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Large Animal Isolation Facility – Equine Unit

Introduction

The Large Animal Isolation Facility is located on the other side of the road to Small Animal Hospital (northern aspect). Two isolation stalls are available for equine patients (equine isolation 1, equine isolation 2), and one isolation stall is available for food animal patients.

Equine isolation 1 is designed to accommodate a mare and foal if required. An enclosed examination and treatment room for equine patients is present in the facility.

No common airspace is present between the isolation stalls or examination room and each stall is structurally and functionally a separate unit.

Protocols are in place in the isolation unit to enforce optimum biosecurity and prevent dissemination of pathogens between stalls and from the isolation facility to the remainder of the veterinary school.

The equine unit of the Large Animal Isolation Facility (hereafter referred to as the Facility) is for isolation of equine patients with suspected/confirmed infectious diseases that are potentially contagious in equine populations and/or are the result of zoonotic pathogens.

Horses known or suspected to be suffering from the specified diseases for isolation protocols (see list below) will be transferred directly to the equine unit of the Facility for diagnostic investigation &/or treatment. In the circumstance of confirmation or suspicion of a zoonotic pathogen, the senior clinician responsible for the case will inform all individuals who have had contact with the animal and will advise the nature of the risk.

All protocols of the Facility must be followed. Appropriate protective clothing (coveralls, boots, cap and gloves) must be worn by personnel at all times while in the Facility. All protective clothing must be removed in the changing room prior to exiting the Facility.

Consumption of food and drink and smoking in the Facility is strictly prohibited at all times.

Suspected/Confirmed Diseases Requiring Isolation

Confirmation or suspicion of one of the following disease in a horse at the Weipers Centre for Equine welfare (hereafter referred to as The Weipers Centre), University of Glasgow Veterinary School warrants immediate transfer to the Facility:

- *Streptococcus equi* subspecies *equi* infection (strangles)
- Viral respiratory disease (Equine herpes virus/Equine influenza/Equine rhinitis virus)
- Salmonellosis
• Suspected infectious diarrhoea (*Clostridium difficile, Clostridium perfringens*)
• Infection with multiple drug resistant bacteria (including MRSA)
• Equine Viral Arteritis
• Equine Infectious Anaemia
• Rabies
• West Nile Virus myeloencephalopathy
• EHV, myeloencephalopathy-abortion
• Any aborting animal
• Any Viral Encephalitides
• Contagious Equine Metritis (*Taylorella equigenitalis*)

**Protocol for isolation of horses with Diarrhoea**

**Adult horses:**

1. All horses admitted with a principal complaint of diarrhoea or that have diarrhoea at the time of presentation to the hospital will be admitted directly to the Facility.
2. Horses that develop diarrhoea during hospitalisation at the Weipers Centre will be transferred immediately to the Facility if:
   a. The horse is *pyrexic* (rectal temperature >39.0°C [102.2°F]) or,
   b. The horse is *leucopaenic* (White blood cell count <4x10⁹/L)
   c. Positive *Salmonella* culture or detection of *Clostridium difficile* toxin from faeces
3. If the horse has had surgery (especially abdominal surgery) within 5 days and is not pyrexic, haematology must be performed within 12 hours of developing diarrhoea.
   a. If the horse is leukopaenic, the horse will be transferred directly to the Facility
   b. If the horse is not leukopaenic, the horse may remain in the stables of the Weipers Centre provided semi-isolation of the horse is commenced (see below).
   c. If diarrhoea persists beyond 3 days the horse is to be transferred to the Facility
4. If enteritis or colitis is detected during abdominal surgery, the horse must be transferred to the Facility after recovery from anaesthesia.

