

Cherished Pets Foundation Annual Report 2020 - 2021

Organisation: Cherished Pets Foundation

ABN: 62 687 607 711

A message from our Chair

Cherished Pets Foundation supports the elderly, people living with disabilities and those experiencing mental illness, homelessness or fleeing family violence. We provide in-home community pet care volunteer services, emergency pet respite care and boarding, and veterinary care and support, and so much more... By supporting the health and wellbeing of pets, we reduce pet owner anxiety and increase overall health and wellbeing.

The number of people experiencing loneliness and isolation in our community this year increased as a result of social restrictions and lockdowns and rates of family violence, homelessness and mental health issues have increased significantly also.

The need for our support has increased significantly in the community.

Our volunteer services were suspended for much of the year and we have also experienced a reduction of available volunteers.

In addition to this, our general donations reduced as people in the community were 'doing it hard'.

But there also have been many highlights in our work!

The Board has continued its commitment to the work of the Foundation and I am grateful for their significant contribution during these challenging times. Thank you to Alicia, Helen, Jen, Mel and Nat for all you do for the Foundation.

Our sub-committees have continued to meet and I would like to thank Board members for their work on these and also to thank Alyson

Dyer for her voluntary contribution to the Fundraising Committee as an external expert. We have worked hard to engage with the community, develop and maintain partnerships and raise funds during these 'virtual' times. The Governance Committee and Finance Committee have also continued on with their work in supporting the Foundation.

I refer you to the Annual Report for a detailed overview of the Foundation's achievements and challenges.

We were granted funding to employ an Executive Officer from January – June this year. The focus of this position was to develop organisational capacity, to support the Board to develop partnerships, to increase revenue to support our work and to re-start the Volunteer program as it had been impacted by Covid. I am grateful to Nat for the work that she did while in this role, which has put us in a stronger position moving forward.

We have worked particularly hard to develop and implement our Veterinary Social Work program and I have been privileged to be actively involved in this innovative initiative. A key part of this has been having four social work students from Deakin University undertake their field education placement with us this year – a total of 2000 hours!. Two of these students, Alyce and Esther, went on to join our team part-time as our first qualified Social Workers, providing both case management and service package delivery in often very challenging circumstances. They have both contributed immensely to the work of the Foundation and the wider Cherished Pets organisation

and go above and beyond what is expected of them in this new role. Thank you!

Finally, I would like to thank everybody who is involved with Cherished Pets Foundation. Again, Alicia and Nat, your contribution cannot be over-estimated and we are very grateful for the work that you do. Thank you also to our community vets, community vet nurses, veterinary social workers and others involved with the work of the Foundation

and the wider Cherished Pets organisation. Also, thank you to our many supporters – our volunteers, donors, sponsors and wider community. We could not do what we do without you!

I am hopeful that this year will be a better year for us all and that the Foundation will continue to grow its work in the community. There is much to do and we are in a great position to do it!

Judy Wookey, Chair

The Cherished Pets Foundation Board

Judy Wookey, Chair

Helen Butteriss, Treasurer

Jen O'Dwyer, Secretary

Alicia Kennedy, Founder

Natalie Davey, Member

Mel Twomey, Member

Introduction and Executive Summary

It has been another extraordinary year. A year where we can say that companion pets played an important role in the wellbeing of all pet owners. The COVID-19 lockdowns during 2020 and 2021 resulted in many vulnerable pet owners feeling more worried and isolated than before.

Cherished Pets services were in demand and valued by pet owners, who at times were dealing with some big challenges. By caring for the health and wellbeing of their pets, we reduced pet owner anxiety, increasing their overall happiness and wellbeing.

The implementation of our new veterinary social work model has provided the framework to increase the vulnerable pet owners we can support. By investing time in reviewing and improving our processes, and developing a true holistic care model with the introduction of skilled social workers, we were able to widen our area of service to include more complex human-animal cases. Building on our veterinary social work capacity has expanded our expertise to not only support the elderly and disabled pet owners but also pet owners experiencing physical or mental health crisis, insecure housing or family violence.

