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Achieving a good ‘Culture of care’

Jane Hurst, University of Liverpool

norecopa.no/RSPCA/coc

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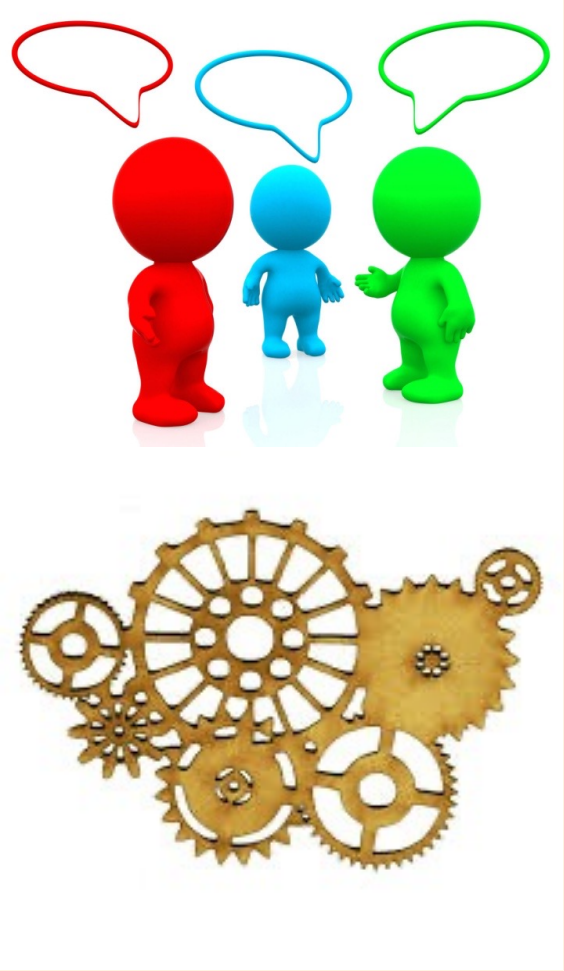
*The **culture** of an organisation relates to the **beliefs**, **values** and **attitudes** of its **people** and the development of **processes** that determine how they behave and work together.*

*i.e. **what people think and do***



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"Compliance, and failures to comply [with regulations] can ***often be traced back*** *to* ***behaviours*****…** *and* ***attitudes*****.**

Home Office - Animals in Science Regulation Unit
Annual Report 2013

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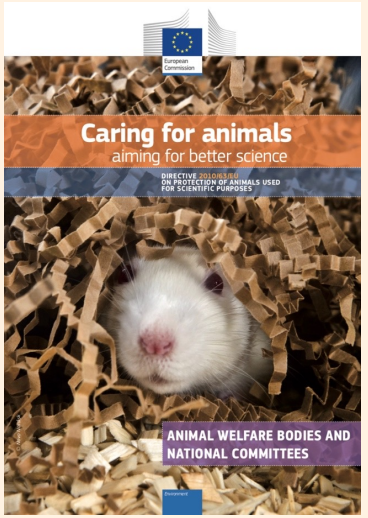
www.gov.uk/government/publications/animals-in-science-regulation-unit-annual-report-2013

"Simply having animal facilities and resources which meet the requirements of the legislation ***will not ensure*** *that appropriate animal welfare, care and use practices will* ***automatically follow****."*



European Commission

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https://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/pdf/endorsed_awb-nc.pdf

The right ‘culture’: why is it important?

- Necessary if **legal**, **ethical** and **animal welfare obligations**, and wider **responsibilities to employees and the public**, are to be met.
- Says a lot about **the organisation you are** and aim to be.
- Impacts on **scientific quality** and **outcomes**.

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A poor culture can lead to...

- People blaming each other when things go wrong or trying to cover up mistakes.
- Breakdown in key relationships and a lack of trust.
- Missed opportunities for implementing the 3Rs.
- Reputational damage.
- **Unnecessary or avoidable harms caused to animals.**
- **Poor standards of research or staff wellbeing.**

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It’s easy to say you have
‘a good Culture of Care…’

- but **what do you *mean***?
- and **how do you *know***?

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International Culture of Care Network

Proposed in 2016 by Thomas Bertelsen from Novo Nordisk.

