i>infection controls</i> in a foal NICU.	7.1 Aseptic techniques and strict hygiene protocol are maintained for the NICU. 7.2 Regular ongoing hygienic maintenance of the floor, counter, cabinets and stalls is performed. 7.3 Routine daily checks to specialist equipment are completed. 7.4 Critically ill and/or infected foals are isolated and strict sanitary procedures are observed.
8. Provide <i>routine care</i> for mare in NICU.	8.1 Routine tasks involving hospital care of the dam (brood mare) are carried out. 8.2 Mares are milked out as per instructions.

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
9. Discharge foals from NICU.	9.1 <i>Foals are discharged</i> from the NICU according to industry guidelines. 9.2 Facilities are prepared for incoming patient.

Required Skills and Knowledge

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

Required skills include:

Ability to:

- analyse and solve problems using available information and resources including recording information and prioritising daily tasks
- apply interpersonal skills to work with others and relate to people from a range of cultural, social and religious backgrounds and with a range of physical and mental abilities
- communicate effectively to fulfil the job role including questioning, active listening, asking for clarification and consulting with or seeking advice from appropriate persons
- comply with animal welfare legislation, animal care guidelines, state and territory veterinary surgeons or practitioners legislation and regulations
- employ safe, humane and environmentally responsible organisational systems and procedures when working with, handling and restraining mares and foals
- follow sequenced written instructions, record accurately and legibly information collected and select and apply procedures to a range of defined tasks
- identify hazards and assess risks
- measure parameters of health in foals
- maintain appropriate records
- maintain the highest standards of hygiene and infection control at all times to reduce the risk of infection and cross-infection considering zoonotic and exotic disease possibilities (biosecurity)
- milk mares by hand
- monitor and maintain intravenous fluids and plasma and/or blood transfusions
- operate and maintain indwelling intravenous catheter, naso-gastric tube and intranasal oxygen
- provide nursing care to impaired foals
- read, understand and follow required policies and procedures, including workplace health and safety, infection control and waste management
- recognise normal physical and behavioural signs in horses
- use numeracy skills to estimate, calculate and record routine and more complex workplace elements
- use safe manual handling techniques and/or equipment
- use safe, hygienic and environmentally friendly waste handling and disposal procedures
- work as part of a team and in close working arrangements with the supervising veterinarian.

Required knowledge includes:

Knowledge of:

- normal health parameters for foals

- handling techniques for impaired foals
- nutritional requirements and options for impaired foals
- nursing techniques for impaired foals
- principles and practices of infection control
- principles and practices of routine care of hospitalised animals
- principles of animal welfare
- relevant legislation, regulations and codes of practice, including workplace health and safety, animal welfare and ethics, veterinary practices and waste disposal
- understanding of the function and use of relevant equipment
- understanding of the purpose and use of relevant medications
- workplace hygiene standards (biosecurity) including: disinfectants, cleaning agents and techniques, cleaning and appropriate disinfection or sterilisation of equipment, materials and personal protective equipment (PPE).

Evidence Guide

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.

Overview of assessment

Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit

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:

- implement infection controls
- administer enteral and parenteral nutrition to impaired foals
- provide respiratory support and perform emergency ventilation to impaired foals
- assemble 'crash kit' items
- follow aseptic procedures
- admit and discharge patients from NICU
- care for mares in NICU
- follow workplace health and safety and animal welfare rules
- accurately document and maintain appropriate records.

The skills and knowledge required to provide intensive foal care and nursing must be transferable to

	a range of work environments and contexts and include the ability to deal with unplanned events.
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Context of and specific resources for assessment	Assessment for this unit is to be practical in nature and will be most appropriately assessed in a veterinary nursing workplace with neonatal intensive care facilities and access to the appropriate equipment and/or resources to enable one to demonstrate competence.
Method of assessment	<p>To ensure consistency in one's performance, competency should be demonstrated, to industry defined standards, on more than two occasions over a period of time in order to cover a variety of circumstances, patients, cases and responsibilities and over a number of assessment activities.</p> <p>The assessment strategy must include practical skills assessment. Suggested strategies for this unit are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written and/or oral assessment of candidate's required knowledge • observed, documented and first-hand testimonial evidence of candidate's application of practical tasks • simulation exercises that reproduce normal work conditions • third-party evidence • workplace documentation • case studies • portfolio. <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	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).

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.

<i>Admit</i>	<p>Procedures to follow to admit new arrivals to the NICU will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gathering information about the patient from referring veterinarian • preparing bed and stall for patient • performing full physical examination • providing any required support or emergency nursing care of new arrival • recording all health parameters accurately • recording and maintaining accurate documentation of patient's progress • monitoring comfort and well-being of foal.
<i>Nursing care for recumbent foals</i>	<p>Nursing care for recumbent foals may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performing specialised nursing techniques as required • safely assisting foals to stand and support • rotating foal position regularly between left to right sternal recumbency • close monitoring of all vital signs and body functions, including pressure points (bed sores) • use of monitoring equipment, which could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blood pressure (BP) monitor • glucometer • lactate monitor • Refractometer • BRIX sugar refractometer (degrees Brix [symbol °Bx]) • electrocardiogram (ECG) machine • pulse oximeter • ISTAT or IDEXX machines (haematology analysers).
<i>Respiratory support</i>	<p>Respiratory support may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assembling, administering, monitoring and maintaining intra-nasal oxygen • handling and storing oxygen tank safely • providing respiratory support and resuscitation of critically ill foal.
<i>Crash kit and pharmacy</i>	<p>Items that may be encountered in a crash kit include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • oxygen tank, regulator and flow meter

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• oxygen tubing• endotracheal tubes• self-inflating bag-valve resuscitator• syringes and needles• fluid giving sets• catheter placement kit• fluid pump• pharmaceuticals as specified by hospital policy and procedures and/or veterinary directions• a chart with a list of all drugs and their doses.
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<i>Nutrition to impaired foals</i>	<p>Methods of providing nutrition may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bottle feeding • maintaining indwelling naso-gastric tube under veterinary supervision • preparation of artificial food substitutes • preparation and monitoring Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN) under veterinary supervision.
<i>Parenteral medications</i>	<p>Procedures for preparation of parenteral medications may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aseptically drawing up medications under instruction • accurately labelling and recording all treatments administered • monitoring and maintaining an indwelling intravenous catheter • correctly administering medications to neonates: oral, intramuscular, intravenous, topical • monitoring and maintaining intravenous fluid therapy • operating fluid pumps • monitoring and maintaining plasma and/or blood transfusion.
<i>Infection controls</i>	<p>Routine industry standard infection controls may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practising aseptic techniques in all possible areas and maintaining strict hygiene protocol • monitoring and maintaining specialised equipment • preparing and maintaining individual inventories for each patient • accurately labelling and recording samples taken • following strict isolation protocol in all cases where infection and/or contagion is suspected • observing and practising strict personal antiseptic protocol.
<i>Routine care for mare</i>	<p>Routine care for mare will include::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feeding and watering • stable cleaning • exercising • reproductive tract maintenance • collection and storage of mare's milk • monitoring mare's health.

<i>Discharge foals</i>	Procedures to discharge foals will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• preparing patients for departure: remove catheter, groom, prepare medications to go with patient• providing instructions for follow-up care and treatments• organising transport• emptying stall of bedding• disinfecting stall and equipment used by that patient.
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Unit Sector(s)

Veterinary nursing