



**BUILDING A**  
*brighter*  
**FUTURE FOR *pets***

ADVANCING CRITICAL CARE AND SPECIALTY SERVICES  
AT THE ONTARIO VETERINARY COLLEGE

UNIVERSITY  
*of* GUELPH

IMPROVE LIFE.

# SAVING *lives*

When faced with a medical crisis with a beloved pet, nothing else matters. There are many emotions that follow the uncertainty these life and death moments bring: shock, fear, panic, desperation, guilt...but also hope.

Critical care is the beating heart of a tertiary referral hospital.

The days are demanding. The nights can be long. But there's no other place that our veterinary team would rather be than on the frontlines, battling alongside the animals that come through our doors—working tirelessly each day with one goal in mind: saving lives.

The Intensive Care Unit (ICU) is a place of hope.

Each day is unpredictable and at any given time our interdisciplinary team of veterinary professionals tend to and monitor up to 25 patients in a small and crowded space. In a flurry of activity, diagnoses are made, lifesaving emergency procedures are delivered, phone calls to pet owners are in-progress and rounds are underway.

Everyone working furiously to help pets – like Daisy.



Patient Daisy received lifesaving medical care in the Intensive Care Unit at the Ontario Veterinary College.

## DAISY'S STORY

Daisy came to the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) like many patients on hot summer days. Patients experiencing heat stroke often need to be placed on a ventilator for up to four days — Daisy spent 10 days in OVC's ICU.

“Immediately we felt like we were in good hands. The team was doing everything that they could to help Daisy,” says Daisy's owner.

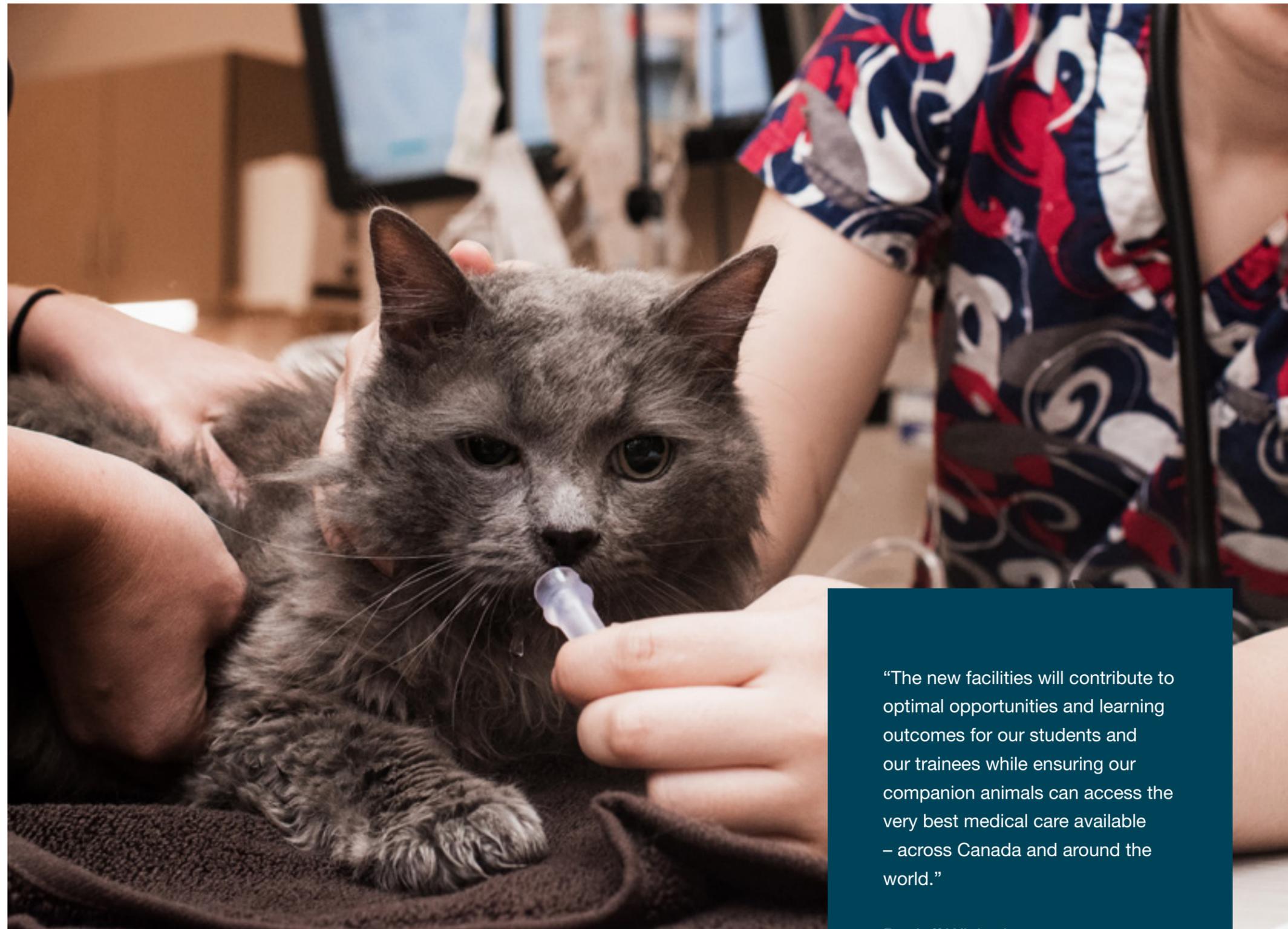
Daisy survived because of lifesaving care she received at OVC.” The team at OVC was there to help Daisy and to help us,” says her owner. “What we usually talk about is the level of dedication of the people that work there, these people that dedicate their whole lives to helping animals.”

