

Animal Welfare Implementation by Staff for Non-Infectious Inpatient Cats at Gustavet Veterinary Clinic & Acupuncture

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Abstract

Animal welfare constitutes a form of animal rights, ensuring the fulfillment of animals' physical, and psychological needs, as well as environmental conditions suitable for them. This study aims to evaluate how well staff at Gustavet Animal Clinic and Acupuncture implement animal welfare in their non-infectious cat inpatient facilities. Research was conducted from October to November 2024 at the Gustavet Veterinary Clinic and Acupuncture, involving six staff who served as veterinary paramedics. The inpatient facilities were evaluated using a welfare level scoring method, ranging from 1.0 to 4.0. The implementation of animal welfare by staff was assessed using the Guttman scale method. The results indicate that Animal welfare assessment based on non-infectious animal inpatient facilities obtained an average of 3.4 including the moderate category. This study concludes that animal welfare assessment based on the implementation of animal welfare by non-infectious inpatient staff obtained an average of 88% including the good category. Animal welfare implementation in non-infectious inpatient care meets WOA and AVMA standards.

INTRODUCTION

Companion animals, such as dogs, cats, rabbits, and horses, are recognized as sentient beings whose well-being is intrinsically dependent upon human custody and stewardship; consequently, their welfare must be afforded serious and continuous consideration by their custodians (Hunter and Brisbin 2016). This fundamental dependency necessitates that humans assume complete responsibility for all facets of the animal's existence, spanning from nutritional provisioning to the maintenance of their emotional health. The critical role of companion animals within contemporary societal structures is evidenced by survey data collected by Rakuten Insight (2021), which revealed that the most prevalently kept pet by the Indonesian populace is the cat, constituting 47% of the total number of respondents participating in the survey. This majority feline ownership underscores the imperative that specific attention toward the welfare of this carnivorous species should be intensified, particularly concerning the standards of medical treatment and their housing environments. The subject of animal welfare has emerged as a significant global discourse being addressed commensurate with the heightened ethical awareness within modern society toward non-human organisms. The dereliction of an animal's basic needs is regarded as a clear infringement upon ethical principles and moral obligation. Therefore, a formal regulatory framework is required to ensure that minimum care benchmarks are fulfilled,

thereby guaranteeing an optimal quality of life for those animals that have been integrated into the human familial unit. This commitment is institutionally reflected in various policies and best practices adopted at an international level.

Animal welfare is defined comprehensively as the fulfillment of the animal's fundamental rights within the context of satisfying their physical and psychological requirements, alongside the provision of an environment that is both appropriate and optimal for the specific species. This foundational conceptual and practical framework is constructed upon three interconnected and supportive pillars: first, *welfare science*, which is mandated to objectively measure and evaluate the effects induced upon animals across diverse situations and environments, where this evaluation is conducted exclusively from the animal's perspective; second, *welfare ethics*, which addresses the question of how humans ought to treat animals by incorporating aspects of morality and propriety; and third, *welfare law*, which delineates the legal standards governing how humans are obligated to treat animals, including the specified sanctions that are enforced in cases of non-compliance (Triastuti 2015). Furthermore, the global benchmark for animal welfare is formalized by the World Animal Protection (WAP) and is universally known as the *Five Freedoms* (Susanto et al. 2015). These five domains of freedom encompass essential components: freedom from hunger and thirst through readily available access to potable water and a balanced, nutritious diet; freedom from discomfort through the provision of an appropriate habitat and effective shelter; freedom from pain, injury, and disease through preventive measures, prompt diagnosis, and efficacious veterinary intervention; freedom from fear and distress through management protocols that secure a positive mental state; and finally, freedom to express normal and innate behavior through the allocation of sufficient space, resources, and social opportunities (Elischer 2019). Succinctly, as articulated by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH 2021), animal welfare is fully realized when the animal exists in a state of good health, comfort, and is protected from excessive pain, debilitating fear, or undue psychological stress.