Again, this year we have seen an increasing need for pet respite care for people in crisis. This is partly due to the increased incidence of mental illness and family violence coinciding with the pandemic as well as a shortage in affordable, pet friendly housing.

Cherished Pets successfully partnered with RMIT to complete two research projects looking at the importance of pets in the lives of older people and exploring ways to reduce loneliness and isolation through our pets.

We have provided social work placement opportunities for four more Deakin University social work students. They bring energy, enthusiasm, ideas and skills that improve our services and support our community.

We continue to build our capacity to meet the community demand, our expertise in fundraising and connecting with partners to better support the needs of vulnerable pet owners and their pets.



Community Pet Care Program

In 2020-2021, the CPF community pet care program was interrupted by COVID travel limits and lockdowns. We continued to support 37 vulnerable pet owners to care for their pets following COVID-safe protocols. Many of the pet owners supported were women living alone (70%), 19% were men living alone, 11% were couples or had family. 76% of pet owners are seniors on an aged care pension and 32% of the have a physical or mental health disability.







Volunteers

Thank you to our dedicated volunteers for their enduring support and adaptability over another unusual year. We appreciate the time given by all our volunteers whilst also juggling home and work commitments, and with the additional challenges created by the pandemic. Our volunteer team was faced with on again - off again pet care visits this year as we went into and out of lockdowns. The unpredictability had an impact on our volunteer program and we saw a drop in volunteer numbers at the end of 2020.

At the start of 2021 things were looking more optimistic and we actively recruited volunteers with the assistance of our newly appointed Volunteer Coordinator, Alyce Evans. Volunteer

This year more beneficiaries have needed hospital admission for physical and mental health concerns, and we expanded our services to include support for beneficiaries fleeing family violence or in insecure housing because of a shortage of affordable, pet-friendly housing. As a result, we have seen a four-fold increase in the need for respite care with over 835 nights of care provided for 20 pets.

enquiries gradually increased and although the number of enquiries were similar to the previous year, fewer completed the application process and our volunteer numbers have not been fully replenished. The demand for emergency pet respite care has continued to grow putting pressure on our team of respite carers, who went above and beyond when welcoming pets into their homes. The growing need for respite care can be partly attributed to an increase in beneficiaries requiring hospitalisation and widening the eligibility criteria to support people experiencing family violence and housing insecurity.

-  **52** volunteers are registered; 26 are actively volunteering; 26 are available
-  **3** volunteers resigned
-  **98** volunteer enquiries were received between July 2020 and June 2021. Of these, 76 did not proceed with their application beyond the initial enquiry.
-  Volunteers completed **606** hours (excluding voluntary veterinary support and care)
-  Nearly three quarters of our volunteers (73%) have been volunteering for more than 2 years, 17 % for between 1 and 2 years, 10% for less than a year.
-  The primary volunteer role is community pet care (73%) and 29% offer respite pet care. The primary task performed by all community pet carers was dog walking

"Excellent care and work they do. Positive changes made to mine and my dog's life."
Cherished Pets
Foundation beneficiary.

"Just very blessed to get into the program and to have my dog looked after and cared for by people who do it and look after the pets for the love of it. They are very caring. They are like good friends." Cherished Pets
Foundation beneficiary

Veterinary Social Work



This year Cherished Pets focussed on developing and implementing Cherished Pets’ unique Veterinary Social Work model of care.

Veterinary Social Work (VSW) is an exciting new approach that attends to human need that can arise in the intersection of veterinary medicine and social work practice. At its core is a strong focus on the human-animal bond.

VSW encompasses the four pillars of:

- Animal-assisted interventions
- Compassion fatigue
- Animal-related grief & bereavement
- The link between human-animal violence.

