European Veterinary Parasitology College (EVPC)

Guidelines for EVPC clinical studies preparation and their evaluation

Definitions

A Clinical study can be either a **Clinical Trial** or a **Clinical Case**. Clinical trials cannot be >30% of the total clinical studies.

Clinical Trial

Experimental work done in clinical research studies designed to answer specific questions in veterinary parasitology, i.e. new treatments (novel vaccines, drugs, etc.). Clinical trials may be experiments (i.e. conducted in a laboratory/research facility) or field studies. Surveys without any specific clinical implications are not acceptable.

Clinical Case

Detailed description of the history, clinical signs (changes that can be measured/observed and are objective), diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up of an animal patient (individual or group). Although clinical cases have limitations, they are useful in veterinary medical research and evidence-based veterinary medicine. Clinical case reports based only on a post-mortem examination and/or applying molecular techniques in the identification of parasite(s) without any treatment, control, or follow-up studies are not acceptable.

Every submitted Clinical Study will be scrutinized for adherence to the guidelines; the examination committee (EC) will inform the applicants about the acceptance/rejection of each submitted document within 3 weeks.

Scope

The dossier of Clinical Studies must demonstrate the diversity of veterinary parasitology, not only in terms of host species, but also parasite groups, tests and procedures applied.

A total of 10 clinical studies must be submitted by prospective candidates for examination.

Clinical studies must consist of at least six studies dealing with domesticated animals (farm/companion animals): 3 studies from either ruminants, horses or pigs; and 3 studies from either dogs, cats or poultry. The remaining four studies can be from the same species or other species such as zoo animals, wild fauna, laboratory animals, fish, honey bees, etc., conducted during the period of the residency. Clinical studies involving human patients are not acceptable.

Clinical studies must include at least three studies dealing with different parasite groups (helminth, arthropod and protozoa). Candidates whose approved EVPC course includes Veterinary Mycology must submit at least one study based on a mycological case.

Composition and length of the Clinical Study Report

(Either Clinical Trial or Clinical Case, must be specified)

TITLE PAGE: 1 page

TEXT PAGES (max. 5, including references, figure legends and tables)

FIGURES: There are no limitations to the number of figures that can be submitted. Upon submission of the report, authors must include all figures and tables as a single PDF file of the report. Figures should not be submitted as separate files but additional higher resolution files could be included (compatible formats: Photoshop, TIFF, GIF, JPEG; PNG at a resolution of at least 300 dpi unless the resolution is intentionally set to a lower level for scientific reasons) together with any other supplementary media on the DVD/CD containing the whole dossier of Clinical Studies.

Manuscript preparation

Format

Manuscripts (including footnotes, references, figure legends, and tables) should be prepared with the following attributes:

- A4 page size
- Double-space typed
- 12-point Times New Roman font
- Standard Microsoft Word
- Margins: 2.5 cm top margin, 2 cm other margins (bottom, left and right)
- Left justification
- Sequential line numbering
- Sequential page numbering

Organization and contents

Manuscripts should be organized as follows:

- Title page
- Structured abstract
- Keywords
- Text – Clinical Trial or Clinical Case
- References
- Figure legends

- Tables captions

TITLE PAGE

The title page must include the title and, the first name, middle initial, and last name of the resident. If information in the text has been presented at a scientific meeting or previously published, this should be indicated on the title page as well as the candidates' contributions to the case must also be specified.

STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

All manuscripts submitted as a Clinical Study within a EVPC resident's dossier must include a structured abstract of 350 or fewer words. The abstract should be clear, descriptive and can stand alone. No references should be present within the structured abstract.

For a **Clinical Trial**, the structured abstract must include the following headings:

- Title
- Summary
- Objective
- Design (type of study)
- Allocation of animals
- Monitoring and sampling
- Clinical and laboratory examinations
- Results
- Conclusions and Clinical Relevance

For a **Clinical Case**, the structured abstract must include the following headings:

- Title
- Summary
- Background-Introduction
- Case Presentation: Features, clinical and environmental history (The presentation of the clinical disease; body system affected: pneumonia, rhinitis, bronchitis, etc.; where are the affected animals: feedlot, pasture, housed; when were, the animals affected: arrival, stress)
- Clinical findings and investigations: Physical examination, Clinical pathology (cultures, serology, haematology, necropsy findings)
- Diagnosis (interpretation of results of clinical pathology, etc.) and differential diagnosis
- Treatment outcome and follow-up
- Control (mass medication or metaplasia, management of risk factors, vaccines)
- Clinical relevance and discussion

KEYWORDS

Three to five keywords representing the main content of the article.

TEXT – CLINICAL TRIAL

The text is organized under the following headings

- Introduction
- Materials and Methods
- Results
- Discussion

The **Introductory section** should supply sufficient pertinent background information to allow readers to understand and interpret results. It must include the rationale for the study, the investigators' hypothesis, and a clear statement of the purpose of the study.

