



## **Category 1: Physical and Emotional**

### **MANDATORY**

**1.4 Every patient evaluation includes a pain assessment and assignment of a pain score, no matter the visit circumstance**

- Job Level (who should be able to perform the task)
  - o Veterinary technician or assistant – history
  - o Veterinarian – physical exam and diagnosis
- Special Skills Required
  - o Ability to take a thorough history
  - o Ability to perform a comprehensive physical exam

### **Equipment and Supplies**

May include but are not limited to:

- Colorado State University's Canine and Feline Acute Pain Scale
- University of Glasgow Short Form Composite Pain Score
- 2015 AAHA/AAFP Pain Management Guidelines for Dogs and Cats
- WASAVA Guidelines for Recognition, Assessment and Treatment of Pain

### **Examples and Compliance Paths**

History is taken by a veterinary technician/assistant and documented in the medical record (MR)

- Pain assessment begins with a history and includes general information regarding the patient's behavior at home such as:
  - o Eating
  - o Drinking
  - o Activity
  - o Grooming
  - o Sleeping
  - o Attitude
  - o Weight loss/gain
  - o Urination and defecation habits

Physical exam is performed by a veterinarian and documented in the MR

- Pain assessment continues with a thorough physical exam of body systems including:
  - o Ears, eyes, nose, mouth, throat
  - o Heart/lungs
  - o Gastrointestinal



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- Musculoskeletal
- Integument
- Neurologic
- Urogenital

Common signs of pain may include but are not limited to:

- Changes in patient's normal mentation (dull or aggressive)
- Changes in eating habits
- Vocalizing
- Licking or biting at a location of discomfort
- Limping
- Tense abdomen
- Disinterest in exercise or other social activities
- Reluctance or inability to use stairs
- Difficulty getting up or down
- Poor grooming habits
- Changes in muscle mass

Pain findings are then communicated to the client to formulate an appropriate treatment plan

### **Scoring**

Review of medical records for:

- Pain assessment history
- Physical exam of body systems

Observation of communication of:

- Pain findings with client
- Treatment plan where appropriate
- Can be done verbally or in writing



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