A singularly critical role is performed by veterinary clinics in the maintenance of animal welfare across the lifespan, as these establishments are designated as the primary centers for medical treatment, prophylactic disease control, and post-operative or post-injury convalescence. The contribution of these clinics transcends the singular aspect of therapeutics; the clinic operates as the forefront institution in promoting and ensuring elevated standards of *animal welfare*. According to the AVMA (2022), animal welfare within the clinical domain involves a set of structured interventions, which commence with humane and low-stress handling upon the animal's arrival, the proactive mitigation of stress and anxiety while treatments and examinations are being administered, and the provision of adequate and species-appropriate housing and inpatient facilities tailored to the patient's specific medical status. Regarding patient management, all medical procedures are meticulously pursued to minimize pain and distress, incorporating the judicious use of appropriate sedation or anesthetic techniques. Stress reduction is systematically applied through the creation of calm, low-noise environments and the physical separation of differing species to alleviate fear responses. Adequate facilities guarantee that patients are accommodated in sterile conditions, with regulated temperature control, and under rigorous 24-hour medical observation. Consequently, the function of the animal clinic is expanded from merely a health service provider to an institution that is held responsible for the patient's total welfare while they are retained under clinical supervision.

A holistic and exhaustive approach to safeguarding animal welfare has been consistently implemented by Gustavet Klinik Hewan dan Akupunktur, situated in Jakarta. This methodological framework is strategically focused on verifying that every patient

animal receives not only the requisite and precise medical interventions but is also situated within a physical and psychological environment conducive to the recovery process. Within this facility, the core principles of animal welfare (Kesrawan) are rigorously executed. This execution encompasses freedom from pain through aggressive and proactive pain management protocols, and freedom from stress is accomplished via the design of inpatient wards that are configured to reduce anxiety triggers in the animals. A secure and comfortable enclosure is afforded to the animals throughout the duration of treatment, particularly for *non-infectious* feline inpatients who exhibit elevated sensitivity to environmental alterations. Feline patients are housed in designated areas segregated from canine patients to diminish psychological threat, and the caging units are furnished with hiding spots that enable the cats to manifest their natural ethological behaviors. The clinic's steadfast adherence to these stringent animal welfare standards constitutes the principal rationale adopted by the researcher. The researcher seeks to acquire the most current and accurate data concerning the practical execution of Kesrawan, specifically applied to the cohort of cat patients presenting with *non-infectious* conditions who require intensive care and a tranquil environment, as carried out at Gustavet Klinik Hewan dan Akupunktur. The ultimate objective is to document these exemplary practices so that they may be established as a viable model for replication by other veterinary health facilities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Time and Place

This research was conducted from October to November 2024 at the Gustavet Animal and Acupuncture Clinic located at Jalan Bang Pitung No. 7, North Sukabumi, Kebun Jeruk District, West Jakarta City, Special Region of Jakarta 11540.

Tools and Materials

The tools and materials used in this research are questionnaire links, devices, and literature studies.

Research purposes

This study aims to provide an assessment of the implementation of animal welfare by staff and the implementation of non-infectious inpatient facilities for cats at the Gustavet Animal and Acupuncture Clinic.

Research methods

Qualitative data collection methods were applied in this study. Staff at Gustavet Animal Clinic and Acupuncture served as respondents, with online data collection followed by a field survey. The sample of respondents was determined using a simple random sampling technique with a total of 10 people. The inclusion criteria were as follows: Staff were willing to be research subjects, Staff worked at Gustavet Animal Clinic and Acupuncture, Staff were responsible for carrying out health matters, Staff had at least 1 year of experience in a veterinary clinic, Staff had a minimum education of Diploma 3 in Veterinary Paramedicine.

Work procedures

Sampling was based on a survey using a questionnaire link and field observations. Data collection used two types: environmental observations and respondent surveys. Environmental observations based on clinic facilities were conducted using a welfare level score of 1 to 4 (Rantai 2018), while the respondent survey used survey data from Gustavet Animal Clinic staff using the Guttman scale (Aqilah *et al.* 2020).

Collection of animal welfare implementation data by staff

In the initial stage, sources were determined through inclusion criteria, sources were asked for their willingness to fill in the questionnaire link. Researchers used the Guttman scale for data collection. The Guttman scale is a measurement scale with data obtained in the form of interval data or dichotomous ratios (two alternatives) (Aini et al. 2019). Based on (Fatimah and Puspaningtyas 2020), the Guttman scale is a scale that only provides two answer choices, for example yes or no, good or bad, appropriate or not appropriate. The resulting data is nominal data, positive answers are given a value of 1 and negative answers are given a value of 0. Staff assessments and implementation of animal welfare are categorized as appropriate and not appropriate. In the range 0% to 49% it is called approaching unsuitable, while for the range 50% to 100% the term approaching suitable is used (Aqilah et al. 2020).