**Foals:**
Any neonatal foal with diarrhoea should be transferred to the Facility as soon as possible. If movement of the foal to the Facility is not possible due to the degree of intensive management required, semi-isolation protocols must be enforced. Older foals with diarrhoea are to be transferred to the Facility if one or more of the following is present; leukopaenia, pyrexia &/or persistence of diarrhoea for >5 days.
Faecal samples from any horse or foal with diarrhoea must be submitted for:

1. Selective *Salmonella* culture – one faecal sample daily for 5 days
2. *Clostridium difficile* toxin A/B detection by ELISA – a minimum of 1 sample during hospitalisation

The retrieval of a positive result from either of the above procedures necessitates immediate transfer of the horse to the Facility. In the event of a positive result in a foal, the mare should be tested also. A stable at the Weipers Centre that has housed a horse with suspected or confirmed Salmonellosis or *Clostridium difficile* enterocolitis is to be handled in the following manner:

1. Removal of all contained feed and bedding and dispose in the designated waste disposal area at the Facility.
2. Removal of organic matter by washing down and scrubbing all surfaces with detergent and hot water
3. Scrubbing of all surfaces with disinfectant solution and allowed to dry
4. The stall will not be suitable for use for a period of 48 hours and until negative *Salmonella* cultures taken from surfaces are obtained.

*Salmonella* spp are zoonotic pathogens and all personnel that have been in contact are to be informed of the *Salmonella* status of the horse and have the implications explained by the senior clinician responsible for the case.

**Protocol for isolation of horses with Respiratory Disease**

1. Any horse with suspected viral respiratory tract disease (Equine Influenza Equine Herpesvirus, Equine Viral Arteritis) should be transferred to the Facility. Criteria for isolation are ≥2 of the following:
   1. acute onset of coughing, serous/seromucoid nasal discharge, inappetance, lethargy
   2. pyrexia
   3. history of infectious respiratory disease in stable/yard cohorts
   4. no/unknown vaccination history (Equine Herpesvirus 1&4, Equine Influenza)

2. Any horse with suspected or confirmed infection with *Streptococcus equi* ss *equi* or have been transported from a property with a recent history of Strangles will be isolated in the Facility. Infection will be suspected if the horse has ≥1 of the following:
   1. a history of exposure to a horse with Strangles
   2. purulent nasal discharge
   3. submandibular swelling or
   4. swelling of Viborg’s triangle

3. Any horse with suspected or confirmed Equine Viral Arteritis (EVA) or from a property with a recent history of EVA will be isolated in the Facility. EVA should be suspected in horses with pyrexia, lethargy, inappetence, chemosis, conjunctivitis, serous nasal discharge, scrotal and preputial swelling, mammary swelling or abortion. A confirmed diagnosis of EVA necessitates notification of the Divisional Veterinary Manager of DEFRA.
Protocol for isolation of horses after Abortion

Any horse admitted for abortion of undetermined origin will be transferred to the Facility immediately. In addition, any horse transported from a facility with a recent history of Equine herpesvirus 1 abortion will be admitted to the Facility.

Protocol for isolation of horses with multiple drug resistant bacteria

Horses from which Methicillin Resistant Staphyloccocus aureas (MRSA) or Methicillin Resistant Staphyloccocus intermedius (MRSI) are isolated require transfer to the isolation facility. Isolation of other bacteria, including Enterococcus spp. and E.coli spp. with multiple resistance patterns may warrant transfer of the horse to the Facility or instigation of semi-isolation procedures at the discretion of the senior clinician responsible for the case. Multiple drug resistant bacteria are regarded as potential zoonotic pathogens. All personnel who have been contact with the horse are to be informed by the senior clinician responsible for the horse.

Protocol of isolation of horses with Neurological disease

1. Any horse in which one or of the viral encephalitides is suspected or confirmed is to be admitted to the Facility. The viral encephalitides includes infection with Togaviridae viruses (Eastern, Western and Venezuela equine encephalitis), Flaviviridae (West Nile Virus, Japanese Encephalitis), Rabies and Borna Virus.

2. A horse with suspected/confirmed Equine herpesvirus 1 myelopathy is to be transferred directly to the Facility.

Any horse exhibiting neurological derangements (including behavioural) of undetermined origin (particularly acute disease) should be considered to be a viral encephalitides suspect.

Protocol for isolation of horses with Equine Infectious Anaemia

Any horse with confirmed or suspected EIA will be transferred directly to the Facility. A confirmed diagnosis of EIA necessitates notification of the Divisional Veterinary Manager of DEFRA.