## CRITICAL *care*

OVC created the very first veterinary emergency and critical care unit in Canada. At the time it was one of only a few operating in North America.

Over the past year, our team of veterinary specialists and trainees managed more than 21,000 companion animal patient visits, like Daisy, many arriving in critical condition. Sixty per cent of pets referred to OVC are in need of the complex, critical or specialty veterinary care OVC provides.

We have seen a sharp increase in cases and the rising count has resulted in OVC's ICU teetering on the edge of its capacity. Consequently, there have been some instances when we have had to close our doors to less critical patients that can be managed elsewhere.



Emergency and critical care patient receives oxygen therapy in the ICU at the Ontario Veterinary College.

“The new facilities will contribute to optimal opportunities and learning outcomes for our students and our trainees while ensuring our companion animals can access the very best medical care available – across Canada and around the world.”

Dr. Jeff Wichtel  
Professor and Dean  
Ontario Veterinary College  
University of Guelph

# EXPANDING *hope*

The expansion and creation of new spaces for critical care and specialty services at OVC is urgent and essential to continue to help the sickest of the sick, bring the medicine of tomorrow to our patient's bedside and allow OVC to keep pace with the modernization of health care.

Our facilities offer more than just medicine; our veterinary teams are the guardians of our most critical patients. Improvements to OVC's critical care and specialty units will enable our team to focus on delivering best-in-class care for all of our patients.

Your support of this expansion will help us create a new vision for critical care in Canada.



A patient closely monitored after treatment by the care team in the ICU at the Ontario Veterinary College.

## THE RENOVATIONS WILL:

- ✓ Dedicate space (1857 sqft) for veterinary emergency services, which previously coexisted within the ICU itself.
- ✓ Expand the ICU to a larger, newly renovated space (2231 sqft), increasing capacity by 50 per cent.
- ✓ Create a flexible space to adapt to patient care needs, accommodating various configurations of dog and cat kennels to minimize stress.
- ✓ Provide a dedicated workspace for the medical team with clear sightlines to patients.
- ✓ Offer two separate bays for the most critical patients, each with monitoring capabilities.
- ✓ Improve design, by including zoned lighting for a more restful patient experience that is less disruptive to animals' circadian rhythms.
- ✓ Provide increased privacy within the ICU to allow pet owners the opportunity to visit companions that cannot be moved for end of life care.

