

## **Use of Expired Medical Materials Policy and Guidelines**

### **Background**

According to USDA Animal Care Resource Guide Policy the policy on the use of expired medical materials (Policy #3) is as follows:

*“The use of expired medical materials such as drugs, fluids, or sutures on regulated animals is not considered to be acceptable veterinary practice and does not constitute adequate veterinary care as required by the regulations promulgated under the Animal Welfare Act. All expired medical materials found in a licensed or registered facility are to be brought to the attention of the responsible official. The facility must either dispose of all such materials or segregate them in an appropriately labeled, physically separate location from non-expired medical materials. The Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has no jurisdiction over facilities using expired medical materials for non-regulated animals or non-regulated activities.*

*For acute terminal procedures, APHIS does not oppose the use of expired medical materials if their use does not adversely affect the animal’s well-being or compromise the validity of the scientific study. Proper anesthesia, analgesia, and euthanasia are required for all such procedures. Drugs administered to relieve pain or distress and emergency drugs must not be used beyond their expiration date. Facilities allowing the use of expired medical materials in acute terminal procedures should have a policy covering the use of such materials and/or require investigators to describe in their animal activity proposals the intended use of expired materials. The attending veterinarian and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) are responsible for ensuring that proposed animal activities avoid or minimize discomfort, distress, and pain to the animal. These responsibilities cannot be met unless the veterinarian and the IACUC maintain control over the use of expired medical materials.”*

The following guidelines concerning the use of expired medical material, developed by the *Office of Animal Care Management* and the IACUC at the University of Vermont, are based on the above USDA policy.

### **Guidelines**

#### **FOR SURVIVAL PROCEDURES:**

No expired drugs or materials may be used in survival surgeries. All expired controlled substances must be returned to the Office of Animal Care Management with the drug log sheets.

Example: An item stamped "12/03" may be used through December 31, 2003. It is outdated January 1, 2004. Dispose of the outdated items appropriately.

Investigators are responsible for ensuring that all drugs and medical materials used in their laboratories are within the expiration date. All drug preparations must be labeled with the date of preparation and the earliest expiration date of the component drugs. All expired supplies must be labeled "Expired-Do No Use" and stored separately from non-expired materials if immediate disposal is not possible. Justification for use of expired medical materials is required in each protocol.

#### **FOR NON-SURVIVAL PROCEDURES:**

With the exception of controlled substances and emergency, anesthetic, analgesic, or euthanasia drugs, expired medical materials may be used in terminal procedures, including non-survival surgeries, provided:

1. The use of expired medical materials is explicitly stated in the IACUC protocol and approval to use such materials has been granted by the IACUC. Items #4 and #5 (below) must be addressed in the IACUC protocol.
2. Materials are marked as "Expired – Use ONLY in TERMINAL Procedures."
3. Materials are stored in a different location (cabinet, drawer, etc.) than materials used for survival procedures.
4. The use of expired medical materials does not adversely affect the animal's well-being or compromise the validity of the scientific study.
5. Proper anesthesia, analgesia, and euthanasia are employed for all such procedures.

#### **IDENTIFICATION AND REMOVAL OF EXPIRED MEDICAL MATERIALS:**

The IACUC recommends that each laboratory establish a procedure to facilitate the identification and removal of expired drugs and other medical materials used for research involving animals. This may take the form of a drug log, signed by a member of the laboratory each month, indicating that they have checked for and discarded, or set aside for disposal, any expired drugs or other medical materials from their laboratory. The IACUC reserves the right to make this recommendation a requirement if expired drugs or other medical materials are repeatedly identified in a particular laboratory.