If a horse is transferred to the Facility from The Weipers Centre, the stall/holding box at the Weipers Centre is to be placed ‘on hold’. Further, the stall of any horse discharged/euthanased that had diarrhoea is to be placed ‘on hold’. The stall/holding box will be on hold until the stall is cleaned and disinfected. The stall/holding box of a horse from which a positive Salmonella culture has been obtained is to remain ‘on hold’ until cleaned and disinfected and a negative environmental Salmonella culture has been obtained.
Protocols for Access to Isolation facility

1. Animal access:
Horse entrance to Equine isolation 1, Equine isolation 2 and the Examination room of the Facility are present on the northern aspect of the facility via a ramp. The animal entrance to the farm animal isolation stall is at the north-west corner of the facility; an unloading ramp is present and animals are to proceed directly through the sliding doorway at the western end of the building into the stall. All animal entrances into the isolation stalls are not to be used for personnel entrance into the facility. The entrance into the Examination room is for both horses and personnel.

2. Personnel entrance:
There is one personnel entrance into the food animal isolation facility and one personnel entrance into the equine facility that services both Equine Isolation 1 and 2. Each personnel entrance leads directly into the change room. The change room is divided into clean (outer) and dirty (inner) areas. The protocol for movement into the isolation stalls is as follows:
   - Saturate soles of shoes in the disinfectant mat placed inside the door
   - In the clean area all remove coveralls and other pieces of outer clothing and place these items on the hooks provided.
   - Remove all items of jewellery that may come in-contact with patients (Medical-alert bracelets are exempt)
   - Remove shoes
   - Put on a disposable coverall, cap and gloves
   - Move to the dirty area and put on a pair of dedicated isolation facility boots (white for isolation 1, green for isolation 2)
   - Proceed to the appropriate isolation ante-room and saturate the boot soles in the disinfectant mat.
When designated tasks have been completed in the isolation stalls, the following protocol is required for exist from the facility:
   - Wash boots in the boot wash facility in the ante-room
   - Saturate the boot soles in the disinfectant mat and proceed to the appropriate changing room
   - Remove dedicated isolation boots and dispose of coveralls, caps and gloves into designated bin
   - Wash and disinfect hands
   - Move to clean area, dress, and saturate shoe soles in the disinfectant mat and exist facility.

Horses in the Facility must be attended to by veterinary staff, undergraduate veterinary students and grooms after horses in the stables of the Weipers Centre and riding school have fed and received any required veterinary attention. All personnel returning from the Facility to the Weipers Centre must avoid all unnecessary contact with in-patient and out-patient horses. If gross contamination of personal clothing by biological material occurs at the Facility, access to the Weipers Centre is prohibited until the involved clothing has been replaced with clean items of clothing.
**Movement of horses**

Horses are to remain in the allocated stall in the Facility during the period of hospitalisation. If horses are moved between the assigned isolation stall to the examination room of the Facility, any faeces produced in transit must be collected immediately and placed in the manure/bedding waste disposal area and the path disinfected with XXXXXXXXX.

Animals are only to leave the isolation facility on discharge or following euthanasia/death (except in exceptional circumstances).

Horses are not to be moved from the Facility to the Weipers Centre unless absolutely necessary. Circumstances that may warrant movement of a horse from the Facility to the Weipers Centre include a requirement for general anaesthesia and surgery.

All movement of the horse must be justified in terms of the requirement(s) of the horse and the risk of exposure of other horses and personnel to pathogens.

Horses are not to be moved to the Weipers Centre for procedures that are not vital to the welfare of the horse. If a horse is transferred from the Facility to the Weipers Centre, the following protocol must be followed:

- If possible, the horse is moved to the Weipers Centre after all daily veterinary requirements of the out-patients and in-patients of the Centre have been completed i.e. the horse should be last case to receive veterinary attention for the day.
- Wrap the tail in a plastic bag/rectal glove
- The horse is brushed and the feet picked out as it leaves the stall
- The horse is lead directly from the isolation stall to the Weipers Centre along the service road of Garscube Estate
- Any faeces produced in transit must be collected immediately and placed in the manure/bedding waste disposal area of the Facility and the path cleaned and disinfected with XXXXXXXXX.
- At arrival at the Weipers Centre the horse is to proceed directly to the required area of the hospital. One person is required to lead the horse and a second person is required to follow with a bucket to catch any passed faecal matter. The ground that the horse passes on in the Weipers Centre is to be cleaned and disinfected and allowed to dry. The ground is to be closed to all animal and personnel traffic until dry.
- Only personnel directly involved in the care of the horse are to have contact with the horse

**Feeding**

Horses in the Facility are to be feed by the veterinary grooms of the Weipers Centre after all other horses have been fed. Hay or haylage is to be placed in the stalls from the external door; gloves must be worn. Hard feed is to be carried into the Facility by proceeding through the designated protocol for
personnel; provision of hard feed and water is to be carried out from the anteroom side of each stall.