The **Materials and Methods** section should describe the experimental design in sufficient detail to allow others to reproduce the study. A subsection detailing statistical methods used to summarize data and test hypotheses and the level of significance used for hypothesis testing should be provided. Products, equipment, and drugs should be identified in the text by chemical or generic names or descriptions. A trade name may be included in a lettered footnote if that specific product, equipment, or drug was essential for the outcome. For all statistical tests, authors are required to indicate whether applicable test assumptions were met. When citing software products, use a footnote to cite the software or software program used (egg, PROC GLM, SAS Institute, Cary, NC) and a reference to cite a User's Guide (egg, SAS/STAT9.2 user's guide. Cary, NC: SAS Institute Inc, 2008; page number).

With the exception of reports of retrospective studies, manuscripts describing studies that involved the use of animals, including studies that involved the use of privately owned animals (e.g., animals owned by clients, staff members, students, or private entities), must include a statement that the study protocol was reviewed and approved by an appropriate oversight entity (e.g., an animal care and use committee (ethical committee) or institutional review board) or was performed in compliance with institutional or other (e.g., governmental or international) guidelines for research on animals. If animals were euthanatized, the method of euthanasia must be indicated. Manuscripts describing prospective studies that involved privately owned animals must also include a statement indicating that owner consent was obtained.

The **Results section** should provide data that are clearly and simply stated without discussion or conclusions. Tables and figures should be cited parenthetically. Authors should refrain from repeating within the text data that are also presented in tables. Authors of manuscripts reporting gene sequences should submit those sequences to an appropriate data bank.

The **Discussion** section should focus on findings in the manuscript and should be brief, containing only discussion that is necessary for interpretation of findings. The discussion should concentrate mainly on what is known in nonhuman animals, with less emphasis on what is known in humans.

TEXT CLINICAL CASE

The text is organized under the following headings

- Introduction
- Case presentation
- Discussion

The Introduction section should explain the background of the case, including the disorder, usual presentation and progression and an explanation of the presentation if it is a new disease. If it is a case discussing an adverse drug interaction the introduction should give details of the drug's common use and any previously reported side effects. It should also include a brief literature review.

Case presentation(s) should present all relevant details concerning the case. The case presentation should begin with signalment (e.g. age, sex, body weight, and breed) of the animal or animals and clinical history. The presenting complaints and pertinent medical history of the animal including any relevant previous laboratory results are essential. These data should be followed by a chronologic description of pertinent aspects of the diagnostic examination (i.e. patient's history and clinical signs, tests and procedures), treatment or intervention, and outcome.

When more than one animal is involved, a representative of the group should be described in detail; important differences among animals can be addressed separately. For reports in which there are 3 or fewer animals, pertinent abnormal findings should be summarized in the text. For 4 or more animals, 1 table that provides a summary of pertinent abnormal findings may be accommodated, if such findings are not repeated in the text.

The **Discussion** should clearly state the main conclusions of the case report and give a clear explanation of their importance and relevance. Is it an original case report of interest to a clinical specialty of veterinary medicine or will it have a broader clinical impact across veterinary medicine? Include information on how it will significantly advance our knowledge of a disease aetiology/epidemiology or drug mechanism.

REFERENCES

Ensure that all references cited in your text appear in full in the **Reference list**. Use *Harvard Referencing Style* for in-text citation and the reference list.

FIGURE LEGENDS

Each figure should have a brief title and a description of the illustration.

TABLE CAPTIONS

Each table should have a brief and self-explanatory title.

Evaluation

STRUCTURED ABSTRACTS

For each resident, the 10 structured abstracts will be first evaluated following the compliance to the full respect to the guidelines described above.

Furthermore, as it is stated in EVPC Policies and Procedure:

Clinical studies will be based on the preparation of 10 Clinical Studies of which at least consist of at least six studies dealing with domesticated animals (farm/companion animals): 3 studies from either ruminants, horses or pigs; and 3 studies from either dogs, cats or poultry. The remaining four studies can be from the same species or other species such as zoo animals, wild fauna, laboratory animals, fish, honey bees, etc., conducted during the period of the residency. Clinical studies must include at least three studies dealing with different parasite groups (helminth, arthropod and protozoa).

ExCom will give a feedback to the 10 submitted structured abstracts with motivated rejection or acceptance of each clinical study. It belongs to resident to take into account those comments for the next step.

FULL CLINICAL STUDIES

The 10 full clinical studies will be evaluated (out of 20 for non-selected clinical studies for oral presentation and out of 25 for the 2 selected clinical studies) following several criteria developed in the table below:

Criteria	Point number
Adhesion to instructions	3
Orthograph, grammar, quality of summary	3
Originality of the case report	2
Clinical logic	2
Relevance of information	2
Quality of discussion	2
Amount of work	2
Figures	2

Bibliography	2
Presentation*	3
Response to questions*	2

* Only for the two selected clinical studies for oral presentation

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