Our VSW model evolved from the service improvement project funded with a grant from the Jack Brockhoff Foundation. The project’s aim was to review and improve processes with a focus on developing a suite of pet care service packages and strengthening our risk management. While working on this project, it became clear that our intended goals were a key component of a bigger picture service model. Through our strategy planning process, we identified the need for a VSW model that included the pet care service packages as a resource.

The VSW model was developed and trialled with Deakin University social work students on work placement at Cherished Pets. Two part-time veterinary social workers were then engaged in December 2020 to continue to develop and provide case management and service package delivery.

Changing to our VSW service model has led to:

- capacity to respond to more than twice the number of enquiries per week
- reduction in the rate of enquiries declined or referred on to other agencies by 10%

- assisting 30% more vulnerable pet owners and pets
- reduced costs per vulnerable pet owner by nearly 25%
- reduced case management hours per pet owner by 40%

Pet care plans and agreements were completed for 45 vulnerable pet owners registered for Foundation support. Improvements in our efficiency and capability to handle more cases reduced the average cost per case whilst maintaining the quality of services and benefits for pet owners and their pets. Most pet owners who responded to our 2021 survey said they received health benefits from owning a pet (82%), felt less stressed with their pet (88%), and were happier (94%), less lonely (94%) and felt safer (76%) because of their pet. Consolidating the key indicators for pet owner wellbeing and the bond with their pet, the average wellbeing of pet owners was at 71% and the average human-animal bond strength was at 81%. Owners said their pets were in good health (76%), up to date with their vaccinations (82%) and getting regular walks (82%). The average score for pet wellbeing was 66%.

In 2020, we observed an impact on pet owner wellbeing due to the Covid-19 social restrictions. Nine pet owners surveyed during a lockdown in June 2020 said that they felt more worried and isolated. However, we can infer from responses to surveys in 2019 and 2021 that their pets would have been a comfort to them during a worrying time.

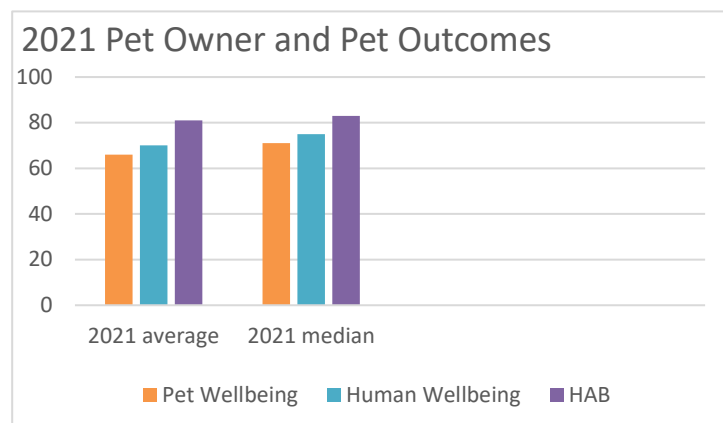


Table 1: Survey responses from Foundation beneficiaries

	2019 survey (n=18)	2020 Covid- 19 survey (n = 9)	2021 survey (n=17)
HUMAN WELLBEING			
When I am feeling stressed, being with my pet calms me down			88%
My pet provides emotional assistance	72%		
I am a happier person because of my pet	100%		94%
My pet keeps me from feeling lonely			94%
Having a pet makes me feel safer			76%
I have found health benefits from owning a pet			82%
Participating in Cherished Pet's program means I worry less about providing for my pet's needs	83%		
Participating in Cherished Pet's program means I worry less about my pet if something happens to me	72%		
In June 2020, during COVID-19 lockdown I felt worried		67%	
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT			
My pet(s) have helped me develop better relationships with other people			65%
The social aspects of volunteer visits are valuable	83%		
My pet helps me meet new people			71%
Meeting other pet owners and volunteers through Cherished Pets is valuable	67%		
My pet and I were very affected by the suspension of volunteer visits		72%	
In June 2020, during COVID-19 lockdown I felt isolated		78%	
RELATIONSHIP WITH MY PET (human-animal bond)			
I consider my pet as my family	94%		100%
My pet is my best friend	94%		88%
PET WELLBEING			
I would rate my pet's health as good or excellent			76%
My pet gets at least 5 walks a week			82%
My pet has been vaccinated in the last 12 months			82%
Participating in Cherished Pet's program has improved the health of my pet	78%		
Participating in Cherished Pet's program has improved the happiness of my pet	89%		