Animal welfare data collection based on inpatient facilities

The first stage was to determine the informants through inclusion criteria, then ask for the willingness of the informants to fill out the questionnaire link. The results of the evaluation data were analyzed using a survey adapted to the five principles of animal welfare (freedom from hunger and thirst, freedom from heat and discomfort, freedom from injury, disease and pain, freedom from fear and suffering and freedom to express normal and natural behavior). Based on Rantai (2018), data collection from the clinic was carried out by scoring the welfare level, namely a score of 1.0 to 4.0. The assessment categories and average scores are shown in Table 1 Data obtained from the survey form and questionnaire were analyzed by calculating the average.

Table 1. Assessment categories based on scoring results

Assessment Category	Assessment Score	Average Score
Bad	1	1,0–1,4
Poor	2	1,5–2,4
Average	3	2,5–3,4
Good	4	3,5– 4,0

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained are in the form of information regarding the level of implementation of animal welfare for cats hospitalized as non-infectious inpatients at the Gustavet Animal and Acupuncture Clinic.

Animal welfare assessment based on non-infectious animal inpatient facilities

The average results of non-infectious animal welfare based on non-infectious animal inpatient facilities Table 2. This study was calculated based on the average scoring results for each component.

Tabel 2. Results of the assessment of animal welfare for hospitalized non-infectious animals

Animal Welfare	*Average
Freedom from hunger and thirst.	3,6
Freedom from heat and discomfort.	3,4
Freedom from injury, disease, and pain.	3,2
Freedom from fear and suffering.	3,4
Freedom to express normal and natural behavior.	3,3
Average	3,4

Remarks: *Average Description: 1.0–1.4: Poor, 1.5–2.4: Poor, 2.5–3.4: Moderate, 3.5–4.0: Good.

Assessment components are freedom from thirst and hunger.

The assessment of animal welfare for freedom from hunger and thirst was obtained by scoring the components in Table 3, as determined by Rantai (2018). The assessment for the criterion of Freedom from Hunger and Thirst yielded a mean score of 3.6, categorized as "good," reflecting the suitability of the feed type (scored 3.7, "good"). Feeding involved condition-adapted commercial diets; specifically, Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD) patients (4 kg) were administered a specialized commercial urinary wet food (30 g/feeding) with a composition low in protein (<29%), magnesium (<0.08%), and phosphorus (<0.08%). This targeted formulation is critical, as elevated levels of these nutrients can cause urine supersaturation, increasing urine pH (>7) and facilitating struvite crystal formation (Chandra *et al.* 2024). Feed was administered via syringe feeding.

Tabel 3. Assessment of Judgment free from hunger and thirst

Component	Skor
Is the type of food you provide appropriate for the type of animal?	3,7
How often are food and water containers cleaned for inpatient non-infectious cats?	3,7
How often are inpatient animals fed?	3,8
Do you always ensure a clean water supply in the inpatient cages?	3,5
Are the materials used for the feed containers appropriate and safe?	3,3
Average	3.6

Remarks: *Average Rating: 1.0–1.4: Poor, 1.5–2.4: Poor, 2.5–3.4: Moderate, 3.5–4.0: Good

The provision of quality feed meeting an animal's nutritional requirements is a crucial factor in maintaining its health (Setiawan *et al.* 2021), and the availability of such feed is considered a basic animal necessity (Dalimunthe *et al.* 2020). This underscores the importance of nutritional monitoring in hospitalized animals. According to Grimm *et al.* (2016), malnutrition during hospitalization is linked to a higher incidence of complications and prolonged recovery times. Therefore, an effective system is essential for closely monitoring the animal's nutritional intake and hydration status, coupled with systematic observation for any signs of deficiency to trigger appropriate intervention. Furthermore, feeding regimes that align with specific nutritional needs significantly enhance the energy levels and overall health of feline patients (Smith *et al.* 2022). Additionally, supplementary nutrition is required to accelerate recovery and boost immune system function in sick cats (Fitriana 2020).

The assessment of the cleaning frequency for feed and water containers yielded a mean score of 3.7 ("good"). Cleaning is performed routinely three times daily or adjusted per the animal's condition. This routine sanitation helps reduce the risk of infection in hospitalized cats and supports their well-being by lowering stress levels (Fitriana 2020). Moreover, effective cleaning minimizes contamination during feed handling (Mappanganro *et al.* 2018).