Every year, nearly 2,500 animals, 60 per cent of the pets referred for advanced care to the OVC require care in the ICU. The ICU plays a crucial role as a central hub within the hospital, for pet owners and for their referring veterinarians. Patients from all OVC services frequent the ICU: from cardiology to neurology to oncology, internal medicine and surgery.

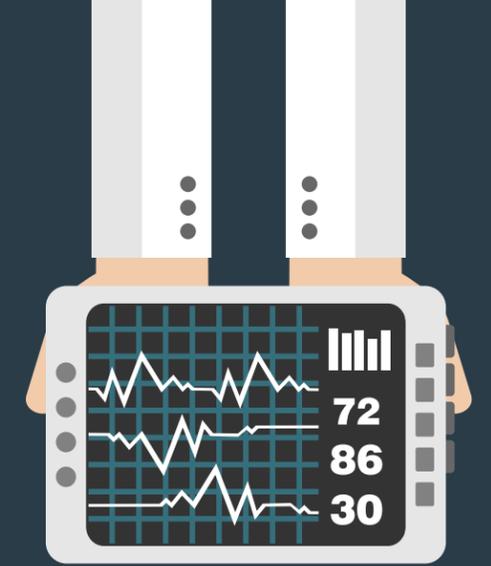
## TRANSFUSION *medicine*

Blood transfusions, transferring components of blood to a pet, are commonly performed on dogs and cats in OVC's ICU. Whether they are being treated for an immune-mediated disease that may be causing anemia or suffering from blood loss from a trauma such as being hit by a car, receiving a transfusion can be a matter of life and death. OVC has its own in-house Blood Donor Program, where volunteer dogs and cats donate over 240 units of blood every year to help the critical patients who need it to survive.



## ADVANCED *diagnostics*

When patients are admitted to the ICU, diagnostics are the first step in their care; they are often in critical condition and in need of a definitive diagnosis for their illness or condition. The ICU staff and doctors assess the patient's condition and provide symptomatic care while specialty teams establish what's medically wrong with the pet. This may involve transporting the patient to provide various diagnostic imaging procedures including ultrasound, CT scan, and MRI, to running bloodwork, and potentially even performing a biopsy, or taking them into the operating room for emergency surgery. "Pet owners need answers; knowing what's wrong with their pet and where they can go from here is important," says Dr. Alexa Bersenas, a board-certified emergency and critical care specialist at OVC. "They're grateful we can keep their pet as comfortable as possible while our teams search for the answers."



# CRITICAL *Care*

## How *the OVC ICU helps pets...*

### 24 HOURS

The number of hours per day OVC's ICU is open to offer care to the most critically ill patients.

### 2500

The number of pets per year that require advanced care in OVC's Intensive Care Unit.

### 60%

The percentage of pets referred to the OVC Companion Animal Hospital that require care or recovery within OVC's ICU.

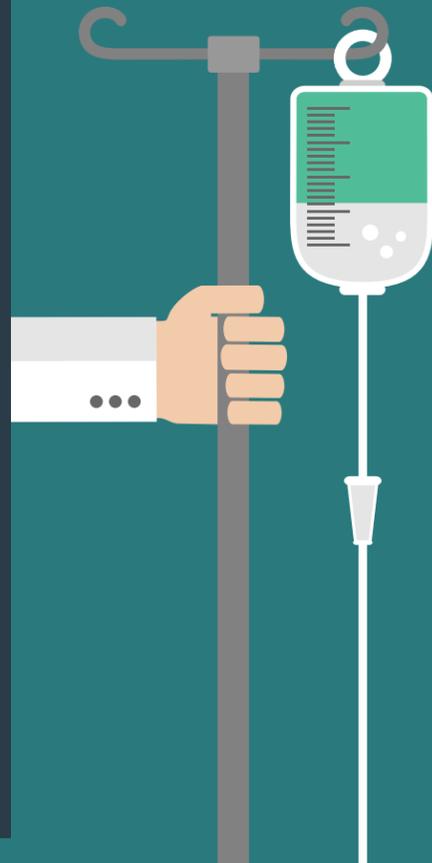
### 75

The number of clinicians and staff across the OVC Companion Animal Hospital that, at any given time, are providing in-hospital, hands-on clinical training to 30-40 student veterinarians, all while caring for pets who are often in critical and life-threatening conditions.

