

IMPACT REPORT

1-5 SEPTEMBER 2025
*In partnership with
Animal Protection Society (APS) Samoa*


VETERINARIANS Lead Vet Felicity Keenan, Yael Schneider, Jim Garven
VET NURSES Michelle Schimanski, Sian Manning, Eleanor McGlip
APS STAFF Leisha Ah-Sang, Tino Tuionetoa

CLINIC OUTCOMES

Desexing – dogs	166	Clinic hours total	47.5
Desexing – cats	24	Vet volunteer hours	285
General medical cases	118	Vet nurse volunteer hours	285
Parvovirus vaccines	150	Admin volunteer hours	80
Parasite treatments	1,275	Volunteer flights	6
		TOTAL ANIMALS TREATED	308

CLINIC VALUE **NZ\$190,000**

The calculation is based on SPAW costs, donated products, administrative expenses, and professional services. While SPAW does not charge for services, donations are welcomed.

LEAD VET COMMENTARY

This was my fourth volunteer tenure with SPAW and my first as team leader. Our team had all arrived into Samoa at different times, so we came together on the Saturday with the Animal Protection Society (APS) team picking us up from various locations to make the afternoon ferry crossing to Savai'i.

This particular outreach was split between Savai'i and Upolu which made for a very hectic week for both our team and APS. Our accommodation on Savai'i had a swimming pool and we made the most of this "luxury" when we could – a nice relief from the tropical heat. On Upolu, we were hosted at the APS volunteer house which had everything we needed.

Over five days, our team performed 190 surgeries and treated another 118 animals for various health issues, ailments and parasite infestation. The days were long, but the spirit of the team to get through the days' caseload and see as many animals as possible was heartening.

Our breaks were rare, dinners late and the pace relentless. Apia was especially challenging, with over 100 people waiting on the first morning. When admissions became overwhelming, Tino and a local volunteer stepped in to help install calm. Despite exhaustion, the SPAW team

supported one another with our final surgeries done by torchlight – a fitting end to a week of compassion, grit and community care.

The team's veterinary work was skilled and all members of our group showed a high level of care and professionalism in relation to their work. I really appreciated Jim and Yael's surgical expertise, loyalty, commitment and dedication with massive surgical caseloads each day.

On our final night in Apia, the APS board hosted us at a local restaurant – a warm gesture of thanks and camaraderie. President Nynnette Nelson, Joan Macfarlane, Paul Davis, Sose Annandale and Judge were all there along with Leisha and Tino, whose tireless support of both SPAW and APS was deeply appreciated. It was a lovely evening – one that reminded us that behind every clinic shift and every patient, there's a community of people working together to make a difference.

Felicity Keenan, BVSc
Lead Veterinarian



VOLUNTEER STORY

I have had the good fortune of being involved with SPAW in Tonga, 2024 and Samoa, 2025. I am a Canadian trained veterinarian based in Ontario. SPAW offers opportunities for those interested in giving back to the wider animal loving population through carefully organised clinics in under serviced villages throughout the South Pacific. Being part of one of those teams is an opportunity to engage with like-minded folks looking to impact animal overpopulation in the region.

You are blessed to stand on the shoulders of the giants who have gone before you and the many, many people both at



the administrative level (accommodations, flights, etc) and the dedicated boots on the ground warriors looking after your every need while on island. The unbridled gratitude of all that you encounter is well represented in this client's face, receiving care for her piglet in Tonga last year.

Dr Jim Garven
Veterinarian



Dr Jim Garven
& Leisha



Tino

LEISHA AND TINO, APS SAMOA

Leisha and Tino were instrumental in raising community awareness, navigating customs to secure supplies and welcoming our team at the airport. Their dedication ensured that every day ran smoothly, even in challenging conditions.

Tino worked shoulder-to-shoulder with our veterinary team in surgery, bringing a local's skill to the week. Meanwhile, Leisha led clinic operations with precision and care – managing registration, coordinating check-ins and providing essential translation between Samoan locals and our team. Their efforts helped us reach more animals, more families and deliver more impact than we could have alone. Thank you, Leisha and Tino for being part of it all.

IMPACT PARTNER

The Van den Brink family of New Zealand

This clinic was made possible through the generous support of our Impact Partner, the Van den Brink family of New Zealand. Louise, a former trustee and long-time champion of SPAW, continues to play a vital role in our journey. We are deeply grateful – this clinic simply wouldn't have happened without their commitment. Their gift has helped prevent countless litters of puppies and kittens from being born into environments unable to sustain them, creating lasting change for animal welfare in the region.



COMPLEX CASES

The team encountered a diverse range of clinical challenges in Samoa, particularly in Apia where the caseload remained consistently high. In addition to routine desexing and general consultations, several complex cases required specialist attention – including a dog with a severe tick infestation that rendered surgery unsafe, an obese patient with a large abdominal hernia and a fracture case that was

redirected for advanced imaging and surgical care.

Fortunately, animals in Samoa benefit from the presence of APS, which offers x-ray facilities and a frequent rotation of visiting veterinarians operating from their base in Apia. The SPAW clinic, meanwhile, experienced especially high demand due to its free services, contributing to the intense workload faced by the team.