

MEDIA RELEASE

15 October 2026



Progress for pets and people: CANA reports on a year of impact

12,769 adoptions, 3,518 animals returned to their owners and national advocacy to help people and pets stay together.

Companion Animal Network Australia (CANA) today released its 2025-26 Impact Report highlighting a year of care, advocacy and progress for pets and the people who love them.

CANA members facilitated 12,769 adoptions and returned 3,518 animals to their owners in 2025–26. Beyond rescue, fostering and adoption, members also provide care for more than 60,000 animals in the community each year, including reduced-cost or fully funded veterinary care and emergency boarding.*

Alongside its members' frontline care, CANA made government submissions advocating for funded in-home pet care assistance for older people and recognition of animals' needs in responses to family and domestic violence. It also developed practical resources to help aged care providers support people with pets.

Together, this work combines care for animals in need with national advocacy and practical support to help people and pets stay together.

"Rescue and adoption services are essential, but we also need to support people before they reach the point of surrendering a pet," said CANA Acting CEO Julie Jensen.

"Losing a much-loved animal can cause significant heartbreak and emotional distress. By helping people keep their pets, we can protect the human-animal bond and prevent the pain of unnecessary separation."

Helping pets stay with their people

CANA advocates for change across issues including rental housing, access to affordable veterinary care, ageing, homelessness and family and domestic violence. Its focus is on addressing the underlying barriers that can force people to give up their pets.

The report also identifies continuing challenges. Surrenders accounted for 32% of animals entering members' care, up from 25% the previous year, while renting issues accounted for 16% of surrenders, compared with 13% previously.

"For millions of Australians, pets are family. Yet the policies and services designed to support human wellbeing too often fail to recognise the important role pets play in people's lives," Ms Jensen said.



“When someone is facing housing difficulties, entering aged care, experiencing domestic and family violence or struggling to afford veterinary treatment, keeping their pet can become much harder. We need practical support and policies that recognise the importance of the human-animal bond and help people and their pets stay together.”

Support for ageing with pets

[CANA's 2025 Status of Pets in Aged Care Survey](#) found 96% of respondents believe aged care residents should be able to have pets. CANA advocates for pet care assistance to be included in funded in-home aged care and this year has developed more practical resources to help aged care providers to become pet-inclusive.

View, download and share CANA's Pet Friendly Aged Care resources at <https://petfriendlyagedcare.com.au>

Encouraging change in kitten intakes

The report also shows cats under six months old accounted for 34% of all cat intakes, compared with just over half the previous year. The lower proportion is an encouraging result and reinforces the importance of continued investment and education for desexing programs to prevent unwanted litters.

A national approach to lasting change

Drawing on its members' experience, CANA advocates nationally and develops practical solutions to help people and pets stay together. Its 2026–2029 Strategic Plan is guided by the One Welfare framework, recognising the interconnected wellbeing of people, animals and the environment.

Download CANA's 2025–26 Impact Report: <https://australiacan.org.au/media-center/>

** The annual community-care figure is based on member reporting of veterinary services, reduced-cost or fully funded veterinary care, and emergency boarding. Community-care averages were calculated using Animal Welfare League Queensland's FY 2024–25 data and Lort Smith's calendar year 2025 data.*

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MEDIA CONTACT

Caroline Zambrano PR Manager, Companion Animal Network Australia
0403 550 730 | media@australiacan.org.au or petjourn@gmail.com

ASSETS:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Ydl56-KDMGofzoRkw9IGaHOTAKLMhFLe?usp=sharing>

About Companion Animal Network Australia

Companion Animal Network Australia (CANA) is a registered charity and advocacy network representing companion animal welfare work nationwide. Our members provide rescue, shelter, re-homing, fostering, health care and enrichment services to more than 80,000 animals every year. Through national campaigns, partnerships and initiatives, we advocate for the human-animal bond and promote responsible pet ownership. We use our national voice to lobby for the humane treatment of all companion animals, and we rally support for our member programs that deliver high welfare standards. To discover more, visit www.australiacan.org.au, <https://petfriendlyagedcare.com.au/> and <https://rentwithpets.com.au/>