

## BCSN Position Statement on the Use of Animal Tissue.

The BC Simulation Network [BCSN] acknowledge both the distinct value of, and challenges with the use of animal parts, tissues, and cadavers [hereafter referred to as animal tissue] for the technical education, training, and continuing competence of health care clinicians. “Studies support both the continued use of animal tissue for anatomic and surgical training and the search for alternative methods that are safe and effective in human and veterinary medical education.”<sup>1</sup>

In alignment with commitments made by other Canadian institutions, the BCSN is proactively committed to the reduction and replacement of animal use, to the refinement of procedures wherever possible<sup>2</sup> and to an ethical, and responsible approach that adheres to standards of excellence.

Whenever possible, in alignment with learning outcomes, we encourage the use of task trainers as a replacement to the use of animal tissue. In situations where task trainers are either not available or do not support learning outcomes, an approach should be taken that reduces the use of animal tissue. This may include strategies that combine the use of task trainers and animal tissue and/or the incorporation of virtual task trainers or augmented reality resources which have both been shown in the literature to be of value.<sup>1</sup>

As stated by The Canadian Council Animal Care Guidelines, animal tissue can only be used for educational purposes if sourced from licenced industry or commercial settings.<sup>3</sup> Members of the BCSN will work to ensure that if animal tissue is used in their programs, that it is sourced from licenced established industry or commercial settings.

The Canadian Standards Association Standard Z314:23 on Canadian Medical Device Reprocessing states that medical devices used on animals or cadavers shall not be reprocessed in a Medical Device Reprocessing Area used to reprocess medical devices used on humans or accepted for human use. In addition, suppliers of medical devices shall, if requested, confirm that the loaned, reusable medical devices have not been used on animals or cadavers.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, only disposable instruments or instruments that are dedicated for, and labelled “*not for human use*” shall be used with animal tissue in BCSN affiliated centres.

Cleaning of affected areas should be done in alignment with applicable infection prevention and control practices and should be coordinated in advance with custodial and/or facilities services and infection control practitioners. Disposal of animal tissue should be coordinated with custodial and/or facilities services in accordance with local practices and biomedical waste procedures. Such procedures should encourage the use of single use containers with a biohazard symbol without liners unless such liners are needed for spill and/or smell prevention. Consideration should also be given to assuring that such containers are never placed directly next to recycling containers.

BCSN members can assist in supporting the items included in this position statement. The plan to use animal tissue should be discussed well in advance, as those who may opt out of participating should be offered alternatives. For participants, this may afford time to find alternate ways to meet learning objectives, and for facilitators and support staff such conversation may assist in finding others to help set up before, facilitate during and/or cleaning up after sessions.

See next page for answers to frequently asked questions.

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<sup>1</sup>Varner C, Dixon L and Simons MC (2021) The Past, Present, and Future: A Discussion of Cadaver Use in Medical and Veterinary Education. *Front. Vet. Sci.* 8:720740.

<sup>2</sup>[https://uwaterloo.ca/research/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/animal\\_research\\_statement\\_-\\_jan\\_2023.pdf](https://uwaterloo.ca/research/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/animal_research_statement_-_jan_2023.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Guidelines/Experimental\\_Animals\\_Vol1.pdf](https://ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Guidelines/Experimental_Animals_Vol1.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.csagroup.org/store/product/CSA%20Z314%3A23/?gad\\_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiA1-6sBhAoEiwArqIGPqb19TdP27Eg1NaJJ0812gbvOsLLmBckDfx9o9BPiMCC7yOEOccyFhoCEMCAvD\\_BwE](https://www.csagroup.org/store/product/CSA%20Z314%3A23/?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiA1-6sBhAoEiwArqIGPqb19TdP27Eg1NaJJ0812gbvOsLLmBckDfx9o9BPiMCC7yOEOccyFhoCEMCAvD_BwE)

# BCSN Position Statement on the Use of Animal Tissue.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***Does this mean that we can't train using animal tissue or cadavers?***

No. This position statement appreciates the value in using animal tissue and was written to support a refined, ethical, and responsible way to do so.

### ***What are task trainers?***

Task trainers are models that represents a part or region of the human body, such as a leg, ribs, or a neck and are purpose built for skills training. These models can be used on their own to support procedural skills training and or maintenance of competency, and or incorporated into scenario training.

### ***Can you share an example of a strategy that combines the use of task trainers with animal tissue to reduce the use of animal tissue?***

Let's say you are training a group of clinicians on the invasive procedures of intraosseous vascular access [I/O], chest tube insertion, and emergency front of neck access [eFONA] in airway management. This training could use purpose-built task trainers to provide learners with as many attempts as they need to learn the steps of the procedures. Following that, animal tissue [legs, ribs, trachea] could be used as a last step, to "get the feel" of the procedure.

### ***What does "sourced from licensed industry or commercial settings" mean in practice?***

Municipal, Provincial and Federal governments have all developed laws regulating the care, transport, and control of animals. In BC, the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, Food Safety Act and meat inspection regulations outline accepted practices and licensing requirements for farms and abattoirs. Animal tissue used in training should be sourced from a setting that adheres to these statutes, such as licensed abattoirs, commercial butchers, or grocery stores.

### ***If I do use a clinical device on animal tissue, can't I just clean it and return it to the clinical arena?***

No. Once a device has been used on animal tissue, it must be removed from the clinical arena, as it cannot be cleaned, and can no longer be accepted for human use.

### ***If we do use animal tissue, what is the approach to cleaning the room afterwards?***

For most routine cleaning and disinfection, accelerated hydrogen peroxide wipes should suffice. However, it is best to liaise with your housekeeping team, as a terminal clean of the room may be recommended.

### ***How does this position support people who have an ethical objection to the use of animal tissue for health care education purposes?***

This position statement works to assure that when animal tissue is used, that people will be informed in advance, and it encourages facilitators to respect objections and to explore alternatives. For health care trainees, such alternatives could include the use task trainers only, and the provision of space to work that does not cause expose them to animal tissue. Similarly for custodial and/or facilities services it may be that another member of the team performs the clean-up task.