Veterinary Social Work student placements

For the second year Cherished Pets offered work placements for two Deakin University Bachelor of Social Work students. The students explored various aspects of veterinary social

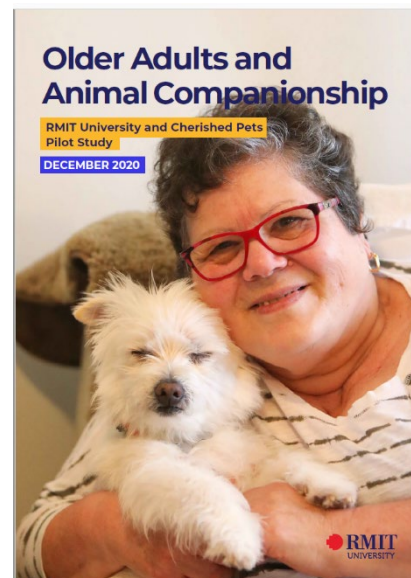
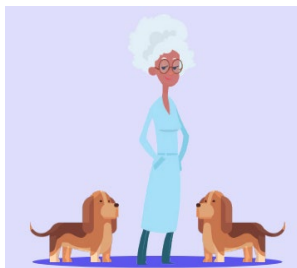
work with a focus on case management, inclusiveness, community engagement, self-care.

Older Adults and Animal Companionship Report

Cherished Pets' concern for the increasing worry and isolation experienced by elderly pet owners throughout the COVID lockdowns led to a collaborative pilot project with digital ethnographer Larissa Hjorth and media researcher Ingrid Richardson from RMIT. The pilot study explored the experiences, perceptions, and practices of Cherished Pets' beneficiaries and volunteers over 2020,

culminating in publication of the report *Older Adults and Animal Companionship*.

Describing 'stories from the field', the work captured the value of pets in enhancing the lives of older adults, particularly those living alone, framing the importance of animal companions during the pandemic as integral to these older people's wellbeing.



Pet Playing 4 Placing Making

Another collaborative project with RMIT, supported by a grant from the Give Where You Live Foundation, commenced this year. PhD student Jacob Sheahan worked with Cherished Pets and our community on the project Pet Playing 4 Placemaking to improve social inclusion and connection amongst older pet owners during and after COVID-19 restrictions. The research team co-designed with community members a novel community-based, placemaking game called Pet Pals, drawing on the power of pets to connect people. The project was conducted over three

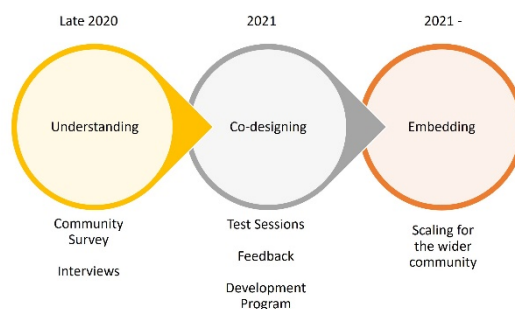


phases of understanding, co-design and embedding. The first phase was a community survey to understand how the pandemic affected social engagement and learn about community characteristics, community engagement and pet responsibilities. Responses to the survey were used to inform design of the Pet Pals game. The game makes use of a treasure-hunt application with players using mobile technology and personal devices to complete challenges and locate markers in their local area. The Cherished Pets community actively participated in testing iterations of the game and providing feedback on their experience.

Through this project, we have begun to form a picture of companionship, social wellbeing, and the pandemic for the community and enabled and fostered opportunities for social

connection and reduced isolation. As well as offering a fun way to learn with technology and promote a broader awareness of our work and the community we support.

