



Friday, 24 February 2017

Dr Emmanuel (Emmanouil) Stamatakis
School of Public Health: Public Health; Sydney Medical School
The University of Sydney

Email: emmanouil.stamatakis@sydney.edu.au

Dear Dr Stamatakis

I am pleased to inform you that the University of Sydney Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) has approved your project entitled **“Physical and Affective Wellbeing Study of dog owners (PAWS): an observational semi-randomised controlled feasibility pilot trial”**.

Details of the approval are as follows:

Project Number: 2017/1134
Project Type: Privately owned animals
Project Duration: 16 February 2017 – 16 February 2020
Approval Period: **16 February 2017 – 16 February 2018**
Annual Report Due: 16 February 2018

In compliance with Section 27 of the NSW *Animal Research Act 1985*, this Animal Research Authority (ARA) remains in force for a period of 12 months from the date of issue, unless cancelled sooner.

Renewal of the ARA is conditional upon submission of a satisfactory annual report to the AEC in accordance with the *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition 2013*.

Authorised Personnel: Stamatakis Emmanuel (Emmanouil) (CI); Powell Lauren; Edwards Kate; McGreevy Paul; Bauman Adrian; Chia Debbie

Project Description:

There is very little empirical evidence on the influence of dog ownership on human health and there are hardly any controlled trials. This is mainly because dog ownership is not an intervention in the traditional sense that can be examined using conventional research designs. In a sample of 90-105 participants aged 18 and over, the main aim of the proposed pilot controlled trial will be to test the feasibility of the recruitment, group allocation, and measurement methods employed by a custom design semi-randomised controlled study investigating the effects of acquiring a dog on cardiometabolic and mental health and social connections in humans. Approximately 30-35 of our human participants will acquire a dog during the pilot. We do not interfere with participants' decisions in regards to buying or adopting a dog.

Knowing about the dog's weight status and physical activity levels as well as the owner's personal health and activity behaviours may help us to better understand the link between dog ownership and human health. So, we also aim to test the feasibility of measuring dog weight, using weighing scales, and daily activity, using a physical activity monitor applied to the dogs' collar. Both these measurements entail a minute risk to the welfare and wellbeing of the animals and minimal disruption to the animals' normal living. However, their use will make this study one of few in the field to record empirical data on the frequency and intensity of dog physical activity and associate this with dog obesity.



Documents Approved:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Document</u>
18/01/2017	Other	PAWS Master Questionnaire
18/01/2017	Other	Canine Body Condition Score and Body Fat Index Protocol
18/01/2017	Other	Weighing Dogs Protocol
18/01/2017	Information Statement	Modified PIS/PCF (lodged with HREC [2016/921])
11/01/2017	Other	Heyrex User Guide
11/01/2017	Other	Measurement Flow Figure (Q 3310.0)

Animals Approved:

Please refer to the document at the end of this letter, which details your approved animal usage and location(s).

Conditions of Approval

1. This project must be conducted according to the approved project including continuing compliance with the conditions outlined in this ARA and with the *Animal Research Act 1985*, *Animal Research Regulation 2010*, the *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th edition 2013* (the Code) and all other relevant legislation.
2. Any changes to the project must be approved by the AEC prior to their implementation. This includes notifying the AEC of any changes to named personnel, source of animals, animal numbers, location of animals and experimental procedures.
3. An annual progress report or completion report must be submitted on or before the anniversary of approval of the project.
4. All unexpected adverse events that may impact on the wellbeing of an animal must be reported to the AEC within 48 hours, as per Clause 2.1.5 [v] [d] and 2.4.34 [ii] in the Code. Please refer to the Animal Ethics website and log into IRMA to complete an Adverse Event form.
5. The AEC must be notified if rodents are required to be singly housed.
6. All animal enclosures (e.g. pens, cages and containers) must be clearly identified with chief investigator name, number of animals, DOB if provided and date of arrival, sex and strain.
7. The following documentation must be kept in the facility where your animals are housed or with you when undertaking fieldwork:
 - A copy of this ARA
 - Emergency contact details in case of an animal emergency
 - Approved monitoring records
8. Personnel working on this project must be sufficiently qualified by education, training and experience for their role, or adequately supervised.
All new investigators must successfully complete the Introduction to Animal Research (ITAR) course.
9. Data must be retained and stored in accordance with the relevant legislation and University guidelines.
10. The AEC will make regular announced inspections of all animal facilities and/or specific research projects. The Animal Welfare Veterinarian will be conducting unannounced inspections of all animal facilities and/or specific research projects.



11. Any drugs to be used for procedures involving animals must within date (not expired) and stored appropriately as per the manufacturer's recommendations. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all relevant and current authority for the use of restricted drugs is obtained.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Office at animal.ethics@sydney.edu.au should you require further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely

Dr Lois Cavanagh
Chair
Animal Ethics Committee
On behalf of the University of Sydney

The AEC is constituted and operates in accordance with the NSW Animal Research Act 1985 and its associated Regulations, the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition 2013 and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2007. All personnel named on the project should be conversant with these documents.



Animals Approved:

Country	State	Invasiveness	Location	Classification one	Classification two	Common/strain name	Approved	Total used to date
Australia	NSW	1. Observation involving no or minor interference	Other	Domestic mammals	Dogs	Dog	35	0