

# Study reduces euthanasia rates of cats

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Unwanted cats and kittens who have to be “put down” are the subject of a new study at The University of Queensland's Centre for Companion Animal Health.

PhD candidate Corinne Hanlon's research is collecting comprehensive data on homeless and unwanted [cats](#) to help reduce Australia's large number of cats currently being euthanised.

Currently, an estimated 60 percent of cats that enter Australian shelters

are euthanised, with the figure climbing higher in council pounds.

While strategies have been put in place in an effort to curb the euthanasia rates, including mandatory desexing, pet registrations and community awareness programs, rates have increased by 28 percent in the past year.

By working closely with RSPCA shelters across Australia, Ms Hanlon's research is specifically investigating the cat population entering shelters.

This data is being analysed to identify which factors have the greatest impact as to why cats and kittens end up in shelters.

“We are looking into specific factors such as demographics and the environment and whether the temperature, rainfall and day length have an effect on entry of cats and kittens to shelters, and if so, what factors are most influential,” Ms Hanlon said.

“Analysing the reasons why people surrender their cats and the human demographics of those who surrender will also allow us to determine if socio-economic status, housing situations or local legislation have any influence.

“Additionally, we are investigating the characteristics of these cats, for example, which cats are at a higher risk of euthanasia once in a shelter and what shelter factors improve the outcome for kittens and cats?”

The study will provide a comprehensive, nationwide view of the unwanted cat population, enabling shelters and government bodies to reduce the numbers of unwanted kittens born and cats entering shelters.

“Ultimately, our goal is the reduction of cat euthanasia through the development of targeted management strategies,” Ms Hanlon said.

Provided by University of Queensland ([news](#) : [web](#))

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