

FROM THE FIELD

Focus on Quality: New Tools to Support Patient Safety in Anesthesia

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From the Field shares insights from **Banfield Pet Hospital** veterinary team members. Drawing from the nationwide practice's extensive research, as well as findings from its electronic veterinary medical records database and more than 8 million annual pet visits, this column is intended to explore topics and spark conversations relevant to veterinary practices that ultimately help create a better world for pets.

At Banfield Pet Hospital, we acknowledge that anesthesia, along with sedation and immobilization, poses a high risk for patient safety. We are committed to continual improvement of education and training materials available to the profession.

In January 2018, Banfield launched a new anesthesia program, including *Anesthesia and Analgesia for the Veterinary Practitioner: Canine and Feline* and the introduction of Anesthesia Medical Quality Standards. Guidelines, protocols and Clinical Essentials have been developed from an evaluation of the current literature, consensus of board-certified veterinary specialists and align with other professional standards, whenever possible.¹

Our anesthesia quality standards and updated protocols define processes of care and the requirements—based on current scientific knowledge—that help ensure the care we provide is safe, effective, timely, efficient, equitable, and patient centered, resulting in the best possible outcomes for every pet, every time.

Key highlights of Banfield's new anesthesia program include:

■ Quality Standards

- Key behaviors, responsibilities and tasks to support medical quality and a patient-centered experience in the preparation, anesthetic delivery, and procedural recovery of each pet.



The primary intent of all recommendations is to support patient safety and minimize patient risk as much as possible, based on the best evidence currently available.

- Anesthesia Machine Checklist and Pre-Induction Timeout Checklist to support patient safety and team communication.

■ Learning Materials

- Job aids to support each phase of anesthesia
- Protocol Quick Reference Guide with key differences in patient support requirements.

■ Patient Tools

- Anesthesia Dosage Calculator to guide medication dosages, fluid and oxygen flow rates and selection of personal anesthesia equipment.
- Anesthesia Monitoring Form that aids in collecting key information to be captured in the medical record.

The primary intent of all recommendations is to support patient safety and minimize patient risk as much as possible, based on the best evidence currently available. Most importantly, if you implement any changes to your anesthesia program, remember that the goal is to maintain patient safety above all else. Set realistic expectations based on the experience, equipment, training and staffing that are available to each team.

To find Banfield anesthesia education tools and other resources, visit banfield.com under “Practice Resources.”

With questions on this content or to provide feedback on utilization by your team, please contact anesthesia@banfield.com. **TVP**

¹Note: Protocols are never meant to be followed blindly, and the veterinarian remains responsible for making medication decisions in the best interest of each individual patient.



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Carla Lerum

Dr. Carla Lerum works on the Veterinary Affairs team at Banfield Pet Hospital's headquarters in Vancouver, WA. She previously worked as a clinical veterinarian at Banfield Pet Hospital locations in Oregon. In her current role, Dr. Lerum brings a medical and operational perspective to the broader scope of work. This incorporates drafting medical policies and guidelines, being a liaison for other teams for hospital workflow, and managing the process for evaluation of quality in the care that is delivered by veterinary teams in Banfield's more than 1000 hospitals across the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Dr. Lerum earned her veterinary degree from Oregon State University College of Veterinary Medicine after graduating from Lewis and Clark College. She is the president elect for the Portland Veterinary Medical Association and enjoys connecting with and supporting the veterinary community.