Currently has **57 members** representing organisations from **17 countries.**

https://norecopa.no/coc

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Culture of care is used
to indicate **a commitment** to:

- improving **animal welfare**
- improving **scientific quality**
- taking **care of staff**
- **transparency** towards stakeholders
  (e.g. the public)

International Culture of Care Network

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https://norecopa.no/coc

All organisations should have a **clear vision** of what a good culture of care means for them...

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Key factors

- **Corporate expectation of high standards** endorsed at all levels throughout the institution.
- **Management** setting the right example.
- **Appropriate behaviours and attitudes** towards animal research from all personnel.
- Voices and concerns at all levels throughout the organisation are **heard and dealt with positively**.
- **Effective communication** throughout the institution.
- People understanding the **importance of compliance with the law and regulations.**

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Key factors

- People knowing their own **responsibilities and tasks**.
- The roles and work of **animal care** and **welfare staff** are respected and supported.
- Creating, maintaining and developing the 'culture of care' is **not reliant on just one or two people** - there is a **team approach**
- **Pro-active** attempts made to improve standards, rather than reacting to problems when they arise.
- Attempts made to **assess** '*how well are we doing?*'

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Indicators

of a good culture of care

Head of institution

Should

- Be proactive
- Provide effective leadership
- Champion a good culture of care
- Act as a role model
- Be visible and accessible
- Be engaged

Head meets new animal users

- Helps to **demonstrate the importance** that the leadership places on the responsibilities of the organisation in this area.
- Enables staff to make a **connection** with management.
- Allows the leadership to set out their **expectations for behaviours and practices**.

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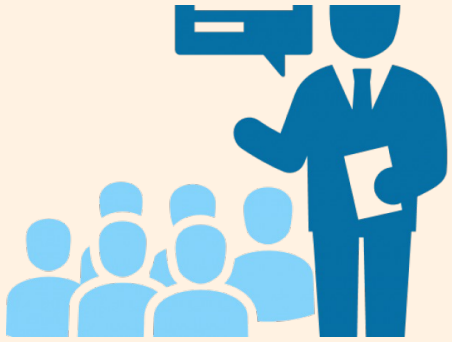
Inductions for all new personnel



- Are all employees informed about the organisation's own animal use - purposes, species, numbers, severity, 3Rs achievements, how ethics and welfare are considered etc?

- Are the organisation's 'local' **values, perspectives** and **policies** explained?

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Appropriate staffing

istockphoto.com/fotografixx

- Sufficient numbers of **trained** and **competent** personnel, with appropriate experience.
- Time for daily, meaningful routine monitoring of all animals.
- Low turnover of staff and minimal need for agency staff to 'plug the gaps'.
- Opportunities for continuous **development**, and for **recognition**.

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Adapted from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/512098/Patterns_low-level_concerns.pdf

Education and training

- **Competence** is not ‘assumed’ but must be established.
- **Training needs** are identified (for all personnel) and met - including supervision of individuals using new techniques, species etc.
- Clear training **plans and records** are kept and well managed, reviewed and tailored to *individual* personnel with ongoing regular ‘refresher’ training, and encouragement and expectation for CPD.

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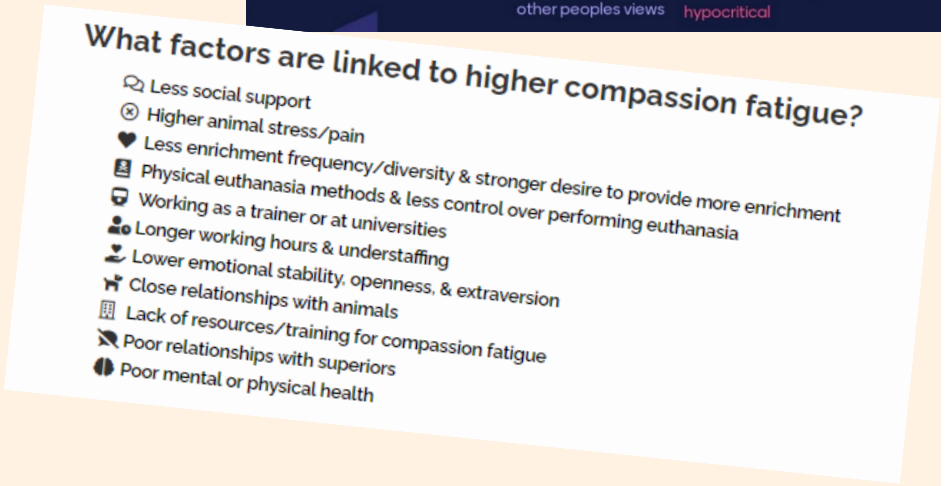
Ongoing support

Provided to personnel who care for animals to **help them cope with the emotional challenges of their job** such as humane killing of animals, especially those with whom they have formed a bond.

