

AAALAC International Update and Activities Related with Animal Welfare

Montip Gettayacamin, DVM, DACLAM

AAALAC International

AAALAC International is a private, nonprofit organization that promotes the humane treatment of animals in science through voluntary accreditation and assessment programs. For some, animal research is a controversial topic. But like others in the animal welfare arena, AAALAC endorses the use of animals to advance medicine and science when there are no non-animal alternatives, and when it is done in an ethical and humane way. When animals are used, AAALAC works with institutions and researchers to serve as a bridge between progress and animal well-being. AAALAC International accreditation shows that an institution is serious about setting, achieving and maintaining high standards for animal care and use and committed to animal welfare in science.

Along with meeting all applicable local and national regulations, AAALAC accredited institutions must also demonstrate that they are achieving the standards outlined in the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide, NRC 2011)*; the *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching (Ag Guide, FASS 2010)*; and the *European Convention for the Protection of Vertebrate Animals Used for Experimental and Other Scientific Purposes, Council of Europe (ETS 123)*. AAALAC International has also referred to other specialty publications for supplemental information about procedures or techniques related to the care and use of laboratory animals. These specialty publications are designated as Reference Resources. References included on this list have been formally reviewed and adopted by AAALAC International's Council on Accreditation as guidance for accredited units as well as the AAALAC International representatives during the site visit. Additionally, these references may be utilized during Council deliberations when discussing issues identified during site visits.

More than 950 companies, universities, hospitals, government agencies and other research institutions in 42 countries have earned AAALAC accreditation, demonstrating their commitment to responsible animal care and use. These institutions volunteer to participate in AAALAC's program, in addition to complying with the local, state and federal laws that regulate animal research. Participating institutions receive an independent, unbiased expert assessment, and those that meet or exceed applicable standards are awarded accreditation.

In 2016, AAALAC ceased spelling out its acronym in favor of simply using "AAALAC International" as its legal, official name. As AAALAC's accreditation program has grown to encompass many wildlife and agricultural animal research programs, dropping the use of the word "laboratory" in conjunction with AAALAC allows for greater inclusivity.

On June 13, 2016, AAALAC International has appointed Kathryn Bayne, MS, PhD, DVM, DACLAM, DACAW, CAAB, as its new Executive Director. On August 24, 2016, AAALAC International has appointed James R. Swearingen, D.V.M., Global Director. The AAALAC update will be presented.

The Council on Accreditation will require use of the 2016 Program Description template following a transition period that encompasses the next three Program Description submission deadlines (i.e., December 1, 2016; April 1, 2017; August 1, 2017).