1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy outlines the responsibilities of the Early Management of Severe Trauma (EMST) program in complying with the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Guidelines for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes.

2. KEYWORDS

Ethics, EMST, Approval, NHMRC Guidelines

3. BODY OF POLICY

3.1. Background

The EMST course is a mandatory component of surgical training and is also available to medical graduates who are post-graduate year two or above. One session of each course is dedicated to a surgical skills training session to enable training and practice in first line surgical skills specifically related to saving the life in severely injured patients.

Skills Taught

The procedures taught and practiced are:

3.1.1. Venous Cutdown for intravenous fluid administration or other vascular access for IV fluid administration.

3.1.2. Peritoneal Lavage for diagnosis of intra-abdominal bleeding,

3.1.3. Intercostal catheter insertion for decompression of pneumothorax,

3.1.4. Cricoidthyroidotomy for rapid access to the trachea in situations where upper airway obstruction cannot be otherwise relieved.

These surgical skills are taught in a clinical laboratory on the second day of each course using anaesthetised animals. The EMST Committee continuously explores alternative models to enable these skills to be taught in a non-laboratory setting.

3.2. Compliance

When employing clinical laboratories to teach surgical skills, the EMST program complies with the Australian code of practice for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes regulations and standards (NHMRC/CSIRO 7th edition, 2004 – under review in 2011) and the New Zealand National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) Animal Welfare Act 1999.

Each facility has its individual requirements for ethics approval, and the EMST program complies with these requirements.

3.3. Duties and responsibilities

3.3.1. The EMST program is responsible for ascertaining that individual course sites are in compliance with the regulations and standards mandated by the NHMRC Australian code and NZ NAEAC Code regulating the use of animals for teaching prior to conducting a course (refer 3.3).

3.3.2. The EMST program, in liaison with the local clinical laboratory facility is responsible for ensuring the ethics approval application is current prior to a course and meets the regulations and standards of the Australian code of practice and established University- associated or Academic- institution.
The surgical skills stations are supervised by the course Director and the participants are supervised by Instructors who are surgeons or animal laboratory accredited non-surgeons. Each Instructor supervises while the participants practice the procedures on an animal. One animal is used at each surgical skills station. The ratio of Instructor to participants is 1:4.

3.4. Monitoring and Tracking of Applications and Approvals

3.4.1. The extent of the EMST program's responsibilities in applying for ethics approval and directing clinical laboratory staff is variable upon the particular laboratory and region.

3.4.2. All applications to Animal Ethics Committees should use the same or similar information in order to achieve a standard approach throughout Australia and New Zealand.

3.4.3. A log of current approval status is maintained and updated by the Skills Training Department of RACS.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS


Approver Education Board
Authoriser Council