In particular, provide opportunities for teams to **discuss feelings around the harms** experienced by animals.



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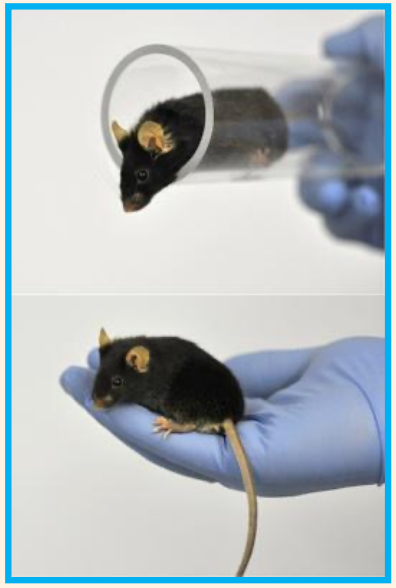
www.na3rsc.org/compassion-fatigue

Improving animal welfare

- Efforts are made to **exceed minimum standards** required by legislation.

- Staff can provide **specific** and **recent** examples of how **each of the 3Rs** are being implemented.



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- Good **integration** with wider lab animal science, 3Rs and welfare communities. Flow into the organisation of info on **good practice**, which is acted on.

- *Procedure* or *species*-specific '**focus groups**' to identify opportunities for **continuous improvement**.

- A **strategy** for issues such as **environmental enrichment**; **rehoming; supporting non-animal methodologies** etc

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All relevant personnel should be able to
talk about what studies using animals involve

- including what **techniques** and experimental **procedures** are authorised and being used
- the scientific **objectives** of the protocol
- the **harms** that animals may experience
- the **humane endpoints** of the study

Pre-start meetings and checking of licences before any work starts.

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Ongoing and retrospective review for **all** projects.

- What has gone well - and what hasn't?
- Have the objectives been met?
- Were the harms to animals as expected?
- Are there learnings to be shared?
- Have any future improvements in implementing 3Rs been identified and shared (inc. externally)?

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Scientists

- Are directly **accessible** and engage positively with animal care and other staff.
- See the **value in a collaborative approach**.
- Respect the **knowledge of animal care staff**.
- Take an **interest in the animals** they will be using.
- Don’t appear in the animal unit only when they are doing an animal experiment.
- Are not “*too busy*” to check animals themselves.

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When things go wrong…

- This can happen in even the best operated institutions.
- Having the right culture means that these things are not ignored or hidden, but are **reported, discussed and dealt with.**
- **People should feel able to admit genuine mistakes.** Learn from them and change practices, rather than ‘blame and shame’.

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A clear system for personnel to raise any concerns

- feelings that a potential refinement is not being implemented
- under-resourcing of staff or lack of equipment
- concerns that a non-compliance has occurred or that there have been ‘near-misses’ etc.
- concerns there is a lack of competency

Process is clearly highlighted

e.g. on posters in animal unit; in induction materials etc.

Effective solutions are put in place…

rather than a succession of ‘quick fixes’.

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Animal Welfare Body

In ideal position to help drive institution's culture

- Contributions from people with **range of views** - including external lay members
- All members - including the Chair - receive appropriate **induction, training** and **CPD**
- Regularly **goes around the animal facility**.
- **Observes** animal **procedures** and speak to personnel.

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Animal Welfare Body

- Well supported - resources, time, authority
- Covers all functions and tasks.
- Ensures **appropriate structures** are in place and keeps these under review to ensure outcomes are delivered effectively.
- Avoids a ‘tick box’ approach.
- **Constructively challenges** current ways of working.

