Subject: Use of an Animal on Multiple Research Protocols

BACKGROUND

This Policy describes standards for considerations of the sharing of animals between protocols.

The sharing of animals between research protocols is a method to reduce the number of animal used in research in general. However, if the research protocols contain procedures with more than momentary pain or distress, a thorough evaluation of such sharing must be made to determine the impact on the animal's well-being. This is especially true when there are surgical procedures on the research protocols.

The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (the Guide, NRC 2011) states: “Regardless of classification, multiple surgical procedures on a single animal should be evaluated to determine their impact on the animal’s wellbeing. Multiple major surgical procedures on a single animal are acceptable only if they are (1) included in and essential components of a single research project or protocol, (2) scientifically justified by the investigator, or (3) necessary for clinical reasons.” (p. 30)

If the species being shared is covered by the Animal Welfare Act and the protocols involve survival surgery, additional steps must be taken to secure approval. According to the Guide, “When applicable, the IO must submit a request to the USDA/APHIS and receive approval in order to allow a regulated animal to undergo multiple major survival surgical procedures in separate unrelated research protocols (USDA 1985, 1997a).” (p. 30)

IACUC Policy

If a PI intends to transfer an animal to another PI or protocol, he/she must notify the IACUC and DLAR. The PI must state what procedures the animal has previously undergone as well as what procedures will be performed on the animal on the other protocol. The transfer request will be evaluated by the IACUC following the standard procedure for an amendment request. The decision of the requested transfer will be provided to both PIs via writing from the IACUC.