The water source quality observed was clear, odorless, and tasteless, meeting good hygiene standards. Maintaining uncontaminated water is critical, as water tainted by rodents or insects can transmit pathogens such as Salmonella, Leptospira, and Hantavirus (Purba *et al.* 2020). Conversely, the criterion for feed and water container material scored 3.3 ("moderate") because the non-infectious ward uses plastic containers. Plastic is suboptimal due to its susceptibility to damage and sterilization difficulties, leading to a strong recommendation for stainless steel alternatives (Aqilah *et al.* 2020).

Components for Assessing Freedom from Discomfort

The assessment of animal welfare concerning the freedom from heat and discomfort was obtained by scoring the components outlined in Table 4, as predetermined by Rantai (2018). The survey results for this criterion indicated a mean score of 3.4, categorized as “moderate” for the animal inpatient facility. The component assessing room temperature conditions scored 3.3, also categorized as “moderate.” Before any procedure, veterinary paramedics routinely check and regulate the room temperature to meet ideal hospitalization standards. The inpatient area at Gustavet Klinik is equipped with air conditioning units set between 19°C and 25°C. According to Sirois and Lat (2016), the optimal room temperature for small animals such as cats ranges from 18°C to 19°C.

Table 4. Assessment of Freedom from Heat and Discomfort

Component	Skor
Is the temperature of the inpatient room considered sufficiently comfortable and suitable?	3,3
Is the temperature of the inpatient room considered sufficiently comfortable and suitable?	3,3
To what extent do you assess the temperature conditions within the inpatient ward to be appropriate and safe?	3,3
Is the temperature of the inpatient room considered sufficiently comfortable and suitable?	3,3
What is the quality of the lighting in the inpatient ward?	3,2
Is the size of the cage used adequately suitable for the size of the animal placed within it?	3,3
Is the type of cage utilized for hospitalized animals considered appropriate?	3,3
Are the animals able to move freely within their cages?	3,2
How frequently is cage cleaning performed in the inpatient facility?	3,7
Are the animal cages appropriately positioned according to the species of animal?	3,5
Are the animal cages protected from adverse weather conditions (rain, wind, heat)?	3,3

Remarks: *Average Rating: 1.0–1.4: Poor, 1.5–2.4: Poor, 2.5–3.4: Moderate, 3.5–4.0: Good.

The assessment of cage size in the Gustavet Klinik Hewan dan Akupunktur inpatient facility yielded a mean score of 3.3, categorized as “moderate.” Paramedics prepare and adjust cage sizes based on each animal’s body size. The cages in use measure 74.5×65.5×64.5 cm, while staff assess each cat’s condition and placement suitability before handling. Rochlitz (2016) recommends cage dimensions of 70×100×75 cm for long-term hospitalization to allow cats to move freely, stand, turn, and stretch comfortably. The cages are made of aluminum, chosen for its lightweight, rust resistance, durability, and cost-effectiveness (Wagner *et al.* 2018).

Cage cleaning is a vital procedure to maintain the health and welfare of hospitalized animals. The cleaning frequency scored 3.7, categorized as “good.” It is performed twice daily or whenever the cage is visibly dirty. The cleaning process includes spraying disinfectant and wiping with tissue until the cage is visibly clean and odor-free. Routine cage sanitation serves as an essential preventive measure (Wahyudi 2024).

Components for Assessing Freedom from Pain, Injury, and Disease

The assessment of animal welfare concerning freedom from pain, injury, and disease was obtained by scoring the components outlined in Table 5, as predetermined by Rantai (2018). Based on the survey results, the criterion related to the equipment used for animal handling received a score of 3.2, categorized as “moderate.” Before any handling procedure, veterinary paramedics conduct observations regarding the animal’s condition. Leather gloves serve as the primary handling equipment in the Gustavet Klinik inpatient ward. Handling procedures are carried out carefully to minimize the risk of injury or stress to the animal. The method of handling implemented is restraint, which aims to restrict movement or immobilize the animal while it remains conscious (Maulidya *et al.* 2021). Additional equipment used to assist handling includes muzzles, towels, and carriers (Herron 2019).

