



People and professions

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How do changes in professional laboratory roles challenge the stability of the animal research nexus?

Project 4 will use interviews and ethnographic observation to examine the role of the NVS as one example of professionalised laboratory roles within A(SP)A. We aim to generate new data and insights on the changing identities and trust relations around professional roles in laboratory animal research.

Section 2C(5) of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act requires all licensed research establishments to employ a **NAMED VETERINARY SURGEON** (or NVS). There is very little published literature which examines the societal and ethical role played by these key individuals, who hold complex and potentially conflicting professional responsibilities:

'We have to balance welfare against the quality of the science, and there are occasions when that is challenging' (Smith, 2006)



PRELIMINARY RESEARCH THEMES



POLICY

Embodied professional labour

The NVS may only **physically** treat research animals (**RCVS Code 24.51**). However, they are also required to **advise** on the conduct of research procedures. This research theme explores the implications of policy distinguishing between embodied and advisory professional labour. Preliminary data indicates that NVSs frequently apply for personal licenses to enable them to physically assist with research and training.



PRACTICE

The relocation of veterinary procedures

The concept of **'veterinary interventions for scientific procedures'** (Poirier et al, 2015) describes clinical procedures being reimagined and repurposed following their physical transfer to the laboratory. The concept of clinical relocation raises specific questions, including the implications of altering the purpose and place of veterinary knowledge. Preliminary data indicates that veterinary clinical knowledge is being relocated both into and out of the laboratory.



ETHICS

Reframing the veterinary 'patient'

NVSs rationalise their responsibilities to laboratory animals as being like the treatment of other **societally useful animals** (Anonymous, 2004) or through appeals to the **animal benefits** of advancing science (Gilbert and Wolfensohn, 2012) This theme explores the framing of animals both inside and outside the laboratory as veterinary 'patients'. Preliminary data indicates that NVSs also feel responsible for the needs of human 'patients' requiring treatment.

OUR QUESTIONS FOR YOU

1. Is the Named Veterinary Surgeon conflicted when using a personal license to assist with research and training?
2. How can the transfer of knowledge between the veterinary and research communities be improved?
3. Does the Named Veterinary Surgeon have a professional responsibility towards human medical patients?

References

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