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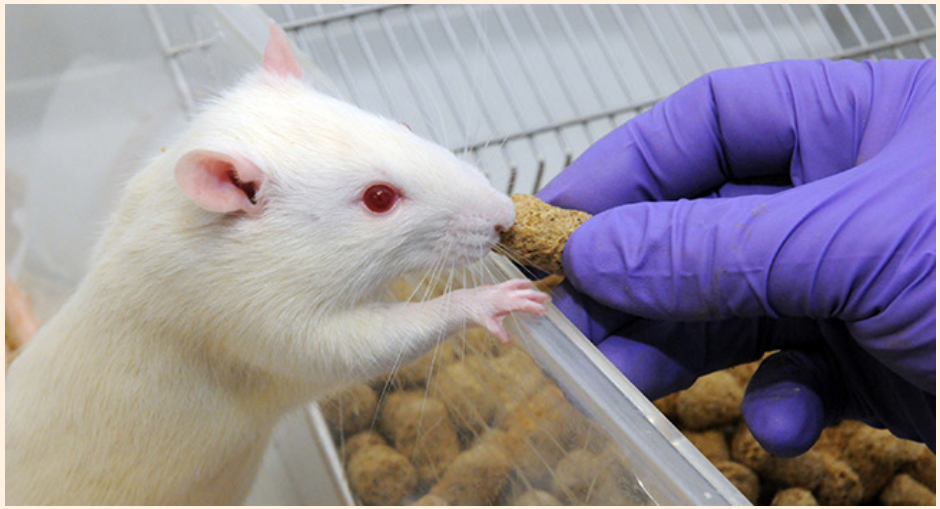
Institution adopts **consistent ethical principles and welfare standards** if sourcing animals, collaborating or contracting studies **externally**.



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If you are a university, what **oversight** do you have of **international collaborations** of your staff, involving animals, tissues or data generated from animal use?

If you are a pharmaceutical company, what steps do you take to review and assure yourselves of the standards in place at **external partners** (e.g. CROs) you use?

If you have personnel working in the **wild** (including overseas), how do you satisfy yourself that animal welfare will be safeguarded, and wider environmental disturbance avoided or minimised?

Wider issues #1

How does your institution respond to developments that affect the 'bigger picture'?

e.g. discussions in the scientific press around research standards and the 'reproducibility crisis'?

*"One-third to one-half of animal experiments are **never published**, and of those that are, many are **too poorly conducted to be reliable**."*

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www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-02676-4

- Does your institution provide access to specialist expertise in **experimental design** and statistics?
- Do you require that the results from all research* be **published or shared - *whatever the outcome***?
- Including **full details of exactly how animals were used** and the steps taken to refine animal use etc.

* Except where there are clear commercial or intellectual property rights issues etc.

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https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-guidelines https://norecopa.no/prepare

Attempts are made to measure the **impact** of animal studies undertaken at the institution.

Set criteria for what represents 'success' and try and measure this.

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Wider issues #2

How does your institution respond to developments that affect the 'bigger picture'?

e.g. **exposés of poor practices** in other institutions?

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How well do you do critical 'self-reflection'?

"It couldn't happen here…"

"We operate to the highest standards…"

"We have the strongest regulation…"

"This is a good prompt for us to review, and potentially improve, our own practices…"

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Transparency towards stakeholders

Providing balanced information

- be clear about the purposes of animal use
- be realistic about the potential benefits
- be honest about limitations of animal research
- accurately portray standards of regulation, science and animal welfare
- be open about what animals experience, including the nature and level of any suffering
- acknowledge the ethical dilemmas involved

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We publish here all non-technical summaries of current licenses granted to University of Manchester researchers granted under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

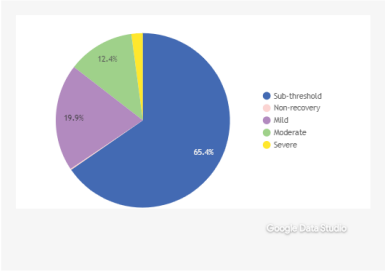
2018

- Dysregulation of Skin Homeostasis (PDF, 110KB)
- Identifying New Therapies to Prevent Internal Scarring (PDF, 231KB)
- New Therapeutic Approaches for Inflammatory Joint Disorders (PDF, 128KB)
- Regulation of Glomerular Barrier Function in Health & Disease (PDF, 222KB)
- The Role & Regulation of Reactive Oxygen Species in Development & Regeneration (PDF, 245KB)
- Understanding the Role of Inflammation in Dementia (PDF, 186KB)
- Zebrafish Models of Haemorrhagic Stroke (PDF, 104KB)
- Designing Therapeutic & Diagnostic Nanotechnologies for Medicine (PDF, 2.2MB)
- Determining Important Regulatory Pathways that Control Immune Responses to Infection (PDF, 142KB)
- Drug Discovery for Parasitic Helminths (PDF, 155KB)

Click to view full size infographic

Severity

The chart below shows how many procedures of each 'severity' level were conducted at the Crick in 2018. Severity is a measure of the impact of the procedure on the animal's health and wellbeing and is divided into five categories.