Table 5. Assessment of freedom from injury, disease and illness

Component	Skor
Are the equipment and instruments used for animal handling considered adequate and safe?	3,2
In your opinion, what is the level of animal density within the cage or holding area?	3,0
Are the animals protected from disturbances by visiting clients or general visitors?	3,3
Average	3,2

Remarks: *Average Rating: 1.0–1.4: Poor, 1.5–2.4: Poor, 2.5–3.4: Moderate, 3.5–4.0: Good

The assessment of animal density within the Gustavet Klinik Hewan dan Akupunktur inpatient cages scored 3.0, categorized as “moderate.” Paramedics supervise the allocation and number of animals in each cage, ensuring compliance with the clinic’s one-animal-per-cage policy. According to Smith and Johnson (2018), housing one cat per cage in inpatient facilities promotes optimal comfort, reduces stress, and supports better health outcomes for the animal.

The assessment of animals being protected from disturbances caused by visitors or clients received a score of 3.3, also categorized as “moderate.” The clinic enforces visiting hour regulations from 2-4 p.m. WIB, with a maximum duration of 30 minutes per visitor and limited visitor numbers. Maintaining a quiet and disturbance-free environment helps animals recover faster and reduces the likelihood of health complications. Therefore, providing isolated and calm areas for animals under treatment is essential (Celebi and Karabulut 2024).

Assessment components: freedom from fear and suffering

The assessment of animal welfare free from fear and suffering was obtained by scoring the components determined by Rantai (2018), as presented in Table 6. The survey results indicated that the condition of the inpatient cages, regarding their freedom from hazardous materials such as chemical substances and sharp objects, scored 3.2, categorized as “moderate.” The cleaning agent used in the Gustavet Klinik Hewan dan Akupunktur inpatient ward is a formaldehyde-free dishwashing liquid. According to Smith and Johnson (2023), the presence of dangerous materials can negatively affect animal health and safety, thereby necessitating corrective measures and regular inspections. Furthermore, the use of safe cleaning agents is crucial for cage sterilization (Mahdia *et al.* 2022), as chemical-based cleaners containing formaldehyde may induce toxic effects (Zuroida and Azizah 2018).

Table 6. Assessment of Freedom from Fear and Distress

Component	Skor
Are the inpatient cages free from hazardous materials such as chemical substances or sharp objects?	3,2
How do you assess the general behavior of the hospitalized animal patients?	3,2
During hospitalization, do the animals receive medical treatment or medication appropriate to their condition?	3,8
Average	3,4

Remarks: *Average Rating: 1.0–1.4: Poor, 1.5–2.4: Poor, 2.5–3.4: Moderate, 3.5–4.0: Good

The assessment of animals receiving medical treatment or medication appropriate to their condition achieved a score of 3.8, categorized as “good.” Prior to admission, each patient undergoes a comprehensive physical examination, which includes the evaluation of vital signs, general condition, and viral screening using test kits. According to Weichbrod *et al.* (2022), the results of such examinations form the basis for an accurate diagnosis of the animal’s health status. Based on this diagnosis, veterinarians develop a detailed treatment plan encompassing medical procedures and medication to ensure optimal recovery and welfare.

Components for Assessing Freedom to Express Normal and Natural Behavior

The provision for expressing natural behaviors is considered capable of enhancing the potential for good welfare. The assessment criteria data for freedom to express natural behavior can be observed in Table 7. The condition of the cages utilized at Gustavet Clinic, concerning their ability to allow the animals to express natural behaviors, scored 3.3, which falls into the “moderate” category. The cages, measuring 74.5×65.5×64.5 cm, generally permit the animals to move freely. However, Rochlitz (2016) suggests that the recommended cage size for inpatient hospitalization is 70×100×75 cm. Cages that are excessively confined can induce stress and frustration, negatively impacting the animal's health (Cage Free Indonesian 2021).

Table 7. Assessment of Freedom to Express Normal and Natural Behavior

Component	Skor
Does the cage used allow the animal to express its natural behaviors (such as running, playing, or digging)?	3,3
How frequently does the animal receive opportunities to socialize or exercise outside of its cage?	3,2
Average	3,3

Remarks: *Average Rating: 1.0–1.4: Poor, 1.5–2.4: Poor, 2.5–3.4: Moderate, 3.5–4.0: Good

The condition of hospitalized animals being provided with opportunities for socialization or exercise outside of their cages scored 3.2, categorized as “moderate.” Inpatient patients are occasionally taken out to play in the morning after examination and in the afternoon before feeding. Hospitalized cats require regular socialization and exercise outside the cage for both physical and mental health. Healthy cats generally have a higher need for environmental interaction (Herron *et al.* 2015).

