



Professor Vanessa Barrs

Professor of Feline Medicine and Infectious Diseases
Sydney School of Veterinary Science &
Marie Bashir Institute, University of Sydney

Vanessa Barrs is Professor of Feline Medicine & Infectious Diseases in the Sydney School of Veterinary Science and the Marie Bashir Institute. She is also a registered Specialist in Feline Medicine, and was pivotal in the establishment and ongoing success of the Valentine Charlton Cat Centre, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2015. Vanessa is a one-health infectious diseases researcher particularly interested in pathogens of animals and humans, including fungi and viruses. In addition to over 100 refereed publications and book chapters, Vanessa is President of the International Society of Companion Animal Infectious Diseases.

[Dr Mark Kelman](#) will be presenting on behalf of Professor Barrs.

Abstract

Halting parvovirus outbreaks in Australian cats

Parvoviruses are highly contagious, environmentally resilient viruses that are often deadly to unvaccinated cats and dogs. They cause severe enteritis, dehydration, sepsis and death. Feline parvoviruses (FPVs) cannot infect dogs, but canine parvoviruses (CPVs) can jump from dogs to cats and vice-versa. Since 2013 there have been several large outbreaks of parvoviral disease in shelter-housed cats around Australia resulting in hundreds of deaths and temporary closure of some shelters.

Results will be shared from a study that was conducted to determine which viruses (CPVs or FPVs) have caused these outbreaks in shelter-housed cats and what factors have contributed to the “perfect storm” that has been brewing to result in the re-emergence of this preventable disease. The results of these study will inform the development of vaccination and biosecurity strategies in shelters to prevent further outbreaks.