Severity levels

Sub-threshold: the procedure has a negligible impact on the animal's wellbeing. For example, the birth of a healthy genetically modified mouse.

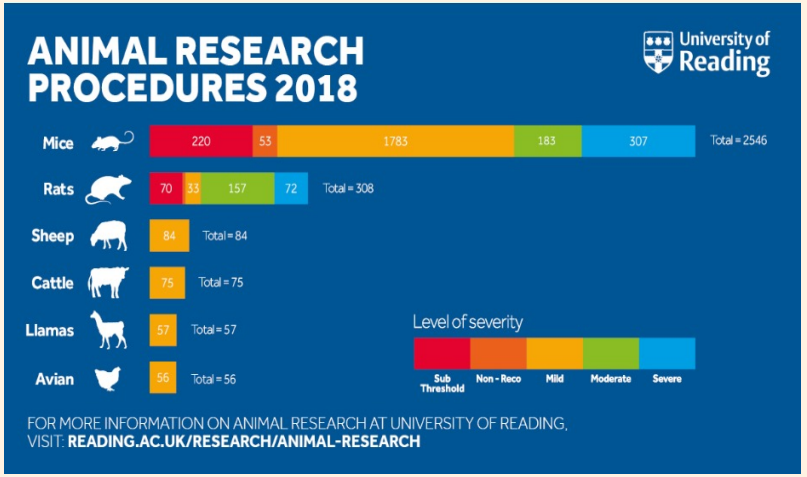
Non-recovery: the procedure is done under general anaesthesia and the animal is humanely killed without regaining consciousness.

Mild: the procedure only causes minor, short-term pain or distress with no lasting impact. For example, a healthy mouse undergoes blood testing.

Moderate: the procedure may cause pain, distress or discomfort and a noticeable disturbance to the animal's natural state, but they are able to move, eat and drink relatively normally. For example, a mouse is given cancer, develops tumours, then undergoes imaging and treatment similar to a human patient.

Severe: the procedure has a major impact on the animals' health and wellbeing so that they don't live or behave normally. They may experience a significant level of pain, distress or discomfort. For example, a ferret is infected with flu and experiences serious symptoms including fever, lethargy and weight loss.

THE FRANCIS CRICK INSTITUTE



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How are you doing?

Review Article

The European Federation of the Pharmaceutical Industry and Associations' Research and Animal Welfare Group: Assessing and benchmarking 'Culture of Care' in the context of using animals for scientific purpose

Sally Robinson[1], Sue Sparrow[2], Bella Williams[3], Thierry Decelle[4], Thomas Bertelsen[5], Kirsty Reid[4] and Magda Chlebus[4]

Abstract

The European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations' Research and Animal Welfare group members reflected on the concept of a Culture of Care in relation to animal care and use and on differences in its understanding and application across European pharmaceutical companies. The term 'Culture of Care' is used across different regions and organizations but rarely with any defined indicators to support working practice.

The European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations' Research and Animal Welfare group has developed a framework to help organizations identify gaps or potential areas for improvement in support of a positive Culture of Care.

The framework is a tool that identif
approach at establishment level, impl
The framework is intended as an aid fo
are present. We expect it to provide pc
Care in a structured way, while facilit
'tick-box' exercise, the framework mus
and discussion about how care manife

Keywords

research animals, Culture of Care, cc
welfare body

Date received: 1 June 2019; accepted: 21 Octot

animals

MDPI

Concept Paper

3Rs-Related and Objective Indicators to Help Assess the Culture of Care

Penny Hawkins [1,*] and Thomas Bertelsen [2]

1 RSPCA Research Animals Department; Wilberforce Way, Southwater, West Sussex RH13 9RS, UK
2 Novo Nordisk A/S, Novo Allé, 2880 Bagsvaerd, Denmark; tabt@novonordisk.com
* Correspondence: penny.hawkins@rspca.org.uk

