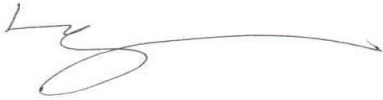


COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH OF OTTAWA COUNTY
Surveillance, Prevention and Control of Infection

CHAPTER: 11	SECTION: 4	SUBJECT: SURVEILLANCE, PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF INFECTION
TITLE: PET PROGRAM - BIRDS		
EFFECTIVE DATE: 2/15/99	REVIEWED/REVISED DATE: 04/30/02, 10/19/04, 11/01/05, 5/6/08, 12/14/09, 12/16/11, 2/18/13, 3/17/14, 3/17/15, 4/21/16, 4/20/17, 7/13/18, 9/9/19, 10/29/20; 05/01/21, 01/03/23	
ISSUED AND APPROVED BY:  EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR		

I. PURPOSE:

To establish procedures that ensure the selection of birds and their placement in programs or residential homes is carefully done with consideration for the consumer population, safety factors, colleagues, and standards of infection control.

II. APPLICATION:

To all Community Mental Health of Ottawa County (CMHOC) operated programs.

III. DEFINITIONS:

None Applicable.

IV. POLICY:

CMHOC supports and recognizes the therapeutic value of having birds in the community living area. Selection of a pet, its placement and maintenance in the program must be done carefully with consideration for the consumer population, safety factors, colleagues, and standards of infection control.

V. PROCEDURE:

1. With the approval of their supervisor, employees and groups of employees who request to maintain a bird must maintain it properly.
2. Birds must be confined to cages. Removing the bird from the cage for handling and free flight is not allowed.
3. No consumer shall directly handle or clean the bird or its cage.
4. Birds are housed in a wire cages that are cleaned on a regular basis to maintain sanitary conditions.
5. Employees who have contact with the birds and cages will be cautious due to possible transfer of microorganisms that may cause human illnesses.

Information About Bird Health

Keeping birds healthy and in good condition is largely a question of careful management for they are generally hardy, and robust.

Birds are normally lively. The first sign of illness may be when the bird is relatively quiet. This is particularly obvious to the regular caretakers who know the bird. If the bird is neglected, its condition will deteriorate rapidly. It may appear fluffed up and often

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sleeps more than usual, its head resting on the back and both feet gripping the perch. A healthy bird uses only one leg at a time to maintain its balance when resting. Depending on the illness there may be other specific signs: Feathers around the vent and head must be clean and not stained or matted in any way. A stained vent indicates digestive problems.

When problems arise:

1. Remove the bird from the community area.
2. Transfer to a warm environment.
3. Without delay, seek veterinarian's advice about possible treatment.

Organisms That May Affect Humans

1. Psittacosis is most frequently associated with parrots and parakeets, and can be contracted merely by breathing the air near a bird cage. Signs and symptoms resemble those of viral pneumonia. Splenomegaly is common. Diagnosis is through serological tests. Patient is often treated with Tetracycline.

Housing and Cleaning Procedure

1. Wire cages are the most popular housing. They often have a plastic base, clear or colored that are easy to clean. Wash base thoroughly with soap and water on a regular basis. Be sure no soap residue is left when rinsing with clean water.
2. Place cage in a draft free area, out of direct sunlight.
3. Provide natural perches, examine and replace as needed. Position perches so that the bird's tail does not constantly rub on the bars.
4. Sand sheets are recommended for the floor of the cage. Newspaper makes a good covering for the floor but in combination with the loose sand may be messy. If newspaper is used, avoid colored print, it could be poisonous and have an adverse affect on the birds.
5. Feed a well balanced commercially prepared bird food. Occasionally green food such as washed lettuce, spinach, etc. add variety to the diet. Grit and cuttlefish bone are staples.
6. Provide clean water and food on a daily basis.

VI. ATTACHMENT:

None

VII. REFERENCE:

APIC Mental Health Focus Group and BHC Standards for Behavioral Health Care (1997-1998).