

## Implementing the Ability Model (Orpet & Jeffery 2007)

There are many models of nursing that can be used or adapted to inform the practice of nursing. Unfortunately they are based on the nursing care of humans. Roper, Logan & Tierney's model is based on the 12 activities of living - the essentials requirements for the being a healthy human. This model has been adapted to be used with animals as the assessment of the 12 activities can, mostly relate to assessment of our patients needs.

We hope to develop this model as the first veterinary model of nursing - and we need your help. We need as much feedback on the use of this model and whether adaptations or inclusions are necessary.

The care of a patient starts when the animal enters the practice, usually with their owner. If the animal is to be admitted, there are certain questions that are required to ensure we have the correct information. Most of these are covered during the completion of the consent form or from consultation with the veterinary surgeon, but do you have enough information? We constantly take measurements of our patients; temperature, respiration rate, oxygen saturation, and evaluate organ function through measurements of electrolytes, enzymes etc. in the blood. These values are useless unless we know what normal values should be. This should also go for the nursing care for our patients - do you know what the animals' normal routine is?

### Assessment

Initial assessment of the patient can take the form of a questionnaire that the owner completes before or during the admission of their animal. The information you need is based on the 10 Abilities of the animal - however the writing of the questions for the owner is important to elicit the information you need. For example; "*does your pet eat adequately?*" would probably result in a *yes/no* answer. However "*what does your pet normally eat, how much and at what times?*" will hopefully give you a better idea. Of course finding out the animals favourite food is important when tempting the inappetent animal.

The next stage is your nursing assessment of what the animal can or cannot do now it has been admitted. Again this is using the same 'checklist' of 10 'abilities' from the model. Transfer the information to your nursing assessment form. You may find you wish to skip the questionnaire part and enter the information gained from the client directly to the assessment form. However, giving the questionnaire to the clients prior to the admission gives them an opportunity to think clearly about their answers and often clients feel that the practice value their pets and the care given to them.

### The Care Plan

From the information you have gained from the assessment, problems have been identified. It is important to also consider potential problems that may occur so they can be prevented. This stage is useful in informing student or less experienced nurses. Once you have identified the problems the decision is made on the nursing care required.

### **Implementing the care**

Detail in the care plan is important, remember everyone needs to know exactly what the nursing intervention is and how often, or how much is required. The decision on the nursing intervention is guided by the goal to be achieved. Setting goals is important to validate the nursing decision made and also to measure the outcomes of the nursing intervention.

### **Evaluation**

In order to evaluate effectively, you should carry out the assessment phase again. From each of the 10 'abilities', assess what the animal can now do or still not do by itself. Hopefully the nursing interventions have worked and the animal is now more 'able' than when admitted. If not look again at the care given and adjust the plan as necessary.

### **Influencing factors**

The assessment and consequent nursing care that is carried out may be affected by other factors. The life stage of the animal is an important factor to consider - neonates are unable to feed, drink, keep warm, mobilise by themselves and this is when they are healthy. Geriatrics may have their senses affected purely by the fact they are old. Mobility may be decreased due to joint pain, muscle stiffness etc.

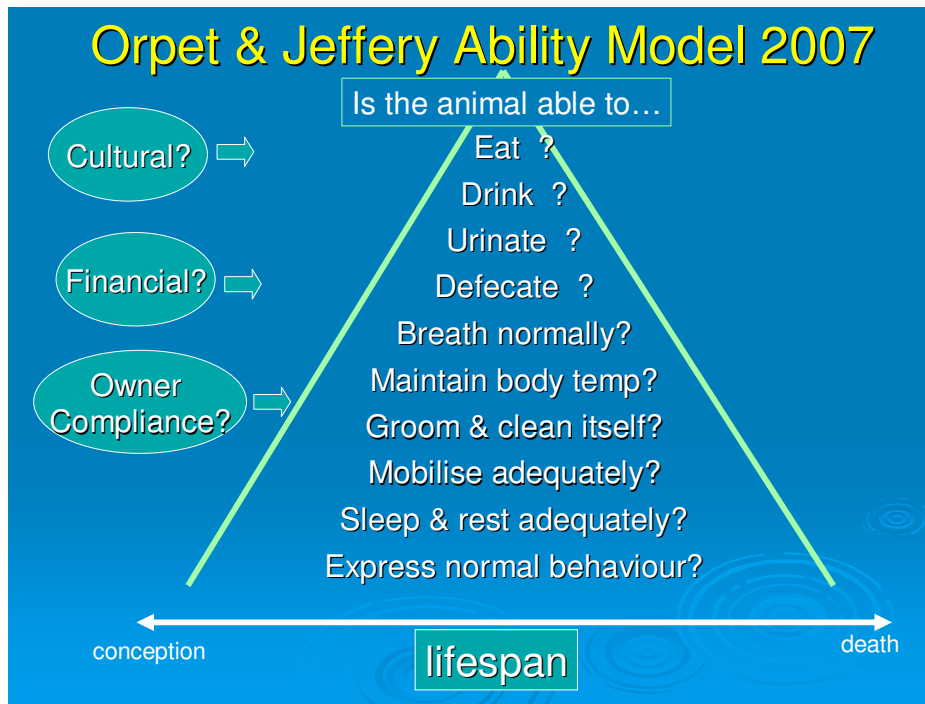
Cultural differences may affect the care given to the animal. What role does the pet play in the owners' life - working dog? only companion? breeding animal? Intensive palliative care may be required if the owners beliefs prevent the animal from being euthanased.