The game is still being refined and the final embedding phase scaling this work for community-wide use is planned for 2022.



Community Pet Hub & the Calm Room

The Cherished Pets Community Hub in Ocean Grove now has expanded to two spaces: a vet clinic at 65 Madeley Street and our Community Hub and grooming salon at 69 Madeley Street. Supported and funded by Kings Funerals, one of our enthusiastic Deakin social work students coordinated the design of our Calm Room at this site. It is a peaceful space that is welcoming to all and has been designed to be inclusive of

neurodiversity and to provide a gentle and safe place to grieve the loss of a cherished pet. In honour of the pets who have crossed the rainbow bridge, there is also a dedicated area at the Community Hub to display photos of our pets and light a candle to reflect on their beautiful souls and the memories we shared with them.



Fondly remembering

Over the year we have sadly said goodbye to some cherished people and pets. We send love to their friends and family, and we will dearly hold their memories in our hearts.



Supporters and Sponsors

Cherished Pets Foundation would not have been able to provide services to the community in 2020-2021 without the financial and in-kind support of generous organisations and individuals.

We express sincere gratitude for this support that has ensured the provision and development of our services for vulnerable pet owners.

Cherished Pets Community Veterinary Care

Cherished Pets Community Veterinary Care (CPCVC) plays a special and significant role in supporting Cherished Pets Foundation (CPF) and the beneficiaries of the Foundation.

CPCVC's provision of services and client base has grown over the year. It retains its world-first status as a certified veterinary B Corp, defined and guided by its social and environmental impact. CPCVC's purpose of enabling the benefits of healthy companion pets to be accessible to everyone is delivered through its partnership with CPF.

CPCVC is integral for providing affordable veterinary services for vulnerable and disadvantaged pet owners; coordinating the volunteer program; providing project

management; engaging in research initiatives; fundraising; and providing a welcoming community space at the Pet Hub.

Over \$30k of pro bono services and products are contributed annually by CPCVC in community vet nursing home visits, pet wellness programs, veterinary services, medications and supplies, and case coordination. The continued growth of CPCVC has helped to sustain the support of CPF beneficiaries when other fundraising streams were diminished.

We want to again recognise and thank the CPCVC team for ensuring that CPF beneficiaries and their pets have access to excellent care, even during the pandemic lockdown periods.

A special thank you also goes to the following organisations and individuals

Grants

Pets Regardless Foundation

Jack Brockhoff Foundation

Give Where You Live Foundation

All Saints Anglican Church Opportunity Shop

The Dove Opportunity Shop

Supporters

Advanced Pet Care

Air Adventure Australia

Bellarine Business Advisors

Cherished Pets Community Veterinary Care

Dalmatian Driving School

Driftwood Café

Edenhills Pet Cemetery

Great Ocean Road Photography

Happy Paws Professional Dog Training

Kings Funerals

Moo Media

Mast Lawyers

Newtown Veterinary Clinic

Pawtastic Paws

Press Here

We would also like to thank ALL our private donors who have contributed generously over the year.