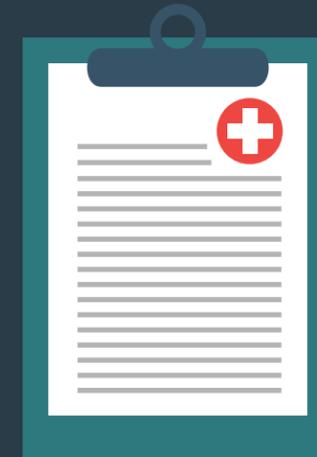
### 365

The number of days per year the OVC ICU is staffed and open to help pets in need of intensive care.

## PAIN *management*



Managing a pet's pain is paramount to helping them stay comfortable and provide relief. A cat or dog may suffer pain for a number of reasons including a cancerous tumour, a trauma, inflammation in their joints or broken limbs, or suffering from abdominal pain from a condition such as a gall bladder rupture or pancreatitis. Different types of pain medications provide comfort in various ways. Many pain medications are delivered as an intravenous (IV) drip. Relief may also be provided through non-pharmaceutical methods such as icing wounds in certain situations and providing comfortable bedding to prevent "bed sores" for those that are too weak to move, as well as nursing care.



## CLINICAL *research & training*

Clinical research helps veterinarians find new and improved ways to prevent, diagnose and treat disease in pets. Clinical findings drive change and improvements - advancing the standard of care, not just for patients at OVC but across the field of veterinary medicine. Discovery at OVC has changed the way veterinarians control post-operative pain management in pets. Current research involves exploring a new oxygen therapy system for dogs with respiratory distress and for brachycephalic, or flat-nosed, dogs, recovering from anesthesia. Projects are also examining ICU noise and light levels, as well as workflow and optimal staff resources. The Emer-

gency and Critical Care Service is also one of many areas at OVC that offers specialized training for interns, residents and Doctor of Veterinary Science (DVSc) students. DVSc is a post-doctoral degree dedicated to advanced clinical education and research. The ICU is also home to many patients who are helping discoveries within other veterinary specialties. Examples include improved and non-invasive methods for identifying gastrointestinal bleeding and investigating clotting defects in dogs and cats and establishing individualized response to therapy. OVC Pet Trust funds both clinical research and training in OVC's ICU.