**Cleaning and Disinfection**
All work spaces in the ante-rooms are to be cleaned and disinfected immediately after use

**Personnel:**
All personnel must exit the Facility via the changing room (unless moving a horse to the Examination room). After removal and disposal of gloves, cap and coveralls, all personnel must wash their hands using chlorhexidine hand wash in the sink provided in the changing room.

**Stalls:**
Manure and any soiled bedding/feed will be removed daily by veterinary grooms and placed in impermeable plastic bags. The bags are to be placed in the designated waste storage area situated at the eastern end of the facility. Mucking out of isolation stalls is to be performed after all stalls in the stables of the Weipers Centre have been attended to.

After use, each stall will be cleaned manually of all bedding and manure, washed down using power equipment, scrubbed with detergent and hot water and then scrubbed with disinfectant solution and allowed to dry. The stall will not be suitable for use for a period of 48 hours. All stalls that have housed a horse with diarrhoea must undergo environmental sampling after the stall has dried and samples are to be submitted to Veterinary Diagnostic Services (Microbiology) for *Salmonella* culture.

Stalls are cleared for use after 48 hours after cleaning and a report of negative environmental culture for *Salmonella*.

Any stall that has *Salmonella* cultured from an environmental sample must be cleaned and disinfected daily and environmental samples collected and submitted daily for *Salmonella* culture until a negative result is reported.

After discharge/death of the patient head stalls and lead ropes must be soaked in disinfectant and permitted to dry for at least 48 hours prior to re-use.

**Equipment:**
All reusable equipment that is used in the veterinary care of a horse in the Facility must be cleaned and disinfected daily and discharge/death of the horse. Each stall has designated stomach tubes and a twitch that must be cleaned and disinfected immediately after use. All personal equipment used to examine and treat patients (stethoscopes, thermometers, ophthalmoscopes etc) must be cleaned and disinfected prior to leaving the ante-room or treatment room. When appropriate the item(s) should be soaked in disinfectant for 20 minutes. Endoscopy equipment is to be used in the Examination room and endoscopic examination should be scheduled as the
last procedure of the day. The endoscope must be cleaned and disinfected immediately after use.

**Handing of Waste**
All waste of the Facility must be disposed of in the designated areas of the Facility and must not be transported to other locations on the estate prior to permanent disposal. The Facility is to be stocked with sufficient impermeable clinical waste bags to permit safe disposal of all bedding, waste feed and clinical waste.

- All contaminated clinical material is to be placed in the designated clinical waste bins
- All sharps are to be placed in the sharps container
- All manure and bedding is to be transported directly to the designated waste storage area situated at the eastern end of the facility

**Equipment**
The Facility is to be stocked with sufficient disposable and non-disposable equipment to permit an appropriate standard of clinical care and optimum biosecurity. However, excessive stocking is to be avoided to prevent unnecessary costs of running the Facility. All disposable equipment (including medications and bandages) is dedicated to the Facility and must not be returned to the Weipers Centre.

Stocking requirements;

**Equine Isolation 1 and 2 anterooms:**
1. hibiscrub dispenser
2. mercury thermometer
3. alcohol wipes
4. single use syringes (various volumes) and single use needles (various gauges)
5. sterile gloves (various sizes)
6. sharps container
7. clinical waste bin
8. stomach tubes (large, medium, yearling [& foal tube in Equine isolation1])
9. twitch
10. headstall & leadrope
11. bucket x2
12. tray for disinfecting stomach tubes etc
13. vacutainer blood tubes: plain, EDTA, lithium heparin, fluoro-oxalate, sodium citrate) & vacutainer holders and needles (20 and 21 gauge)
14. sterile swabs for bacteriology
15. sterile sample containers

- each ante-room will be stocked with therapeutic material required by the patient during hospitalisation.
• All opened fluids, drugs, bandages cannot be signed out to other patients and must be disposed off when the patient is discharged/euthanased. The ante-rooms are to be stocked with the minimum amount of therapeutic materials required for each case.