Financial Report



Income and Expenditure Statement

Cherished Pets Foundation For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
Income		
Grant - Give Where You Live	7,145	-
Grant - Jack Brockhoff Foundation	10,000	2,000
Grant - Kings Funeral Pets Bereavement Room	2,000	-
Grant - Pets Regardless Foundation	31,051	51,875
Pet Stock Assist	-	5,083
DSS - Volunteer	-	4,918
Non Acquittal Grants	-	1,000
Non Acquittal Donations	23,459	34,849
Total Income	73,655	99,726
Gross Surplus	73,655	99,726
Other Income		
Interest received	14	50
Total Other Income	14	50
Expenditure		
Bank Fees and Interest	372	239
DSS - Volunteer Expenses	-	4,918
General expenses	1,145	-
Grant - Give Where You Live Expenses	6,495	-
Grant - Jack Brockhoff Foundation Expenses	10,000	2,000
Grant - Kings Funeral Pets Bereavement Room Expenses	2,000	-
Grant - Pets Regardless Foundation Expenses	3,490	51,875
Grant - Pets Regardless Foundation Senior Project Manager Expenses	27,561	-
Insurance	3,676	2,827
Non Acquittal Donations - Reimbursement Perpetual Grant	1,618	-
Non Acquittal Donations - Cherished Pets Packages	10,947	39,042
Police Checks	294	-
Printing and stationery	-	1,025
Telephone	552	552
Travel expenses	652	304
Total Expenditure	68,804	102,783
Current Year Surplus/ (Deficit) Before Income Tax Adjustments	4,864	(3,007)
Current Year Surplus/(Deficit) Before Income Tax	4,864	(3,007)
Net Current Year Surplus After Income Tax	4,864	(3,007)

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.



Assets and Liabilities Statement

Cherished Pets Foundation As at 30 June 2021

	NOTES	30 JUN 2021	30 JUN 2020
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents		23,994	42,355
GST		7,553	2,211
Total Current Assets		31,547	44,566
Total Assets		31,547	44,566
Liabilities			
Other Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable		46	879
Grants carried forward		17,647	34,698
Total Other Current Liabilities		17,693	35,576
Total Liabilities		17,693	35,576
Net Assets		13,854	8,989
Foundation Funds			
Capital Reserve		13,854	8,989
Total Foundation Funds		13,854	8,989

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.



Compilation Report

Cherished Pets Foundation For the year ended 30 June 2021

Compilation report to Cherished Pets Foundation.

We have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements of Cherished Pets Foundation, which comprise the asset and liabilities statement as at 30 June 2021, income and expenditure statement, the statement of cash flows, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes. The specific purpose for which the special purpose financial statements have been prepared is set out in Note 1.

The Responsibility of the Committee Member's

The committee of Cherished Pets Foundation are solely responsible for the information contained in the special purpose financial statements, the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information and for the determination that the basis of accounting used is appropriate to meet their needs and for the purpose that financial statements were prepared.

Our Responsibility

On the basis of information provided by the partners we have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements in accordance with the basis of accounting as described in Note 1 to the financial statements and APES 315 *Compilation of Financial Information*.

We have applied our expertise in accounting and financial reporting to compile these financial statements in accordance with the basis of accounting described in Note 1 to the financial statements. We have complied with the relevant ethical requirements of APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*.

Assurance Disclaimer

[Required if this report has not been audited]

Since a compilation engagement is not an assurance engagement, we are not required to verify the reliability, accuracy or completeness of the information provided to us by management to compile these financial statements. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or a review conclusion on these financial statements.

The special purpose financial statements were compiled exclusively for the benefit of the committee who are responsible for the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information used to compile them. We do not accept responsibility for the contents of the special purpose financial statements.

Independence

We are not independent of Cherished Pets Foundation because we are a director of the Foundation.

Bellarine Business Advisors

Helen Butteriss B Com , CPA

Dated: / /

Stories of People and Pets

Dolores and Bugsy

Dolores lives on her own in government housing accommodation. She is retired and since leaving work she has become more disconnected from her local community. Her small dog Bugsy is her closest companion. Dolores became a beneficiary of Cherished Pets Foundation (CPF) over 3 years ago because her health conditions have left her living with chronic pain and limited mobility, which meant she couldn't walk Bugsy. Prior to COVID, Dolores and Bugsy were visited weekly by CPF volunteer Tracey to walk Bugsy, and often she stayed for a coffee and chat with Dolores. However, when volunteer home visits were suspended due to social restrictions, Dolores felt more isolated, worried, and disconnected from the community. "My dog looks forward to the volunteer coming. I am worried, I am older, I haven't been out. I miss the volunteer visiting." Tracey also missed their regular contact. To help keep them connected over the last year they were invited to participate in the Pet Playing 4 Placemaking (PP4P) project, Dolores and Tracey were able to keep connected as well as interact with the game development team and they helped with the design and testing of the technology and the treasure-hunt game, Pet Pals. The technology assisted Dolores and Tracey to connect remotely in a COVID-safe way. Tracey said that "On the days when Bugsy wears the