Assessment Based on the Implementation of Animal Welfare by Non-Infectious Inpatient Staff

The results of the animal welfare assessment based on the implementation of animal welfare by non-infectious inpatient staff are summarized in Table 8. This study calculated the final assessment based on the mean scores of each respective component, based on the average categories determined by Aqilah *et al.* (2020).

Table 8. Results of the Assessment Based on the Implementation of Animal Welfare by Non-Infectious Inpatient Staff

Animal Welfare	*Average (%)
Freedom from hunger and thirst.	100
Freedom from heat and discomfort.	91,6
Freedom from injury, disease, and pain.	100
Freedom from fear and suffering.	100
Freedom to express normal and natural behavior.	50
Average	88

Remarks: *Average Description: 0%–49%: Approaching inappropriate, 50%–100%: Approaching appropriate.

Components for Assessment of Freedom from Hunger and Thirst

The assessment of animal welfare regarding freedom from hunger and thirst was conducted based on the components established by Aqilah *et al.* (2020), as presented in Table 9. Feed administration frequency for hospitalized animals achieved 100% compliance, categorized as “appropriate.” Paramedics generally provide feed twice daily or adjust it according to the animal’s condition. Feed portions are pre-weighed by the paramedic. Feline patients with FLUTD are fed twice daily, renal patients three times daily, and post-castration recovery patients twice daily. Feed provision is closely related to nutritional management, a vital component of comprehensive healthcare for feline patients that supports longevity and quality of life (Cline *et al.* 2021).

Table 9. Components for Assessment of Freedom from Hunger and Thirst

Components	Skor (%)
Is the frequency of feeding appropriate for the animal's daily dietary requirements?	100
Is the feed dosage provided appropriate for the animal's nutritional needs?	100
Do you understand the animal's ideal body condition and ensure that the feed is appropriate for maintaining its body weight?	100
Is the selection of the clean water source you use considered suitable for animal health?	100
Do you consistently ensure the availability of drinking water in the cage?	100
Average	100

Remarks: *Average Description: 0%–49%: Approaching inappropriate, 50%–100%: Approaching appropriate.

Feed dosage also achieved 100% compliance with nutritional requirements, categorized as “appropriate.” Paramedics determine the dosage following the commercial feed manufacturer’s guidelines, using digital scales during the night shift. The pre-weighed portions are stored in labeled containers corresponding to each patient and feeding schedule. Feed dosage strictly follows manufacturer recommendations. As nutrition is critical to animal health, precise assessment and adherence to feeding guidelines help identify and address nutritional issues. Paramedics play an essential role in ensuring each cat receives optimal nutrition (Borks *et al.* 2014).

Staff understanding of ideal body condition and feed suitability also scored 100%, categorized as “appropriate.” Body condition is assessed through palpation, inspection, and evaluation using the Body Condition Score (BCS). Paramedics palpate the rib cage area during examinations. According to German *et al.* (2018), ribs should be palpable with minimal fat cover in cats with an ideal condition. BCS serves as a quantitative and subjective tool for evaluating body fat, using either a 1–5 or 1–9 scale, with the latter preferred for its higher precision.

Water source selection for cage provision likewise scored 100%, categorized as “appropriate.” Bottled mineral water is consistently supplied in every inpatient ward, and paramedics ensure clean drinking water is always available in each cage. Increasing water intake is a key management strategy for cats susceptible to dehydration, chronic kidney disease, diabetes mellitus, and lower urinary tract disease (AVMA 2017).

Components for Assessment of Freedom from Heat and Discomfort

The assessment of animal welfare concerning freedom from heat and discomfort was conducted based on the components established by Aqilah *et al.* (2020), as shown in Table 10. Staff knowledge of appropriate room temperature conditions achieved a score of 100%, categorized as “appropriate.” Paramedics consistently check and regulate room temperature before patient examinations by monitoring the air conditioning (AC) units. The temperature is maintained between 19°C and 25°C. Understanding proper temperature regulation is crucial for feline health, particularly for senior cats, kittens, or short-haired breeds that are more sensitive to cold (Hayman 2021).