**Equine Examination room:**
1. hibiscrub dispenser
2. alcohol wipes
3. single use syringes (various volumes) and single use needles (various gauges)
4. sterile gloves (various sizes)
5. sharps container
6. clinical waste bin
7. twitch
8. headstall & leadrope
9. bucket x2
10. tray for disinfecting stomach tubes etc
11. vacutainer blood tubes: plain, EDTA, lithium heparin, fluoro-oxalate, sodium citrate) & vacutainer holders and needles (20 and 21 gauge)
12. sterile swabs for bacteriology
13. sterile sample containers

**Laboratory:**
Basic laboratory equipment (microhaematocrit centrifuge and refractometer) is available in the ante-room of Isolation 1 for processing of samples from horses in Equine Isolation 1. All other samples are to be submitted to the Veterinary Diagnostic Services laboratory.

**Monitoring procedures for infection control**
Both passive and active surveillance of the Facility will be performed.

_ii. Active surveillance;_
All stalls that have housed a horse with diarrhoea must undergo environmental sampling after discharge/death of the horse and samples are to be submitted to Veterinary Diagnostic Services (Microbiology) for *Salmonella* culture. Periodic environmental surveillance may be implemented in certain situations including concern of persistence of *Salmonella* in the Facility.

**Protocol for isolation of patients when all Isolation stalls are occupied**
In the event that Equine Isolation 1 and 2 are occupied, stall 1 in the James Armour Stables of the Weipers Centre shall be used to isolate a horse if required. Elective isolation cases (including chronic diarrhoea and Strangles cases) should not be admitted during this period, until an Equine Isolation stall becomes available for use.
**Semi-isolation of Patients**

Horses in the James Armour Stables of the Weipers Centre may be kept in semi-isolation if deemed appropriate by the senior clinician responsible for the case. Situations where semi-isolation may be indicated include development of diarrhoea in the absence of pyrexia and leukopaenia (especially post-surgery) and isolation of bacteria with a restricted in vitro antimicrobial sensitivity pattern (especially in the event of discharging/open wounds).
Large Animal Isolation Facility – Farm Animal Unit

Protocol for isolation of farm animals
(see farm section for separate protocols):

Sick farm animals might be isolated either

1. Because they present a risk to the health of other animals or personnel (zoonosis)
   
   or
   
2. If they are from a property of high health status (see CheCS requirements) and are expected to return to their property of origin.

Within the Farm Animal Clinical areas there are 3 possible accommodation sites:

1. Teaching Area.
2. Isolation unit.
3. Reproduction area.

Most cases (>300/year) are teaching cases. Teaching cases are not returned to farms, but are either slaughtered at a licensed abattoir or are destroyed at Glasgow University Veterinary School. Once admitted to the Teaching Area, cases do not move to the Isolation Unit unless they are diagnosed with either:

1. A Notifiable disease such as Tuberculosis
2. A Reportable disease – Salmonellosis
3. A disease with clear controllable zoonotic potential such as EAE

Cases are also to be admitted to the Farm Animal Unit of the Large Animal Isolation Facility if the animal is destined to return to the herd of origin and could be potentially infected by other animals in the veterinary school (reverse barrier nursing). In the latter case it is essential that the following protocol is followed:

1. Copies of documentation of the status of the herd are received.
2. A recent result or set of results (within 1 week of acceptance or as near to this as is technically possible) confirming this status (unless the case is an emergency)
3. Appropriate samples must be taken immediately on arrival at GUVS to check health status. These will be defined by the health status of the animal.
4. The same samples will taken weekly while at GUVS to confirm freedom from disease or otherwise on a continuing basis.
5. A sample is taken on the day of return home to confirm freedom from certified disease (insofar as current commercially available diagnostic tests are able to determine disease status).

