



Post-Approval Review (PAR) program for Animal Use Protocols

Mandate

The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) requires that institutional animal care committees (ACCs) create and execute a post-approval monitoring program that defines associated roles and responsibilities, and establishes and implements appropriate procedures to address non-compliance.

Goal

The Post-Approval Review (PAR) program is designed to work collaboratively with researchers in providing the resources necessary to support compliance with approved animal use protocols.

Program components

The PAR program is a collegial exchange between researchers and their lab members, Local Animal Care Committees (LACCs), the University Animal Care Committee (UACC), veterinarians, animal care staff, and university administration. Components of PAR include:

- Quality Assurance visits
- Active monitoring and care of research animals by veterinary staff
- Animal welfare documents and records
- Veterinary consultations
- Ongoing education and training
- LACC site visits
- Extra-vivarium animal use space visits

Quality Assurance Visits

A Quality Assurance (QA) visit is a scheduled meeting between a research or teaching lab and the Quality Assurance Analyst (QAA) from the Animal Ethics and Compliance Program (AECOP). Veterinary staff may also attend the meeting. The QAA acts as a neutral observer for the LACC and as a resource for regulatory information.

All labs with animal use protocols (AUPs) are subject to a QA visit approximately once every two years. The primary mechanism for choosing a lab for a QA visit is random selection. A researcher can also request a QA visit.

The QA visit involves a collegial review of protocol procedures and related documents, by observation and/or discussion, to ensure that they are in compliance with relevant regulations. The procedure review will be arranged to minimize disruption to research activity. In advance of the visit, the lab will be provided with a checklist of regulatory requirements for awareness and reference. At the visit, the QAA can also address regulatory questions or concerns held by the lab.

A QA visit report is issued to the researcher after the meeting to summarize discussion points, procedures reviewed, and any related recommendations. The finalized QA visit report is distributed to the relevant LACC.

Benefits of the PAR program

- Protects researchers and the institution by preventing or resolving any potential regulatory concerns;
- Provides an ongoing mechanism for ensuring compliance and preventing issues with applicable animal care and use policies, guidelines and laws;
- Serves as an opportunity for constructive interaction and education between the research staff, veterinary and animal care staff, the LACCs, and the AECP and;
- Helps prepare for visits by outside evaluators, such as inspections by the Veterinary Inspector from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), and assessments by the CCAC.