Table 10. Components for Assessment of Freedom from Heat and Discomfort

Components	Skor (%)
Are you aware of the appropriate room temperature conditions for animals?	100
Do you understand the importance of suitable room lighting for animals?	100
Do you routinely clean feces or urine from the animal's cage?	100
Are you aware of the appropriate room temperature conditions for animals?	100
Do you understand the importance of suitable room lighting for animals?	50
Do you routinely clean feces or urine from the animal's cage?	100
Average	91,6

Remarks: *Average Description: 0%–49%: Approaching inappropriate, 50%–100%: Approaching appropriate.

Staff understanding of appropriate room lighting also achieved a score of 100%, categorized as “appropriate.” LED lights are adjusted according to existing lighting conditions. Proper lighting is essential for creating a comfortable environment, as it influences cats’ sleep cycles, behavior, and mood (Cats Luvus 2024; Tauseef *et al.* 2024).

Staff comprehension of litter box provision in inpatient cages at Klinik Gustavet achieved a score of 100%, categorized as “appropriate.” Paramedics ensure the availability and cleanliness of bedding and litter boxes during routine checks. Bedding type is determined by the patient’s condition: FLUTD patients use underpads replaced when soiled, renal patients are provided with litter boxes, and post-castration patients use underpads to prevent wound infection. Litter boxes are cleaned twice daily, and underpads are changed regularly. Selecting suitable litter also helps reduce odors, enhancing comfort for both cats and staff (Calder 2024).

Staff understanding of appropriate cage bedding for animal comfort achieved a score of 50%, categorized as “nearly appropriate.” Most staff used underpads and fabric carpets as bedding materials. Underpads are effective in absorbing fluids and maintaining cleanliness, especially for incontinent patients (Amat *et al.* 2016). However, fabric bedding is discouraged due to cleaning difficulties, as it cannot be adequately disinfected (Proops *et al.* 2015).

Staff awareness of the need to protect animals from noise pollution achieved a score of 100%, categorized as “appropriate.” Paramedics conduct procedures calmly and minimize loud noises to avoid startling patients. Visiting hours are limited to 03:00 p.m. WIB, with a maximum duration of 30 minutes to reduce disturbance. Maintaining a quiet environment supports the animal’s mental and physical well-being (Smith *et al.* 2022).

Components for Assessment of Freedom from Pain, Injury, and Disease

The assessment of animal welfare concerning freedom from pain, injury, and disease was conducted based on the components established by Aqilah *et al.* (2020), as shown in Table 11. Staff understanding of proper animal handling achieved a score of 100%, categorized as “appropriate.” Before handling, paramedics observe the cat’s body language and condition to determine suitable techniques. Calm animals can be managed with basic manual handling, while aggressive ones require towel restraints and protective gloves. According to Juliadilla and Hastuti (2018), cats may react aggressively when touched on the back or abdomen. Proper handling is essential to minimize stress, and staff must be trained in safe restraint techniques (Auer *et al.* 2017).

Table 11. Components for Assessment of Freedom from Pain, Injury, and Disease

Components	Skor
Do you understand the appropriate method for animal handling?	100
Do you comprehend the overall condition of the animal patient before providing treatment?	100
Do you understand the actions that could potentially compromise the safety of the animal?	100
Do you routinely monitor the condition of critically ill animals?	100
Is the administration of medication to the inpatient animals carried out correctly in accordance with the veterinarian's instructions?	100
Average	100

Remarks: *Average Description: 0%–49%: Approaching inappropriate, 50%–100%: Approaching appropriate.

Staff comprehension of patient condition assessment before treatment also achieved a 100% “appropriate” score. Paramedics with a D3 Veterinary Paramedic background are well-trained in examining healthy and sick animals. Assessments include reviewing medical records and conducting physical examinations, covering vital signs such as heart rate, respiratory rate, body temperature, skin turgor, and mucous membranes. At Gustavet Klinik Hewan dan Akupunktur, examinations are performed three times daily and recorded in patient files, with updates shared through a dedicated WhatsApp group. All clinical actions are documented to ensure consistency and quality of care.

Staff awareness of actions that may compromise animal safety achieved 100%, categorized as “appropriate.” Veterinary Paramedic graduates possess essential knowledge to identify potential risks such as injuries or stress due to improper handling. Animal safety remains a top priority, requiring staff competency in recognizing and preventing harm (Koey and Lim 2014). Comprehensive training programs covering handling, safety, communication, and staff welfare are vital to maintaining quality inpatient care (Ford *et al.* 2017).

