

## INSTITUTIONAL STATEMENT ON THE USE OF RESEARCH ANIMALS

**Vall d'Hebron Institut de Recerca (VHIR) and Vall d'Hebron Institut Oncologic (VHIO)** have joined the agreement on Openness on Animal Research, promoted from the Federation of Scientific Societies in Spain (COSCE), with the collaboration of the European Association of Research Animals (EARA), and launched on 20 September 2016.

We are convinced that animal experimentation plays a fundamental role in the discover of the underlying biological mechanisms of disease, and in the developing of medical treatments. Without research in animals, we would not have most of the medicines, antibiotics, vaccines and surgical techniques that are applied nowadays in human and veterinary medicine.

An important part of the research undertaken at **VHIR and VHIO** aims at contributing to the improvement of human health and wellbeing and is carried out thanks to the use of animals, for example for example in cancer studies, cardiovascular diseases, neurological diseases, infectious diseases, digestive and liver diseases, immune-mediated diseases, innovative therapies, research in surgery, obstetrics, genetics and pediatrics... etc.

The welfare of animals used for research purposes is of paramount relevance for **VHIR and VHIO**, and also the strict compliance and respect to the current legislation on the protection of animals used in research and for other scientific purposes, including education. Our aim is to achieve the highest standards in animal welfare, not only from the point of view of our moral responsibility on them, but also because we are convinced we could not achieve research excellence without proper animal welfare. Our experiments with animals follow the legal standard and are assessed by an Ethics Committee on Animal Experimentation that promotes the use of alternative methods, the reduction in the number of animals used and the refinement in the experimental protocols applied. Not a single research project requiring the use of animals could start without the appropriate and required Ethics assessment and the eventual authorization from the competent authorities.

**VHIR and VHIO** also ensures that the personnel involved in animal care and researchers do have the adequate education and training and the required professional skills, and that all resources are provided to properly keep research animals in terms of facilities, husbandry, wellbeing and veterinary care.