Animal Welfare Assessment (Rodent)

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| **Principal Investigator:** | **Protocol #:** | **Animal Holding Room:** |
| **Group or Animal ID:** | **Species:** | **Breed (Strain, Genotype):** |
| **Sex:** | **Assessment Performed By:** | **Date of Assessment:** |
| **Welfare History:** | | |
| **Description & Dates of Procedures Performed on Animal Since Last Assessment:** | | |

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| **Rodent Welfare Indices** | **WELFARE STATUS** | | | |
| **Normal** | **Abnormal** | | **Unacceptable** |
| **BEHAVIOURAL** | | | | |
| **Social behaviour** | * In close proximity to other cage mates * Exploring cage * Interacting with other cage mates * Moves away or turns to sniff observer | * Slow or hyperactive response when gently nudged * Reduced interaction with cage mates * Reduced exploration of environment * Isolated, away from other mice * Hypo- or hyper-aggression | | * No response to observer, external stimuli, environment, or cage mates |
| **Positive & Negative States** | * Rearing * Grooming - smooth shiny coat | * Circling * Back-flipping * Food grinding | * Hair missing * Bar chewing | * Circling that cannot be interrupted * Self-mutilation |
| **ENVIRONMENTAL** | | | | |
| **Body Condition Score** | * Well-conditioned (ideal) – vertebrae and dorsal pelvis not prominent but palpable with slight pressure | * Underconditioned – segmentation of vertebral column evident, dorsal pelvic bones readily palpable * Over conditioned – spine is a continuous column and vertebrae palpable only with firm pressure * Obese – skeletal structure not visible and difficult to palpate under flesh and subcutaneous fat | | * Emaciated – skeletal structure extremely prominent and visible with little or no flesh cover. Vertebrae distinctly and visibly segmented |
| **Skin Tent to Assess Hydration** | * When skin is gently pinched and elevated above shoulder blades it immediately falls back in place (<3s) when released | * Skin is delayed (3-5s) falling back in place when released | | * Skin is significantly delayed (>5s) falling back in place when released |
| **Nest** | * Well-formed cup shape +/- dome * Utilizes all nesting material * Nesting material consolidated to one area of cage | * Nest is not well-formed cup shape * Nest does not contain all nesting material provided * Nesting material is not consolidated in one area of cage * Feces and urine present on nesting material | | * Isolated, outside of the nest |
| **Animal Density** | * Pair or group-housed | * Single housing * Group housing density exceeds institutional cage area requirements | |  |
| **Macroenvironment** | Institutional standards are met for:   * Temperature * Humidity * Lighting * Noise and vibration | Deviations in institutional standards for   * Temperature * Humidity * Lighting * Noise and vibration | |  |

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| **HEALTH** | | | | | |
| **Body Posture** | * Relaxed with slight arch in back | | * Head tilt * Tail tucking | * Hunched or stiff posture | * Unable to remain upright |
| **Eyes & Nose** | * Clear * Open * No discharge | | * Discharge, Crusting * Sunken * Squinting * Swelling | * Redness * Unable to open eye * Ulceration | * Prolapsed eye * Bulging eye |
| **Fur/Coat** | * Shiny * Smooth * Well-groomed | | * Unkempt/ruffled * Dull * Stained | * Erection of hair * Hair missing | * Degloving injury (separation of large amount of skin from underlying tissue) |
| **Skin** | * Intact * Pink coloration * No lesions | | * Lesions * Bleeding * Necrosis * Pale white or dark pink colour | * Swelling * Crusting * Infection * Increased grooming or biting of area | * Actively bleeding large amounts |
| **Urine & Feces** | * Present * Firm feces * Located primarily away from nesting area | | * Soft stool, feces or fecal smears on sides of cage * Increased wetness of bedding * Reduction or absence of urine or feces * Urine or feces with blood | |  |
| **Mentation** | * Alert * Responsive |  | * Depressed * Lethargic |  | * Unresponsive |
| **Mobility** | * Ambulates swiftly across cage * Able to climb | | * Reduced righting reflex * Dragging a limb * Not using all 4 limbs when ambulating * Unsteady gait * Occasional circling | | * Reluctant to move when disturbed * Immobile * Unable to access food or water |
| **Respiration** | * Normal rate and depth * Pink mucous membranes (nose, feet, ears) | | * Elevated or decreased rate and depth * Pale mucous membranes * Audible breathing sounds (clicking, chattering) | | * Blue or white color to skin or mucus membranes * Abdominal movement when breathing * Open mouth breathing |
| **EXPERIMENTAL, TEACHING & PHYSIOLOGICAL** | | | | | |
| *Research and teaching-specific monitoring and scoring for induced disease conditions, pain, diagnostic testing of physiological parameters, hormone levels, unexpected morbidity, etc to be completed by research and teaching personnel* | | | | | |
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**Outcome of Assessment:**

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| **Welfare Status** | **Descriptions and Actions Required** | **Comments** |
| * Normal (Acceptable) | * No mitigation required. |  |
| * Abnormal (Mild to Moderate) | * Manageable welfare concerns have been identified and fall within descriptions of the AUP * Pre-determined humane endpoints or other mitigation strategies described in the approved AUP can be employed. * Research/teaching personnel, facility veterinarians, animal care staff and facility managers notified. |  |
| * Abnormal (Severe to Unacceptable) | * Welfare concerns have been identified that require extensive mitigation measures, close monitoring, or immediate euthanasia outside what is described in the approved AUP. * Research/teaching personnel, facility veterinarians, animal care staff, facility managers and post-approval assurance team notified. * Notification and discussion with the animal care committee to rectify the situation or terminate the protocol |  |