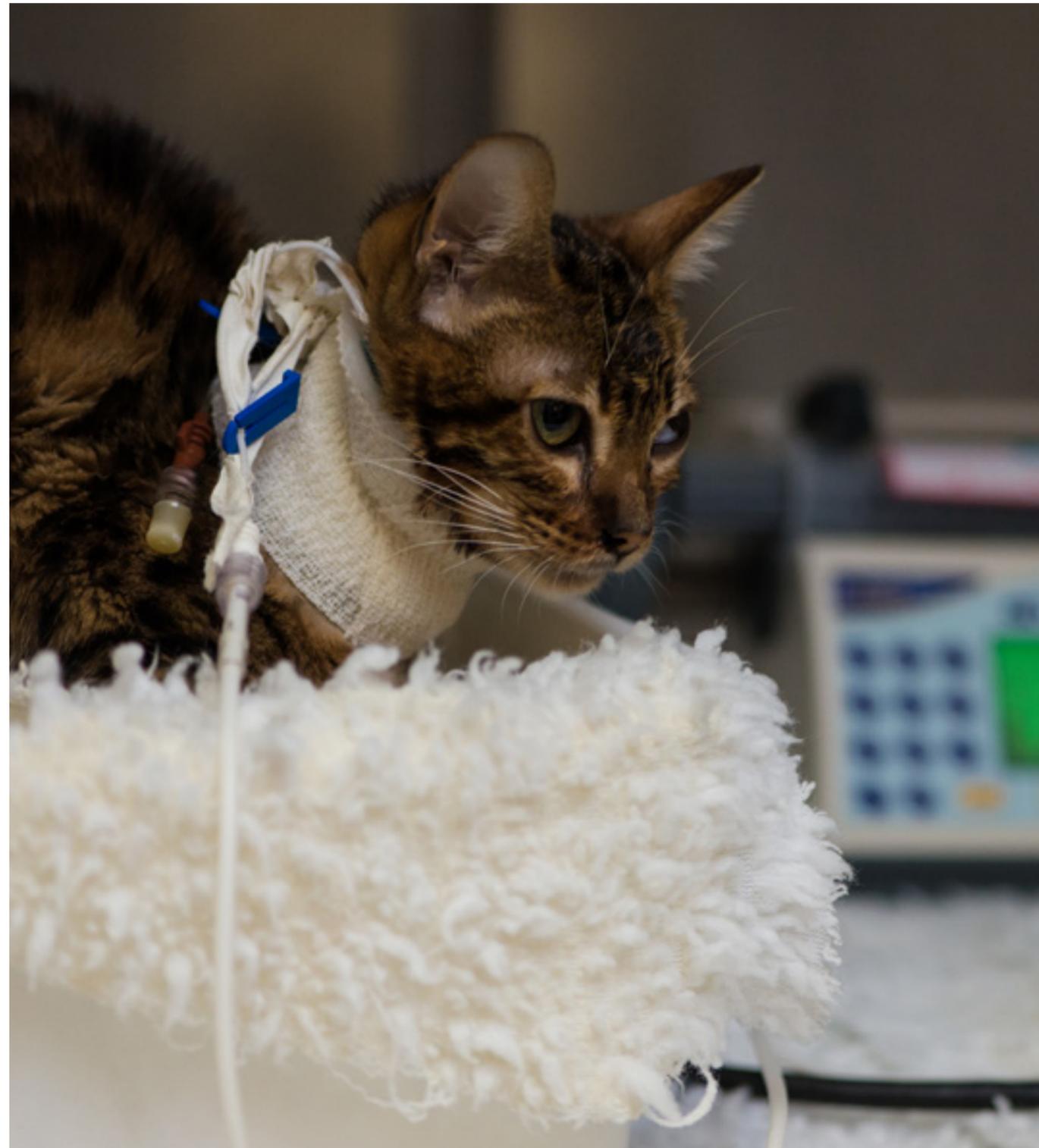
## SUPPORTIVE *care*

Full-encompassing care while a pet is in hospital to manage whatever it is they're dealing with is the heart of supportive care. "I fell in love with emergency medicine and critical care because I am directly helping pets and trying to make them feel better by providing them with a warm and comfortable space," says Bersenas. Cats are housed in a separate glassed-in room to reduce stress and the impact of a busy ICU to create a feline-friendly environment. If an animal is nauseous, the team can provide anti-nausea medications; feeding tubes help with nutritional requirements; if they are not able to be up and walking, the medical team can place a urinary catheter; and if the pet isn't breathing well, the ICU is equipped to offer oxygen and a ventilator, a machine that helps a pet breathe by helping the flow of oxygen throughout the body by pushing air into the lungs.



## ADVANCING *Care*

The Ontario Veterinary College's Health Sciences Centre is a tertiary hospital that provides advanced medical services to our community. Our team consists of highly trained board-certified specialists that work through an integrated approach to diagnose and treat complex medical cases. Clinical specialties include anesthesiology, cardiology, internal medicine, surgery, diagnostic imaging, neurology, oncology, ophthalmology and more. The Intensive Care Unit serves as a critical hub for many of our specialty services.



Monitoring a kitten patient for changes in clinical signs in OVC's ICU feline friendly unit.

