Abstract

Stopping Parvovirus Pet Deaths in Custody

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.