



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## National Research Shows Hamilton/Burlington SPCA on the Right Track for Cats

**Hamilton, ON (January 8, 2018)** – The Hamilton/Burlington SPCA (HBSPCA) is addressing key recommendations in a national report on the state of cat overpopulation in Canada – *Cats in Canada 2017. A Five Year Review of Cat Overpopulation*.

“Hamilton and area are no strangers to cat overpopulation”, says Marion Emo, CEO, HBSPCA. “However the recent report mirrors the experience in Hamilton indicating that ‘attitudes are shifting, spay neuter rates are going up and we’re seeing more cats with permanent ID’. These shifts are critical because there continues to be more cats and unwanted litters than there are homes for”.

The Report issued by the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies in December confirms that common practices to address overpopulation include high volume spay neuter, subsidized spay neuter, and spay neuter for street cats, and humane education to ensure all cats are healthy safe and wanted.

Too many neglected and abandoned cats do arrive in shelters. “No cat is rehomed without first having spay neuter surgery prior adoption”, says Karen Reichheld, Manager Animal Care and Adoptions at the HBSPCA. “And just as important are micro chipping and best practice cat rehabilitation and socialisation while in care for a healthy second chance home”.

“Donors and supporters are the change agents for healthy safe and wanted cats,” Emo goes on to say. “In 2017, the number of spay neuter surgeries for dogs and cats totalled 4,531 – cats making up 90% of all spay neuter surgeries. Our donors and supporters make this possible. With thanks to PetSmart Charities of Canada and grants in 2016 and 2017, a total of 1,900 cats in families with limited access to affordable services received subsidized spay neuter services.”

There is progress in Hamilton; cats are being valued more and getting the care they deserve. “At the same time”, M. Emo indicates, “the Report confirms that the costs of addressing cat overpopulation through charitable spay neuter programs is borne by donors, and veterinary partners who may be committing their time at a discount. Cat overpopulation is a community wide concern, and invites community wide collaborative solutions and resource contributions”

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For more information: [https://www.cfhs.ca/cats\\_in\\_canada\\_2017](https://www.cfhs.ca/cats_in_canada_2017)

Attachment: Recommendations to address Cat Overpopulation

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The Hamilton/Burlington SPCA is a non profit registered animal welfare charity. Donors and supporters sustain animal cruelty prevention and protection, animal care in our Companion Animal Hospital, kennels and foster homes, and outreach initiatives including child and youth programs and pet visiting. About 2,000 pet companions find their forever homes every year. The HBSPCA provided 4,531 spay neuter surgeries in 2017.

## Recommendations to Address the Cat Overpopulation

*Cats in Canada 2017. A Five Year Review of Cat Overpopulation*

Canadian Federation of Humane Societies(CFHS). 2017

	<b>CFHS Recommendation</b>	<b>Hamilton/Burlington SPCA</b>
1	Develop and promote education about the importance of spaying or neutering and about the cruelty and illegality of abandonment.	HBSPCA child and youth programs, public speaking engagements, and partnerships with neighbourhood groups all advance S/N for healthy, safe and wanted pets.
2	Municipalities communicate with other stakeholders to improve understanding of perspectives across stakeholder groups as well as collaborate and strategically align efforts.	HBSPCA and City of Hamilton collaborating on alignment of educational messages, bylaws, compliance and enforcement, and approaches to incentivize spay neuter.
3	Promote widespread and early sterilization prior to sexual maturity among owned cats to prevent unwanted litters that may be dumped.	The HBSPCA Companion Animal Hospital (CAH) practices early sterilization.
4	Make accessible affordable spay neuter (S/N) options available for lower socio economic demographics.	HBSPCA provides affordable S/N services, subsidized S/N services and S/N services for clients of the Community Veterinary Outreach Program (CVO), all with thanks to donors and supporters including PetSmart Charities of Canada.
5	Governments provide financial resources to accessible spay neuter initiatives rather than relying on charitable organizations, their donors and veterinary partners to fund this work.	
6	Organizations adopting out animals make every effort to spay neuter 100% of animals prior to adoption.	All HBSPCA adoptable pets have S/N surgery prior adoption (and receive vaccinations including rabies vaccination, preventative flea and deworming treatment and, a microchip).
7	All facilities consider capacity for care shelter management practices to reduce likelihood of illness in shelter, leading to euthanasia.	HBSPCA animal intake is guided by the resources available to provide optimal care.
8	Engage in successful TNR, based on sufficient resources, solid planning and community wide support to address the feral segment of the population.	HBSPCA pioneered TNR, provides S/N for street and feral cats at its Companion Animal Hospital and in participating vet clinics, and launched the Community Cat Network in with City of Hamilton for best practice TNR.
9	Provide education about how feeding feral or homeless at large cats in the absence of TNR or other spay/neuter initiatives increases overpopulation and related suffering.	TNR and colony cat guidelines guide colony caregiver practice and eligibility for registration.
10	Support research and adoption of non surgical sterilization methods for cats.	HBSPCA veterinary staff are linked with communities of practice to stay abreast of emerging practice. HBSPCA is an early adopter of best practice where the evidence is strong.