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The complete ANZCCART News can be downloaded [here].

Experimental Design: Balancing Statistics with Biology

The need to ensure that any study involving the use of animals will produce meaningful, statistically significant results is a prime consideration for both researchers and members of every AEC. The difficulty sometimes is ensuring that both the biological and statistical requirements of research design are fully considered. This sometimes delicate balance along with some potentially useful strategies have been explored in this article, which can be read [here].

Vale: - Dr Yvette Chen

Like all friends and colleagues of Dr Yvette Chen, everyone at ANZCCART was devastated to hear that she recently lost her battle with cancer. Yvette was the Animal Welfare Officer at Melbourne University, a Past President of ANZLAA and had worked for the BAW in Victoria—which included serving as a member of the ANZCCART Council as well. A more fitting tribute to Yvette can be found [here].

Letter to the Editor

This letter was submitted in response to the article we published late last year, “Can we further refine humane killing with CO2?” The author expresses a clear opinion of dissent with regard to the idea that killing animals with CO2 is humane and expands on that premise. The letter can be read [here].

2015 ANZCCART Conference

ANZCCART would like to announce that the Call for Abstracts is now open. Registrations are also open and the early bird closing date is Friday 22 May. See [here] to register or for further information on the Conference.

ANZCCART AEC Member of the Year Award

This award was created by ANZCCART to recognize the excellent service offered to Animal Ethics Committees by their members. ANZCCART is calling for nominations for the 2015 AEC member of the year award and would welcome nominations for outstanding AEC members who are currently serving on one or more AECs in Australia and New Zealand. Nominations close Friday 8 May. See [here] for more information.
Paul Flecknell Workshop

The Workshop on Assessment, Prevention and Alleviation of Pain and Distress in Laboratory Animals will be held at the Newcastle University, United Kingdom from 20 to 22 April 2015. See here for more information.

Animal Welfare Officer Position, Flinders University

Applications are currently being accepted for the above position and close at 11.00am on Monday 27 April. More details can be found here.

Dr David Bayvel QSO

As this edition of ANZCCART News was being finalised, we were greatly saddened to learn that Dr David Bayvel (Honorary Life Member) passed away as a result of an illness on Tuesday 7th of April, 2015. A more fitting tribute to David will be included in a subsequent edition.

Recent Articles of Interest:

**Cancer patients testing drugs on mouse 'avatars’**

Cancer patients are using mice to test drugs and personalise their own treatment with the hope of curing their disease. Private laboratories breed the mice and patients pay to have a tumour sample banked and for drugs to be tested on mice which have been implanted with parts of their tumour.

Seventy patients whose outcomes from treatment were already known, were studied to see how well the mice performed. Results showed that for 70% of the time, tests in the mice suggested that something had helped the patients and if something had not worked in the mice it almost never worked in a patient.

However, mice do have some drawbacks such as the graft is only implanted under the skin and not in organs where the cancer may be and also their immune systems are highly impaired and differ to humans.

While it might be reasonable to question the scientific validity of such studies, patients though are more confident and reassured when they see their mice responding to the drugs and as one patient said she didn’t see it as animal abuse but as testing to try to save her life.


**Radio-controlled mouse hints at new diabetes treatment**

Genetically altered mice have responded to a radio signal by releasing insulin, which lowers blood sugar. This response relies on the presence of iron particles in the body, allowing energy from radio waves with the right frequency to be absorbed thus changing cell behaviour.

This approach has shown that it is possible to regulate processes within the body remotely and could potentially be tailored to treat other diseases too. Although it is still a long way from being used therapeutically in people, researchers believe that one day it just might allow people with type 1 diabetes to use mobile devices such as their mobile phone to control their disease or to lessen jerky movements in sufferers of Parkinson’s disease.

Ferret mutation makes them ideal flu model

For years, researchers have known that ferrets can be susceptible to human influenza A virus but the reason was unknown.

A collaborative team of researchers from Australian Universities have discovered that ferrets share a mutation previously thought to be unique to humans, leading to a new approach in dealing with human diseases. Read the full article at:

Tickling rats reduces stress of injections

The findings from a new study at Washington State University could have implications for laboratory animal welfare.

When giving injections researchers have been tickling rats in a way which mimics their social play behaviour and have found that the rats show less stress and are easier to handle.

The study can be used to help refine laboratory animal care standards and improve the quality and validity of research data, as well as improving animal welfare.

UK Funders demand strong statistics for animal studies

It would appear that the need to consider possible improvements in experimental design is an international issue with a recent study in UK raising concerns about the number of underpowered experiments being carried out. That study has highlighted the need to ensure that using the right number of animals is an essential component for both scientific validity and ethical assessment of any work.

As a result of the study reported, UK funding bodies will now require clear and appropriate justification of animal numbers as a part of their application process.