GoPro, Dolores might get to see Bugsy



exploring parts of the local town that she never gets to, or perhaps she'll see him interacting with other dogs. But most importantly, she gets to see how much he is enjoying himself." This way Dolores could feel involved in Bugsy's walk, even though she's not physically there. Dolores and Bugsy have had further health challenges this year and Cherished Pets' "Team Bugsy" have all pitched in to look after them both. While our vets took care of Bugsy's health, our vet social workers and volunteer Tracey regularly checked in on Dolores. Tracey has helped out Dolores and Bugsy by providing respite care for Bugsy in her home and taking him to grooming and veterinary appointments. Bugsy is now getting twice the love with Tracey providing him with a home away from home.

Support for a family in crisis

The phone rings and it is a case worker from a social service agency in Geelong. She needs urgent help for a woman with two children and two dogs so they can leave a partner threatening to harm them. The case worker has found safe temporary accommodation for the mother and her children in a women's refuge but the refuge does not accept pets. The woman is refusing to leave the home because she is afraid for the safety of the dogs who are part of her family and have provided her and

the children with emotional support and comfort during their difficult time in a violent household.

The response

Cherished Pets Veterinary Social Work Care Team arrange with the case worker to support the dogs. The CP Care Team needs to urgently find somewhere to board the dogs so that the woman and children can leave today. At such short notice, the CP Care Team must respond

quickly on very limited information. Working with the woman's case worker, arrangements are made to safely transfer the dogs into Cherished Pets' care.

Meeting at an agreed confidential location the CP Care Team meet the dogs for the first time and get an initial indication of their health and behaviour status. The dogs are unvaccinated because the owner could not afford to pay the vet and she has not been able to take the dogs to a vet without her partner's consent. Both dogs are anxious as the situation is unfamiliar and they don't know what is happening. One of the dogs is very nervous and needs to be approached cautiously. The experienced CP Care Team transport the dogs to the CPCVC vet clinic to be checked by a vet.

At the clinic the dogs are vaccinated and treated for fleas and intestinal worms. The most nervous dog also has a skin condition that needs medication. While the dogs are being checked over, the CP Care Team is busy seeking short-term boarding for the dogs.

Finding suitable boarding is difficult because there are two dogs, they are anxious, and their vaccinations weren't up to date. A boarding kennel will not take the dogs unless their vaccinations are current and it has been more than 7 days since the most recent vaccination was administered. The CP Care Team spend hours on the phone trying to find a safe place for the dogs. The Team doesn't have any luck finding a suitable volunteer to offer respite care in their home, so they keep searching other networks.

The CP Care Team locate a boarding kennel out of the local region that has quarantine pens and can take the dogs. This is a safe option for the dogs but Cherished Pets will need to pay the boarding fee.



Once the dogs have completed their vet check they are transported to the kennel along with a supply of food, medication and an anti-anxiety pack to help calm the dogs during the trip and settle in on their arrival. The dogs are safely housed at the kennel and the CP Carer drives home.

It doesn't end there. The CP Care Team contact the boarding kennel daily and provide reports to the owner, via her case worker, to let her know the dogs are safe. This gives the owner much needed peace of mind. The CP Care Team also keep track of the owner's progress through regular communication with her case worker to help plan the ongoing care needs of the dogs.

Whilst in the boarding kennel one of the dogs has a health incident needing veterinary care. As the boarding kennel is over 100 km away, the CP Care Team arranges and pays for a vet nearer to the kennels to visit and treat the dog.

After 3 weeks' stay at the kennels, the dog's owner has found safe, pet-friendly accommodation and the CP Care Team drives back to the boarding kennel to collect the dogs, taking them to a confidential location to be reunited with their relieved family