Ten years' experiences of IACUC in SNUH

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Since 2007 in Korea, animal testing facilities have been required to have the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC; the committee). Seoul National University Hospital (SNUH) has been running the committee since 2005. All animal experiments done in Yeon-gon medical campus should be reviewed by members of the committee. The committee evaluates and oversees the animal research protocol, institution's laboratory animal care and use programs, testing procedures, and facilities. It has the right to require animal laboratory operators and workers to take measures needed for the protection and humane care of laboratory animals. After the employment of an assistant administrator in 2014, the committee can perform its role to the fullest such as protocol review professionalism, communication between the committee and researchers, and consultation on animal testing models and protocols.

In SNUH, the number of protocol review increased more than twice over 10 years from 232 in 2005 to 574 protocols in 2014. As protocol submission has increased, the size of research projects, the content of experimentation, the type of animals used, and the major of the head researchers have been diversified. Operational effectiveness has been promoted by introducing a computerized review program in 2008 and expanding the organization into two committees. As a result, protocol review process has been efficient. In addition, SNUH animal research facility has met the international criteria for facility operation and management with the AAALAC accreditation since 2007.

The committee has been striving to become one of international hubs by leading the management of domestic integrated database, promotion of committee activities, and education. The committee will realize ideas, such as holding international seminars and supporting international study activities with respect to protocol review and humane care of laboratory animals.