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check for updates

Simple Summary: 'Culture of Care' within animal research and testing refers to a commitment to improve animal welfare, the quality of the science, staff morale, and openness with the public. An effective Culture of Care should also promote the replacement of animal experiments with humane alternatives, reductions in animal numbers and suffering, and better welfare through the refinement of procedures, housing, husbandry and care (collectively known as the 3Rs). The Culture of Care is recognized as the foundation of humane and responsible science, but the concept should be applied in a meaningful way and not simply used as a 'buzzword'. Recognizing this, some establishments have begun to define and assess their individual Culture of Care. This paper provides some examples of their approaches to surveying staff and external colleagues. It also sets out some suggestions for objective criteria for assessing the Culture of Care, and for indicators that capture progress with each of the 3Rs. The aim is to complement the growing literature on the Culture of Care and highlight some sources of information and inspiration to help establishments tailor their own assessments.

1. **Assess** some of **these indicators**
   - surveys of personnel
   (e.g. I agree that 'animal welfare is a priority' at our institution)
   - objective measures
   (e.g. vet regularly visits animal unit; animal care staff are members of AWB)
   - 3Rs-related measures
2. Ascertain **current status** in your institution
3. Have an **action plan** for continuous improvement and monitor how well it is working

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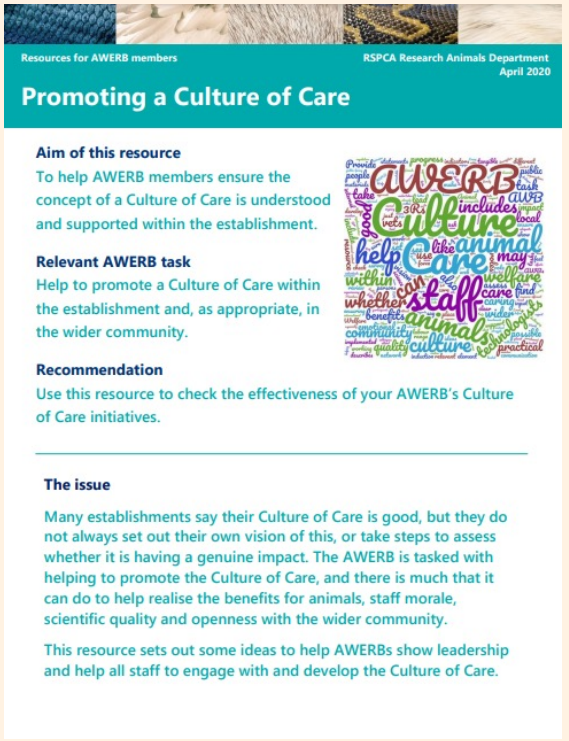
doi.org/10.1177/0023677219887998
doi.org/10.3390/ani9110969

Some questions to discuss with colleagues

- Do we have an establishment-wide understanding of what 'culture of care' **means to us**?
- What specific **actions** have we taken to put the 'culture of care' principles into practice?
- Is what we are currently doing delivering the **desired outcomes**?
- How can we **do things better**?
- What **difficulties** have we faced in creating a culture of care - how did we deal with them?
- How do we **benchmark against others** in the sector?
- How could we **assess** and **evaluate** our own culture of care?

For more information



Resources for AWERB members

RSPCA Research Animals Department
April 2020

Promoting a Culture of Care

Aim of this resource

To help AWERB members ensure the concept of a Culture of Care is understood and supported within the establishment.

Relevant AWERB task

Help to promote a Culture of Care within the establishment and, as appropriate, in the wider community.

Recommendation

Use this resource to check the effectiveness of your AWERB's Culture of Care initiatives.

The issue

Many establishments say their Culture of Care is good, but they do not always set out their own vision of this, or take steps to assess whether it is having a genuine impact. The AWERB is tasked with helping to promote the Culture of Care, and there is much that it can do to help realise the benefits for animals, staff morale, scientific quality and openness with the wider community.

This resource sets out some ideas to help AWERBs show leadership and help all staff to engage with and develop the Culture of Care.

Read our resource

tinyurl.com/AWERBCOC

Email us

animalsinscience@rspca.org.uk

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