There may be financial implications that prevent the care that the animal requires taking place. What alternatives are there? Working with the owner, the nurse may be able to teach basic care techniques or rehabilitation methods when perhaps full physiotherapy and hydrotherapy is prohibitively expensive for the client.

Nursing involves not only caring for your patient but liaising with the owner regarding the nursing care given. The nurses' role is invaluable in maintaining the communication between the client and the practice. Nurses often speak to clients to reassure them of how their pet is progressing in the hospital. Once the animal goes home the care continues in the home. Nurses need to ensure the owner is able to, and are also compliant in administering the care required. Alternative solutions to a problem may be needed. It is unrealistic that an 80 yr old pensioner is expected to bath their Newfoundland dog once a week with medicated shampoo!

The influencing factors should always be considered when creating the care plan for the animal and adjustments made appropriately.

The templates can be adapted for use in the practice, the idea is to ensure the nursing care is structured and documented and useable for everyone involved in the care of the patient.



### References

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### Patient Assessment Form

<b>Date of Admission:</b> 6.4.07	<b>Date of nursing assessment:</b> 6.4.07				
<b>Case No.</b> 123456	<b>Patient Name:</b> Kitty				
<b>Owner</b> Smith <b>Address</b> <b>Contact No.</b>					
<b>Clinical summary: (reason for admission)</b> Corneal ulcer R eye	<b>Owners perception of problem:</b> Problem with eye, not eating				
<b>Previous history (surgery, disease, vaccination status, allergies)</b>  Fully vacc. Booster due July 07 Neutered Dec 05					
<b>T</b> 37 C <b>P</b> 150 <b>R</b> 20 <b>MM</b> pale pink <b>CRT</b> <2secs <b>Wt.</b> 3.8kg	<b>Current medication</b>  None yet - to be prescribed by VS				
<b>Life stage:</b>					
Age: ...2yrs <b>neonate</b> <b>adult</b> <b>geriatric</b>					
<b>Assessment of activities of living</b>					
		<i>Usual routine</i>	<i>Actual Problem</i>	<i>Potential Problem</i>	<i>Long Term Goal</i>
<b>1. eat adequate amount</b>		Eats 1 sachet 2x daily	not eating	Wt loss	
<b>2. drink adequate amounts</b>	200ml/day	not drinking	dehydration		
<b>3. urinate normally</b>	outside	reduced			
<b>4. defecate normally</b>	outside	reduced	constipation		
<b>5. breath normally</b>	normal for conformation	ensure no difficulties arise			
<b>6. maintain body temp</b>	No problems - sleeps on boiler	None			
<b>7. groom itself</b>	Owner grooms weekly	Poor coat condition	Matted coat		
<b>8. mobilise adequately</b>	No problems	None			
<b>9. sleep/rest</b>	No probs - indoors mostly	Should be normal			
<b>10. express normal behaviour</b>	Play reduced recently Sight affected.	Ocular ulcer	Loss of sight, pain		

## CARE PLAN

Patient Name:				Date:	
Date	Problem	Short term Goal	Nursing intervention	Reassess/ evaluation	Review time/date
6.4.07	Not eating	To eat 1/2 tin of food	Tempt to eat by hand feeding, warming food Remove Buster collar whilst feeding	Has eaten 1/4 tin of food	
6.4.07	Not drinking	Maintain fluid intake	Encourage to eat (wet food)	Assess hydration	
6.4.07	unable to groom	Maintain coat condition	Groom with cat comb x2 daily Wipe discharges from face	No matts develop and coat condition maintained	
6.4.07	Normal behaviour affected by condition and Buster collar	Encourage as far as possible normal behaviour	Regular contact with nursing staff not just when feeding or medicating. Assess pain relief requirements		