For Notifiable diseases movement of the animal from the Farm Animal Unit of the Facility will only be with the authority of the competent authority at that time (usually State Veterinary Service -SVS).
For a case of Salmonellosis movement will be agreed by the Head of Division. In the case of diseased animals these will also be monitored for the continued presence of disease either as instructed by the SVS or in the case of Salmonellosis by weekly culture of faeces. On leaving the Facility environmental sampling will be undertaken to confirm freedom post disinfection.

Once housed in the Large Animal Isolation Facility, the protocol for management of farm animal cases is to be conducted in accordance with the protocols for the Equine Unit of the facility. Protocols are in place in the isolation unit to enforce optimum biosecurity and prevent dissemination of pathogens between stalls and from the isolation facility to the remainder of the veterinary school.

Provision for disease control within Isolation

Only a small number of referral clinical cases are currently dealt with by Division of Farm Animal Medicine and Production (< 5/year). The facilities and protocols do, however, allow for increased numbers of cases. Referral clinical cases are to be housed in the Isolation Unit. This is essential for animals from farms of High Health status, where the regulations detailed in any relevant Health Scheme will be adhered to (see CheCS requirements).

Entry of animals to the Farm Animal Unit

All animal movement whether to the property of origin or to the post-mortem room will be by lorry. This will be washed and disinfected prior to entry and after unloading the animal.

Animals are to be lead up the farm animal loading ramp situated at the north-western corner of the Facility, through the double sliding doors at the western end of the facility and into the Farm Animal Isolation stall. At all other times, personnel entry will occur through the changing room of the Farm Animal Unit.

Personnel entry to the Farm Animal Unit

There is one personnel entrance into the food animal isolation facility. The change room is divided into clean (outer) and dirty (inner) areas.

The protocol for movement into the isolation stalls is as follows:

• Saturate soles of shoes in the disinfectant mat placed inside the door
• In the clean area all remove coveralls and other pieces of outer clothing and place these items on the hooks provided.
• Remove all items of jewellery that may come in-contact with patients (Medical-alert bracelets are exempt)
• Remove shoes
• Put on a disposable coverall, cap and gloves
• Move to the dirty area and put on a pair of dedicated isolation facility boots
• Proceed to the isolation ante-room and saturate the boot soles in the disinfectant mat.

When designated tasks have been completed in the isolation stall, the following protocol is required for exit from the facility:
• Wash boots in the boot wash facility in the ante-room
• Saturate the boot soles in the disinfectant mat and proceed to the appropriate changing room
• Remove dedicated isolation boots and dispose of coveralls, caps and gloves into designated bin
• Wash and disinfect hands
• Move to clean area, dress, and saturate shoe soles in the disinfectant mat and exist facility.

Consumption of food and drink and smoking in the Facility is strictly prohibited at all times.

Handing of Waste
All waste from infected or potentially infected animals must be disposed of in the designated areas of the Facility and must not be transported to other locations on the estate prior to permanent disposal.

For high health status animals the bedding can be treated as normal farm waste and bagged and left over the west gate to be taken to the main midden. This will obviate staff from moving into an area potentially infected by equine isolation material.

The Facility is to be stocked with sufficient impermeable clinical waste bags to permit safe disposal of all bedding, waste feed and clinical waste.
• All contaminated clinical material is to be placed in the designated clinical waste bins
• All sharps are to be placed in the sharps container.

Equipment
The Facility is to be stocked with sufficient disposable and non-disposable equipment to permit an appropriate standard of clinical care and optimum biosecurity. However, excessive stocking is to be avoided to prevent unnecessary costs of running the Facility. All disposable equipment (including medications and bandages) is dedicated to the Facility and **must not** be returned to the hospital.

Feeding of patients
• Farm animal forage will be deposited over the gate outside the unit at the west side of the building. All other handling etc will be done with separate equipment designated to the isolation unit.
• Concentrates will be brought through the staff entrance in bags sprayed with disinfectant (if appropriate) and stored in the farm animal ante-room.
• Farm staff will feed any isolated animals first in the day. If a high health status or last if the animal is in isolation due to disease.
Stall management

- High health status animals are to be mucked out first each day and low health status animals are to be mucked out last.
- Animals will be bedded on rubber mats supplemented with sawdust so that bedding waste will be minimized.
- All disposable and non-disposable equipment will be designated for the isolation unit alone.
- Staff will follow all guideline pathways to limit cross-contamination between equine and farm animal areas.