

Code of Practice Non-human primates

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Socialisation	<p>Non-human primates are animals with complex social structures. The animals should be born, grow up and live their lives in conditions that mimic those of the natural group structure to the extent possible, and this is also important with respect to their psychological state at the time of possible rehoming. It is therefore recommended that non-human primates be obtained from centres that provide this. Also as concerns the accommodation at the research institute, a stimulus-rich environment (including a wide range of social stimuli) is not only beneficial to the animal welfare in general but also to the later likelihood of successful rehoming.</p>
Selection	<p>Suitability for rehoming is assessed individually based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the animal's age and life expectancy• the animal's health• the animal's psychosocial condition• if applicable, the impact of rehabilitation operation <p>The licensee is advised by the Animal Welfare Body (IvD). The IvD issue their recommendation to the licensee after consultation with a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned and/or an animal behaviourist, the colony manager (if employed), those responsible for monitoring health, daily care and/or training and researchers. The final decision as to whether or not to rehome an animal rests with the licensee.</p>
Preparation for rehoming	<p>Prior to the rehoming a health examination must be conducted by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned. In addition, a declaration of behaviour is to be issued by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned or an animal behaviourist who has determined that the animal exhibits normal individual and species-specific behaviour.</p>
External rehoming and follow-up	<p>In the case of external rehoming, the organisation from which the transfer originates decides which receiving organisation is chosen. The receiving organisation must have qualified staff with all the necessary expertise.</p> <p>The following aspects are mandatory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the organisation that will provide the accommodation has the required permits for keeping primates,• social housing• spacious accommodation (3D), with varied décor and various forms of environmental enrichment <p>If a non-human primate is transferred to another location where it will spend the rest of its life, it is important that the complete documentation accompanies the animal.</p>

Introduction

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure the quality of life of NHPs that remain alive at the end of an animal procedure and are eligible for rehoming.

Internal and external rehoming

NHPs can spend the remainder of their life at the establishment where they stayed during the animal procedure without being involved in an animal test. In this case, the code uses the term ‘internal rehoming’; retirement must then be explicitly documented. A retired animal can no longer be used as a laboratory animal. The code uses the term ‘external rehoming’ when an NHP is rehomed outside the establishment. The same conditions apply to both types of transfer.

I. The internal process

Socially housed

NHPs are animals with complex social structures. The animals should be born, grow up and live their lives in conditions that mimic those of the natural group structure to the extent possible, and this is also important with respect to their good psychological state at the time of possible rehoming. It is therefore recommended that NHPs be obtained from centres that provide this, even if this involves higher cost. Also as concerns the accommodation at the research institute, a stimulus-rich environment (including a wide range of social stimuli) is not only beneficial to the animal welfare in general but also to the later likelihood of successful retirement.

Eligibility criteria for rehoming

Due to various developments in scientific research, in the field of imaging (NMR) for example, euthanasia at the end of a study is no longer always necessary.

At the end of an animal experiment, consideration is given to whether an animal can be used as a laboratory animal again. In order to assess this, information about the nature of the study and the specific procedures the animal has undergone are of decisive importance. An important additional aspect is the expected distress the animal will suffer in the case of reuse and the total effect including the distress already experienced (*‘cumulative suffering’*). In 2015, the ethical position in the Netherlands is that it is preferable for more animals to be used so that each animal suffers less, than to use fewer animals (or reuse animals) that suffer more distress per animal. Rehoming can be considered if reuse is not possible or desirable.

Under Article 13d of the Experiments on Animals Act (WoD) animals may only be released for rehoming if (a) the state of health of the animal allows it; (b) there is no danger to public health, animal health or the environment; and (c) appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the welfare of the animal.

In all cases, an assessment is made of the suitability of each animal individually.

The assessment takes place on the basis of the following criteria:

- the animal's age and life expectancy
- the animal's health
- the animal's psychosocial condition

To this end, an overall picture is formed of factors that include:

- the long-term health prognosis
- the extent to which the animal can exhibit normal individual and species-specific behaviour
- the extent to which the animal has physical or psychological trauma, including the chance of recovery
- if applicable, the need for a rehabilitation operation and the impact of such on the animal
- the necessary accommodation requirements
- availability of an appropriate rehoming option

Responsibility for decision-making

The final decision as to whether or not to rehome an animal rests with the licensee. The licensee is advised by the Animal Welfare Body (IvD). The IvD issue their recommendation after consultation with:

- a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species
- an animal behaviourist with expertise in the animal species
- the colony manager (if employed)
- person responsible for overseeing the welfare and care
- person responsible for daily care and/or training
- investigator(s) responsible for animal procedures performed

In its advice, the IvD also takes into consideration the conditions at the receiving establishment, such as:

- staff expertise (animal care, veterinary care)
- facilities for accommodation
- initial intake / quarantine
- strategy for socialisation/resocialisation
- long-term objectives, which may be of potential influence on the care of animals

II. The transition process

Preparations for rehoming and documentation

When the animal is transferred it is accompanied by a document containing all relevant information on:

- the animal's health
- the behaviour
- a summary of the welfare log
- the medical condition and history
- medical advice

Prior to the rehoming a health examination must be conducted by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned. He or she determines whether the animal is healthy or has a medical condition with a realistic therapy and good long-term prognosis. The welfare log, containing information about past accommodation and the animal's personality must accompany the animal. The animal's medical history must also be well documented, and accompanied with appropriate advice in the case of any zoonotic diseases.

Non-human primates can carry viruses such as herpes B, which can be deadly to humans. However, a virus status does not automatically have to result in an animal's loss of eligibility for rehoming.

In addition, a declaration of behaviour must be issued by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned or an animal behaviourist who has determined that the animal exhibits normal individual and species-specific behaviour. Among other things, this means that the animal

- exhibits social behaviour
- is explorative
- is not overly anxious
- is not excessively aggressive

When a non-human primate is transferred to another location, it is important that all relevant information accompanies the animal.

Costs

It is up to the supplying and receiving establishments to reach agreement on the accompanying costs, such as:

- the preparatory procedures per animal
- possible rehabilitation operation
- the health examination
- the transport
- the preparatory procedures per animal at the new home
- finding a buddy
- continued medication
- if necessary, making the accommodation suitable

Knowledge of the supplying institution remains available to the receiving institution.

It is important to investigate and lay down the legal aspects concerning the transfer of ownership. These include responsibilities in respect of long-term medical care, choosing a final home and the possible failure of a rehoming.

III. The external process

External rehoming and follow-up

In the case of external rehoming, the organisation from which the transfer originates decides which receiving organisation is chosen. This may be a temporary home provided by an intermediary organisation or a permanent home. The receiving organisation must have qualified staff with all the necessary expertise. In addition, the housing of the receiving organisation must be equivalent or better. It is important that throughout the process the applicable policy and legal frameworks are observed, such as the Animal Holders Decree (Besluit houders van dieren) and the policy rules for protected native animals (Beleidsregels kwaliteit opvang beschermde inheemse diersoorten).

Before a decision concerning transfer is taken, the receiving establishment is visited in consultation with the IvD to inspect the future accommodation. An observation of the future buddy or group is also conducted.

The following elements are required with respect to the accommodation:

- the organisation that will provide the accommodation has the required permits for keeping primates
- social housing
- spacious accommodation (3D), with varied décor and various forms of environmental enrichment

A plan must be present at the receiving establishment for introduction to the new buddy/group. This should include consideration of the type of policy (contact/hands-off) which is suitable for the non-human primate in question.