

# Hospital for Small Animals

Could your cat be a  
blood donor?



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH  
The Royal (Dick) School  
of Veterinary Studies

# Welcome to the Feline Blood Transfusion Unit

At the Hospital for Small Animals we treat many critical patients. A blood transfusion is often needed to save a cat's life. For example, it could be required after a road traffic accident, if a cat requires major surgery or when there is an infection or disease that causes the body to attack the red blood cells.

We are looking for healthy cats that could be feline blood donors. Have a look inside to see whether your cat would be a suitable candidate!

# Do you think your cat could be a potential candidate?

Here are a few simple guidelines as to what is required of our donors:

- Between 1-8 years old
- Weigh at least 4kg
- Up to date with vaccines, worming and flea treatment
- Healthy and not on any medication
- Easy to handle
- Should not have travelled abroad

Our donors are very valuable to us and in return they benefit from:

- Health and temperament check annually and before every donation
- Free blood tests (blood typing and annual standard blood examination)
- Free annual scan of the heart

If you would like to know more, or think your cat is a suitable candidate, please contact the Transfusion Unit via **hfsablooddonors@ed.ac.uk** or call **0131 650 7650**.

Owners who want to enrol their cat as a possible donor will be invited for a health and temperament check by members of our Transfusion Unit. If cats are considered suitable candidates, a blood sample will be collected for blood typing and general health check. Cats will also undergo a free heart scan.

# What happens during a blood donation?

Your cat will be taken to a quiet room where a physical examination will be performed by a vet. A small area will be clipped on the leg to allow clean catheterisation of the vein and a very small amount of blood will be taken from here during placement to check the cat is healthy to donate.

The neck will be clipped for the donation and a local anaesthetic cream applied to minimise discomfort.

We always try to avoid sedation during the procedure, but it may be necessary depending on the cat's temperament. After the donation, food and fluid therapy will be given to support the donor cat.

The donation itself only takes 10-15 minutes, and the complete procedure around 4-5 hours. Cats can be dropped off and collected at the owner's convenience.



Our donor Hobbes during blood donation.



Belle receiving a blood transfusion.

## **The story of Salvo and his brother Calogero**

Salvo was presented to our Emergency and Critical Care Service with a blocked bladder and urinary tract infection. His bladder was very inflamed causing a lot of blood loss and he became severely anaemic, meaning an urgent blood transfusion was required. His blood was type A, which is the most common feline blood type. Sadly none of the cats on our donor list were available, but luckily Salvo's brother Calogero fitted our donor requirements and was also blood type A.

He graciously donated blood and saved his brother's life! Salvo's red blood cell level recovered completely thanks to the transfusion and supportive care. He was soon reunited at home with Calogero and the rest of his family.



Calogero after he donated blood.

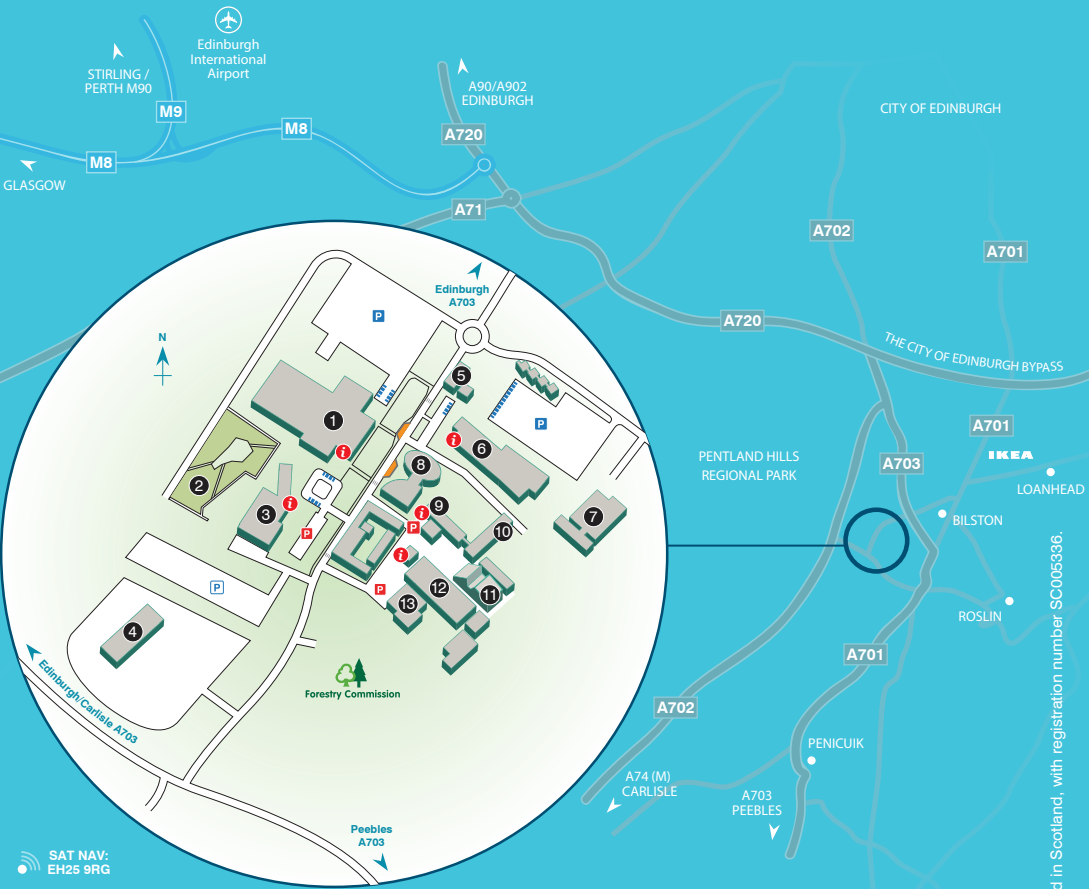


Salvo during a recheck visit at the HfSA  
1.5 months after his blood transfusion.

# Feline Blood Transfusion Unit

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- 1. Veterinary Teaching Building
- 2. Community Garden
- 3. The Hospital for Small Animals and Riddell-Swan Veterinary Cancer Centre
- 4. The Bumstead Building
- 5. Campus Service Centre
- 6. The Roslin Institute
- 7. The Greenwood Building
- 8. The Charnock Bradley Building
- 9. Farm Animal Practice
- 10. Global Academy of Agriculture and Food Security
- 11. Equine Diagnostic, Surgical and Critical Care Unit
- 12. Equine Hospital and Practice
- 13. Farm Animal Hospital

- P Overflow parking
- Disabled parking
- i Main entrance & reception
- Bus stop
- P Client parking
- P Parking

**The Power of Three:** The unique offering of Excellence in Clinical, Teaching and Research make up the three pillars of The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

As part of The University of Edinburgh, the Hospital of Small Animals is a not-for-profit organisation.