“With this expansion, we gain two specialty services suites for our neurology and ophthalmology teams. Each suite will offer two exam rooms, as well as dedicated space for the care teams and student learning.

Should the needs of the hospital change over time, these suites are designed to be flexible and could be adapted to other specialties in future.”

Dr. Stephanie Nykamp  
Associate Dean, Clinical Program  
Ontario Veterinary College  
University of Guelph

# NAMING *opportunities*



Conceptualization of the proposed Intensive Care Unit for the OVC Companion Animal Hospital. Your gift will help create an optimal care-giving and teaching space, adaptable to changing patient needs and case loads.

## CATHERINE BERGERON URGENT & CRITICAL CARE CENTRE **RESERVED**

This expansion is possible through a \$4.2M bequest from the late Catherine Bergeron. A dedicated supporter of OVC Pet Trust, Catherine left an extraordinary legacy to improve the lives of pets through her estate. In recognition of her deep love of animals and her generosity, the Catherine Bergeron Centre for Urgent & Critical Care will be named in her honour.

## INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - \$2M

In this unit highly skilled and advanced care to our most critically ill patients will be delivered.

## TRIAGE & URGENT CARE - \$1M

A separate space for triage will allow emergency patients to be assessed for treatment needs and prioritized accordingly.

## OPHTHALMOLOGY - \$500K

**RESERVED** The suite will include two dedicated exam rooms, a larger treatment area and dedicated space for students.

## NEUROLOGY - \$500K

The suite will include two dedicated exam rooms, a larger treatment area and dedicated space for students.

## TEAM HUB - \$300K

From the ICU Team Hub, veterinary doctors and technicians will monitor the most critical patients who require constant care and close supervision of life saving equipment and medications in use to ensure the patient and family goals of care are met.

## STUDENT ROUNDS ROOM- TWO AT \$75K EACH

Two dedicated spaces available for student learning through patient case review and discussion.

## QUIET/TEAM ROOM - \$75K

The ICU can be a stressful environment for patients. In this space, especially sensitive cases can be separated if needed, while still close to the ICU team. This room may also serve as an office for ICU clinicians.

## EXAM ROOM - FOUR AT \$50K EACH

Four side-by-side exam rooms will allow clinicians to efficiently move from one client to the next. The student can begin the preliminary assessment in one room prior to the arrival of the specialist from the other.

## ICU BAY - TWO AT \$50K EACH

There will be two ICU Bays for the most critical patients, with dedicated patient monitoring capabilities for patients who require intensive care and constant supervision of life saving equipment and medication use.

## DOG QUIET ROOM - \$50K **RESERVED**

There will be separate species-specific rooms within ICU, designed for a calming, reduced-stress environment.

