

# Course VCSN630

## Neonatology and Critical Care Medicine

### Guidelines - 2nd Year Vet Student Foal Sitters

**Please do your utmost to be on time for your shift.** If you are going to be unavoidably delayed, contact the Low Risk nurse on duty. Call (610) 444-5800 and ask the operator to page the Low Risk nurse.

**Find an alternate if you are not able to work your scheduled shift.** It is your responsibility to find an alternate from among the other 2nd year veterinary students. It is your responsibility to inform us of the replacement. If you know about the change during regular hours (9-5 Monday through Friday) email [foalsitters@nicu vet.com](mailto:foalsitters@nicu vet.com). If you have an urgent, last minute, unavoidable scheduling problem outside of these hours, contact the Low Risk nurse. Let us know as soon as possible if you have been unable to find a replacement.

**At the start of each shift, go directly to the NICU nursing station and sign in.** You will not receive credit for foal sitting unless your name is in the sign in log. The nurse on duty will give you your case assignment(s).

**Please wear your UPenn vet school name tag at all times while on duty.** If you forget to bring your name tag, please fill out and wear a name tag with your name and "2nd year vet student". **PLEASE** stay in your assigned area! **NO VISITORS** are allowed during your shift (e.g. significant others, other students, etc.)

**We try to give everyone a 30-minute break during each shift.** (Realistically, there are times when none of us gets a break!) If, during an extremely busy shift, you absolutely must have food or a restroom break, let a nurse know. You can purchase food at our cafeteria which is open 7am - 2pm, Monday through Friday. Vending machines are available for drinks and snacks. Any food you bring should be stored in designated refrigerator in the ICU kitchen area. If you are working in the ICU/NICU, you may eat in the second floor kitchen. Please do not eat in the nurse's station, patient treatment areas or in stall. Never bring food into an isolated area.

**The Low Risk nurse or NICU clinician will outline your duties for each case** and give you a brief description of the foal(s) to which you are assigned. Possible duties include, but are not limited to:

1. Keeping recumbent foals sternal as much as possible.
2. Turning recumbent foals every 2 hours or as requested.
3. Changing bedding as needed to keep the patient clean and dry.
4. Obtaining a rectal temperature, heart rate and breathing rate (TPR).
5. Milking a mare and storing the milk.
6. Exercising a mare and/or foal.

7. Monitoring proper placement and attachment of patient fluid and oxygen lines, urinary catheters, and nasotracheal tubes to prevent disconnection
8. Monitoring infusion pumps and other equipment for alarms and notifying a nurse, senior veterinary student or clinician of any malfunction.
9. Taking an indirect blood pressure.
10. Performing a PCV/TP.
11. Measuring blood glucose.
12. Restraining foals for a variety of therapeutic and diagnostic procedures, including blood drawing, catheter placement, and tube feeding.

**Second year veterinary student foal sitters are *not* to administer any IV, IM or oral medications.** Please do not bottle feed foals. Aspiration pneumonia secondary to abnormal nursing is a constant threat.

**Do not change the settings on ventilators, oxygen humidifiers, fluid infusion pumps or other equipment.** If you think something is wrong, notify the nurse or clinician.

**Familiarize yourself with your patient's treatments during your shift** and notify the nurse on duty if a treatment such as drug administration or feeding is overdue.

**Record all pertinent observations and treatments in the progressive record.** These records become part of the permanent legal document maintained on each patient and may need to be closely scrutinized at some future date. Please print or write *legibly in pen* and mark all entries with the *date, time* and a brief *description of the treatment or observation*, followed by your complete signature and "2<sup>nd</sup> year foal sitter."

**Please feel free to ask questions whenever you are unclear regarding what is expected of you.** If you do not feel comfortable with a specific request, please speak up. For example, do not agree to hand walk a mare if you are not yet comfortable handling horses.

**At the end of your shift, be sure to have the nurse or clinician that you worked with sign your experience log.**

**Please bring a pen, stethoscope and penlight to each shift.**

**Contact Dr. Jon Palmer (ext. 6412, [jepalmer@vet.upenn.edu](mailto:jepalmer@vet.upenn.edu)) with special concerns that arise during foal sitting.**

**If there are no neonatal or high risk pregnancy cases in the hospital and no emergencies expected, 2nd year vet student foal sitters may leave as early as 10:00pm on week night shifts only.**

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