Routine monitoring of critically ill animals also achieved 100%, categorized as “appropriate.” Paramedics consistently implement emergency triage protocols, assessing heart rate, respiratory rate, temperature, and body response. Unconscious patients are evaluated every 20 minutes. As Hayes *et al.* (2019) note, triage ensures efficient prioritization, maximizing recovery and minimizing suffering. Patients are categorized as Red (life-threatening), Yellow (urgent but stable), Green (non-urgent/minor injuries), or Black (deceased/poor prognosis). The triage process includes evaluating respiratory, cardiac, and neurological status, active bleeding, and pain response. Effective triage enables paramedics to respond swiftly and appropriately (Gerrad 2024).

Medication administration by staff achieved 100%, categorized as “appropriate.” Before treatment, paramedics receive written instructions for each shift and review each animal’s medical record, including anamnesis, therapy, and previous medications. All treatments, especially medication administration, must be documented and reported via designated communication channels. According to VNCA (2019), veterinary paramedics are responsible for administering medication, monitoring side effects, and reporting them to veterinarians. They may also perform fluid therapy under veterinary supervision, in accordance with the Indonesian Minister of Agriculture Regulation No. 83, Chapter IV, Article 8 (2012), which defines paramedics’ duties in maintaining and caring for sick animals under veterinarian oversight.

Components for Assessment of Freedom from Fear and Distress

The assessment of animal welfare concerning freedom from fear and distress, conducted based on guidelines by Rantai (2018), revealed exemplary performance by veterinary paramedics in two critical areas. Firstly, staff demonstrated a 100% (“appropriate”) understanding of optimal animal density, ensuring that the individual and spacious cages at Klinik Gustavet provide adequate room for comfortable movement, a factor critical to welfare. This adherence is crucial, as Koey and Lim (2014) stipulate that paramedics must ensure animals can perform all natural postural movements, including standing and lying at full length, within their enclosure.

Table 12. Components for Assessment of Freedom from Fear and Distress

Component	Skor (%)
Are you aware of the minimum number of animals that should ideally be placed in a single cage to ensure comfort and welfare?	100
Do you know how to prevent aggressive behavior in cats during examination	100
Average	100

Remarks: *Average Description: 0%–49%: Approaching inappropriate, 50%–100%: Approaching appropriate

Components for Assessment of Freedom to Express Normal and Natural Behavior

The assessment of animal welfare concerning freedom to express normal and natural behavior was conducted based on the components established by Rantai (2018), as shown in Table 13. Staff provision of care and treatment suitable to each animal's needs achieved a score of 100%, categorized as "appropriate." Understanding animal behavior is essential for assessing welfare and detecting possible health issues when behavioral abnormalities occur (Hartuti *et al.* 2014). Providing proper care in an inpatient facility requires a thorough understanding of species-specific needs, including nutrition, environment, and behavior.

Table 13. Components for Assessment of Freedom to Express Normal and Natural Behavior

Component	Skor (%)
Do you consistently provide care and treatment appropriate to the animal's needs?	100
Are the animals provided with toys or objects that can stimulate their natural behavior?	0
Average	50

Remarks: *Average Description: 0%–49%: Approaching inappropriate, 50%–100%: Approaching appropriate

Paramedics play a key role in promoting animal welfare by delivering skilled, empathetic, and individualized care (Koey and Lim 2014). In contrast, staff provision of toys or objects to stimulate cats' natural behaviors scored 0%, categorized as "not appropriate." No enrichment tools or activities were provided to encourage play among hospitalized cats. According to Aqilah *et al.* (2020), offering toys or interactive objects can help reduce stress and enhance both physical and mental well-being during hospitalization.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

Conclusions

The animal welfare assessment based on the non-infectious animal inpatient facilities yielded an average score of 3.4, which falls into the moderate category. The animal welfare assessment based on the implementation of animal welfare by the non-infectious inpatient staff yielded an average score of 88%, which is included in the appropriate category.

Suggestion

Ensuring the fulfillment of the animal's physical and psychological needs, as well as environmental conditions that can stimulate the animal's natural behavior, such as providing toys, creating natural play areas resembling the animal's original environment, such as hiding

places, providing scratching posts and pads, and ensuring comfortable environmental conditions for the animal, such as a room temperature checklist.

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