## CAT QUIET ROOM - \$50K

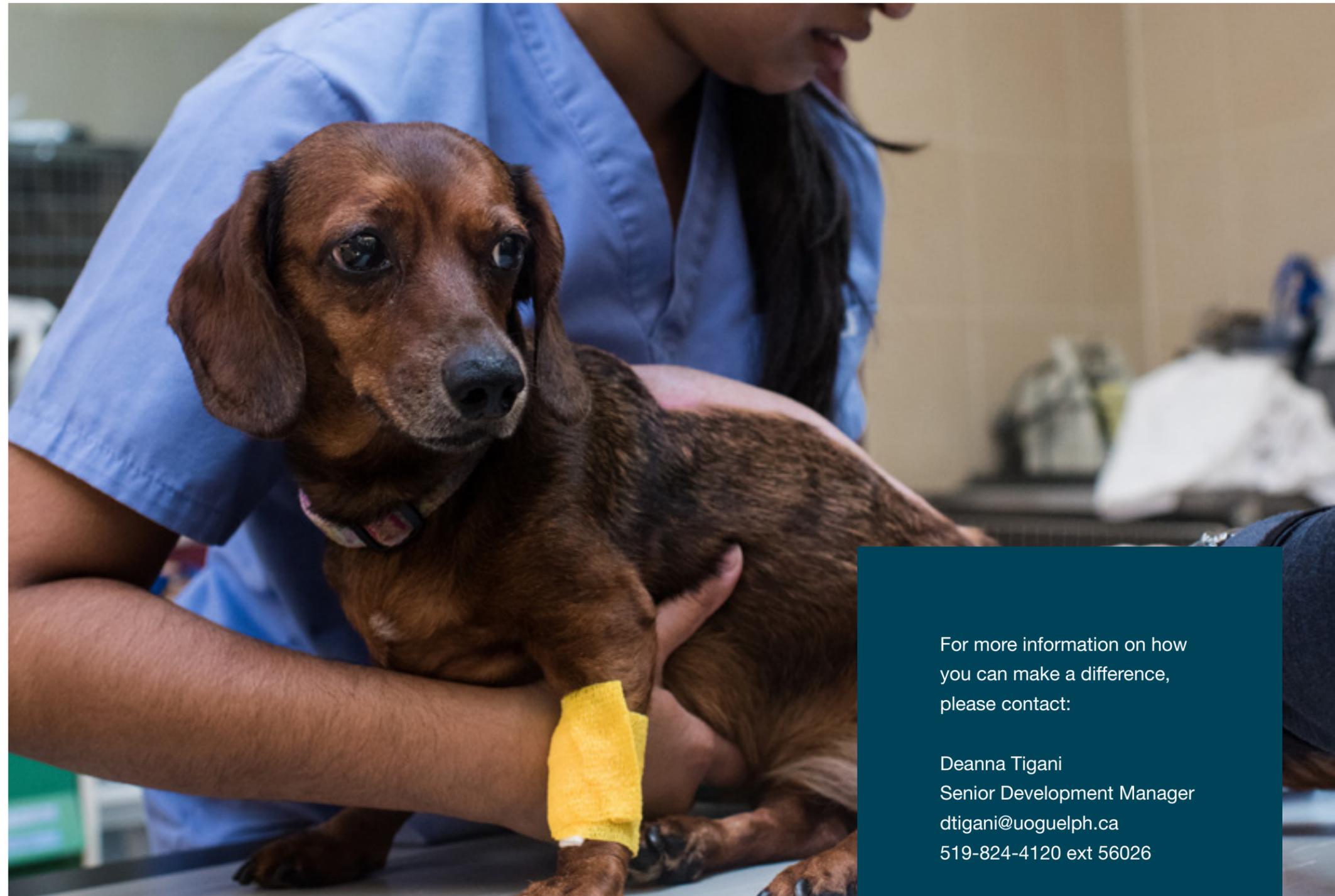
There will be separate species-specific rooms within ICU designed for a calming, reduced-stress environment.

# IMPROVING *life*

This expansion will cost a total of \$8.36 million. Your donation will bring us closer to our goal and help to meet the advanced care needs of animals now and into the future. Your gift will impact thousands of companion animals OVC treats each year that require specialty care and help educate and inspire the next generation of veterinarians and veterinary specialists.

Gifts of any amount are precious to us: one hundred gifts of \$100 can purchase an ICU patient monitor. Opportunities to name a space for a pet or person you love begin with pledges of \$50,000, which can be spread over two or more years.

Your gift today will help ensure that every animal that arrives in our ICU or is in need of our specialty services receives the care they need so they can return home where they belong.



Emergency and critical care patient Charlie recovered in the ICU after receiving back surgery at the Ontario Veterinary College.

For more information on how you can make a difference, please contact:

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# ABOUT OVC PET TRUST

OVC Pet Trust, founded in 1986 at the Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph, is Canada's first charitable fund dedicated to the health and well-being of companion animals.

OVC Pet Trust honours the relationship between pets and their people and veterinary caregivers by raising funds to support innovative discoveries that improve the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases of pets.

Funds also help train veterinarians to provide exceptional healthcare for pets and provide equipment and facilities for the Ontario Veterinary College.