

PREFACE

The last decade has seen unprecedented advances made in the Biomedical and Life Sciences research. The completion of the sequencing of the Human Genome opens up infinite opportunities and potentials towards our search for answers to some of Medicine's most difficult problems. The proof of concept of these potential solutions would need to be carried out before trials can be contemplated in human subjects.

The Department of Experimental Surgery was set up in the early eighties with this as one of its main objectives. The use of animal models in these researches have proven to be an invaluable component of the whole chain of events leading up to eventual clinical applications.

Animal models are crucial test-beds for proof of concept prior to clinical trials. Appropriate choice of animal species and experimental models in these basic researches will help to provide directions for investigators towards their goals.

Over the years, the Department of Experimental Surgery has developed very stringent protocols and guidelines on the use of experimental animals, in line with accepted international standards of practice, ensuring that they are appropriately treated. Their safe handling, maintenance and welfare are no less stringent than what we would do for humans. In addition, high standards of bio-safety within facilities that carry out researches using such models must be observed in line with accepted best practices. The Department has been accredited by the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC) in 2006 for these very high standards of practice, becoming the first institution in Singapore to achieve this. This benchmarks the Department internationally and is a reflection of the vision and commitment of the staff.

All investigators making use of animal models during the course of research work must ensure that they are appropriately trained and taught in the proper handling of these animals. Full compliance with guidelines by the host institution, regulating such use is absolutely essential to ensure successful completion of their projects.

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