

SPAW
SOUTH PACIFIC ANIMAL WELFARE

SPAW SAMOA

IMPACT REPORT

7 – 11 SEPTEMBER 2026

In partnership with Animal Protection Society (APS) Samoa

Impact Partner – the Van den Brink Family, New Zealand

VETERINARIANS	**Team Lead:** Dr Lauren Prouting Dr Laura Nettleton, Dr Yael Schneider
VET NURSES	Akiko Shimoda, Nicole Doriguzzi
CLINIC ASSISTANT	Karen Schade

CLINIC OUTCOMES

Desexing – dogs	**78**	Clinic hours total	**46.5**
Desexing – cats	**24**	Vet volunteer hours	**139.5**
Additional surgeries	**1**	Vet nurse volunteer hours	**139.5**
General medical cases	**60**	SPAW Admin volunteer hours	**85**
Parvovirus vaccines	**125**	Volunteer flights	**6**
Parasite treatments	**600**	**TOTAL ANIMALS TREATED**	**163**

VALUE OF SERVICES NZ **$128,000**

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

Dr Lauren Prouting, New Zealand

It is always a privilege to be part of a SPAW trip, and being invited to lead this clinic was a real honour. Every SPAW trip is a highlight of my year. It reconnects me with why I became a veterinarian in the first place, keeps the passion for our profession alive, and reminds me of the incredible difference a dedicated group of people can make when they come together for a shared purpose.

Savai'i was a wonderful place to visit. Like every clinic, there were challenges along the way. However, it was incredibly rewarding to meet so many animals and their owners and to see firsthand the impact of bringing veterinary care into the community. The clinic structure worked really well, allowing us to move between three locations during the week and reach as many people as possible.

What stood out most to me was the commitment of the volunteer team. Every person brought compassion, skill and an unwavering dedication to helping animals. I am so grateful to Leisha and Tino from Animal Protection Society (APS) Samoa, as well as the many local supporters who embraced and supported this important veterinary initiative for Savai'i. It was truly a collective effort, and everyone worked well together to make the week a success.

Although many of us are regularly exposed to animal welfare challenges in our daily work, it is never easy to witness suffering. I was incredibly proud of how our team approached each case with compassion, professionalism and integrity, ensuring that every animal received the care and respect it deserved.

One of the most encouraging things was seeing so many local families bring their animals in for health checks, consultations and parasite treatments. Change does not happen overnight, but when access to veterinary care becomes available, people respond. These conversations, treatments and opportunities to educate are how lasting change begins. It was heartening to see those first steps happening throughout the week.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank Geoff, Karen and Glenda from SPAW. The amount of work that happens behind the scenes to make these clinics possible is enormous, and they give their time and energy voluntarily.

I feel incredibly fortunate to have been part of such a dedicated team, and I left Savai'i inspired by the people, the animals and the positive change that is already taking place.



A MEANINGFUL RETURN TO SAMOA

Karen Schade, Clinic Assistant, New Zealand

This clinic was particularly special for me. It was my first time back in a clinical environment in more than a decade and nearly two decades since I had visited Samoa. I would be lying if I said I wasn't nervous. I wondered how I would cope with the heat, the pace and stepping back into a world that had once been such a familiar part of my life.

My journey began when I met Yael, the first member of our team, at Auckland Airport. Her friendly presence set the tone for the days ahead. We arrived in Samoa late on Friday evening and, thanks to my thoughtful driver, were able to stop for a few essentials before settling in for the night.

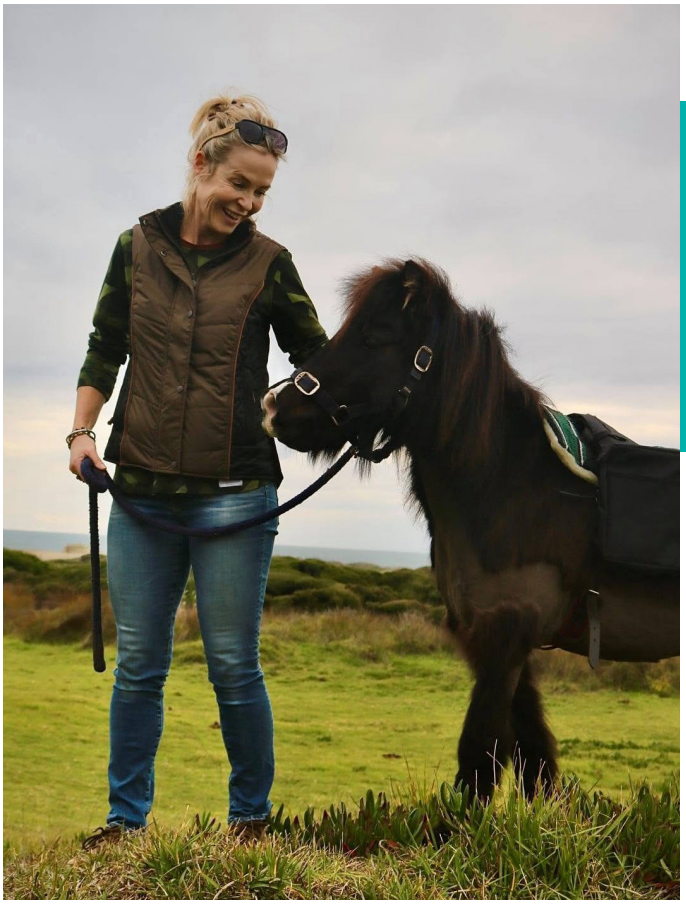
The following morning, our team gathered at the ferry terminal. Alongside Yael were Nicole, Laura, Lauren and Tino from APS, all ready for the trip across to Savai'i. Having the weekend to acclimatise to the tropical heat and a pool at our rather basic lodgings was really nice, because once Monday arrived, the clinic was underway and there was no slowing down.

What impressed me most was our volunteer team. Every member was a returning volunteer, united by a genuine commitment to improving animal welfare. Sharing stories and experiences with them was one of the highlights of the trip. Watching them work in challenging conditions was humbling, and I often found myself thinking that SPAW's future is in very safe hands.

One volunteer shared that these annual trips help keep her connected to the profession and remind her why she became a veterinary nurse in the first place. Hearing that reinforced the importance of what these clinics provide, not only for the animals and communities we serve, but also for those who volunteer their time and skills.

SPAW's work continues to evolve as community needs change. We adapt, learn and focus our efforts where they can make the greatest difference. While I don't believe there will ever be a day when our work is no longer needed, I look to the future with optimism, knowing we will continue to improve the lives of animals and strengthen the communities that care for them.





THANK YOU

Thank you to our Impact Partner the Van den Brink family – Louise is a founding past trustee and along with her husband Karl, continues to support our efforts. Louise and Karl understand our work, its importance and we are grateful for their significant contribution to the SPAW Savai'i clinics for the past two years.



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