



## **Tools for teaching ethics: Ethical dilemmas to stimulate discussion**

The following examples of ethical dilemmas were contributed by delegates attending the Education, Training and Ethics Section at the 2017 LASA Winter meeting. They are published here as a 'tool' that can be used to stimulate discussion in modular and other training courses on ethics.

### **Ethical dilemma 1**

**Should I pass a group of 'difficult' researchers to the responsibility of another named person because I cannot guarantee their compliance but I know the other named person will probably not try to ensure compliance? Will it still be my responsibility?**

### **Ethical dilemma 2**

**As an NTCO, is it ethically right to train and assess someone in a technique that, although authorised, you do not think is ethical or should not be done?**

### **Ethical dilemma 3**

**Is it right to euthanise naive animals because they cannot cope with their environment without using them on a study?**

### **Ethical dilemma 4**

**If an animal resents a procedure is it right to give remedial training in order to carry out the disliked procedure?**

### **Ethical dilemma 5**

**Is it right to keep animals alive indefinitely when there is no imminent prospect of them being used?**

### **Ethical dilemma 6**

**Is it right to apply for licences based on "acceptable" techniques published in Korea or the USA (e.g. tail suspension test in mice) when they would be questionable (or not allowed) in the UK?**

**Ethical dilemma 7**

**Should wild-caught vervet monkeys be used for research abroad in the Caribbean (where they are considered a pest?)**

**Ethical dilemma 8**

**When using severe humane endpoint e.g. in acute sepsis, should weekend checks be done twice, am and pm?**

**Ethical dilemma 9**

**Is killing rodents using a guillotine acceptable?**

**Ethical dilemma 10**

**Is it ethical to use a severe animal model to identify a cure for a human condition which is not life-threatening?**

**Ethical dilemma 11**

**If, following surgery, wound dehiscence is found the following day due to infection, is it better to re-suture or treat with antibiotics?**

**Ethical dilemma 12**

**Is it ethical to use animals in the UK under project licence authority for drugs that may not then be approved through NICE?**

### **Ethical dilemma 13**

**A journal reviewer for a high impact factor journal has asked a researcher to perform an extra study to support publication of a manuscript. The study involves an invasive procedure on 100 mice. The researcher does not believe the study is necessary scientifically, but is feels that the publication is important for their career. Should the study be done?**

### **Ethical dilemma 14**

**Should I report a colleague to management due to mistakes they made?**

### **Ethical dilemma 15**

**Is it ethically acceptable to send surgically prepared animals, or animals which are under procedure, abroad for collaboration on academic studies?**

### **Ethical dilemma 16**

**Can we justify using data/tissue from 20,000 rats poisoned in the wild OR 2,000 laboratory rats?**

### **Ethical dilemma 17**

**Should a trainee technician who makes a serious mistake that impacts on animal welfare be sacked?**