

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The emergence of multi-drug resistant bacteria, both within human healthcare facilities and veterinary practices has pushed the consideration as to the 'cleanliness' of all medical premises to the front of the public's minds and this could be considered as something which was maybe long overdue. With no enforceable standards regarding the cleanliness of veterinary practices there is a wide variation in what practices deem as being 'aseptic' and appropriate levels of cleanliness for their environment. Our varied roles as a veterinary surgeon and nurse have taken us into a wide variety of veterinary practices, some of them demonstrating exceptional levels, others not so good.

The aims and objectives of this project were to give vets and nurses a basis on which to create their own individual protocols for their practices. We hope that personalizing the guidelines to the individual practice will stimulate discussion within the practice team & emphasise the importance of hygiene to the whole practice.



When starting to create such protocols many areas of cleaning and disinfection can be overlooked and so working methodically we (hopefully) have covered all the vital aspects. These guidelines taking into consideration all areas of the practice environment, as well as furniture and staff attire. They will also serve as a good 'review' document for practices who already have cleaning protocols in place, but which may require an update.

For us the document has made us certainly consider our actions within a practice, with the use of stethoscopes being a good example. These are used several times daily, but how often are they cleaned, and where do we place them in between patients? Around our necks? And does this make them another potential source of contamination?

These guidelines should help practices working towards the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme. Pam is a former Senior Inspector of the PSS and Louise herself has personally prepared for RCVS PSS inspection within her own working hospital, so both authors are very familiar with the PSS expectations, and it was with these inspections in mind that the guidelines were written.

Looking to the future we hope our guidelines will provide a useful resource for the planned Infection Control module of the new modular Practice Standards.

We have tried to keep these guidelines as practical, and realistic, as possible, and as always we welcome your comments and feedback.

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