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CATalyst Council Reports Cat Clinical Visits Grow 2.7 Percent as U.S. Veterinary Clinical Visits Fall 1.9 Percent

New CATalyst Council Report Shows Feline Visits Growing Every Quarter for Three Years, With the Kitten Craze Keeping Kitten Visits Above Pre-Covid Levels

NORTH CANTON, Ohio (BUSINESS WIRE). Feline clinical visits at U.S. veterinary practices grew 2.7 percent year-over-year in the third quarter of 2026, while canine clinical visits fell 3.3 percent, according to Vetsource data reported in *CATalyst Council Feline Veterinary Market Insights: Volume VII*. Feline clinical visits grew in each of the last twelve quarters, and canine clinical visits fell in eleven of them. Clinical visits are defined as a patient receiving medical care, including both wellness and non-wellness visits.

Vetsource data show that feline visits rose to 24 percent of companion animal clinic visits in the third quarter of 2026, up from 21 percent in the third quarter of 2023. Cats make up 46 percent of all cats and dogs in U.S. households* yet only about 33 percent of household cats visit a traditional veterinary practice annually.

The CATalyst Council Feline Veterinary Market Insights report gives the first read on kitten and puppy visits for the fiscal year that began in July 2026. Kitten clinical visits from July to September 2026 were 0.9 percent below the same months of 2025. That small change leaves kitten visits on track to finish the fiscal year about 11 percent above the 2018/19 pre-Covid baseline. Kitten visits have been above the pre-Covid baseline in every fiscal year since FY2021, so FY2027 would be the seventh year in a row above it. In each of the past three fiscal years, the July to September change came within 2.0 percentage points of the full-year change.

Puppy clinical visits fell 10.0 percent over the same months, putting puppy visits on track to finish 44 percent below the 2018/19 pre-Covid baseline. Across all species, Vetsource clinical visits fell 1.9 percent year-over-year in the third quarter. A dog that enters a household as part of a small puppy class remains part of the dog population for the rest of its life. A smaller puppy class therefore means fewer dogs of each age in every later year, and fewer clinical visits at each of those ages. A later rise in adoptions adds new, larger puppy classes but does not add dogs to the earlier, smaller classes. For this reason, as previously reported, the second edition of the *Puppocalypse, Kitten Craze and the Expectations Reset* paper shows a documented scenario where combined dog and cat clinical visits decline 1 to 2 percent a year over the next decade.

"Cats are the one large segment of companion animal practice that has grown in every quarter for three years. With puppy visits down, growing feline care has become a strategic necessity for practices."

Jon Ayers, Chair, CATalyst Council Data & Market Insights Committee

For veterinary practices, this shift presents an opportunity to better understand the needs of cats and caregivers, address barriers to care, and build stronger relationships to support lifelong feline health.

“Kitten visits have stayed above pre-Covid levels for six straight years, so practices are seeing a steady stream of new feline patients. The real question is how many of those kittens are still coming in as they age. Our article, The Kitten in the Room, gives practices eight practical actions to turn a kitten visit into lifelong care.”

Gina Fortunato, MBA, Executive Director, CATalyst Council

Read the full article

The Kitten in the Room: Turning Kitten Season into Lifelong Feline Care
is available at no cost on the CATalyst Council website.

[Download the full article](#)

The full Feline Veterinary Market Insights: Volume VII report is available exclusively to CATalyst Council sponsors. For updates, follow us on LinkedIn. To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, contact Gina Fortunato at gina.fortunato@catalystcouncil.org.

About CATalyst Council

CATalyst Council advances feline health through species-specific intelligence to drive evidence-based innovation and lifelong care. As the veterinary industry's trusted authority on the U.S. feline market, the organization brings this mission to life through research, collaboration, and industry-wide engagement.

For nearly two decades, CATalyst Council, a national 501(c)(3), has united veterinary leaders, industry partners, and data scientists to share evidence-based research aimed at improving quality of life for cats and the people who love them. Its inclusive board structure brings together a broad range of stakeholders across veterinary medicine, animal welfare, and industry, working together to change how the U.S. experiences and values cats.

The organization has produced significant research contributions, including the CATalyst 2026 State of the Cat Report, based on a household survey of over 60,000 U.S. households, and the Feline Veterinary Market Insights Report™ (FMIR), an intelligence series synthesizing seven independent data sources for distribution to its sponsor organizations across the veterinary industry.

More information is available at www.catalystcouncil.org.

*Data: Vetsource clinical visits (wellness plus non-wellness), 6,595 practices reporting in every quarter from Q4 2022 to Q3 2026, normalized to Monday to Friday business days. *CATalyst Council 2026 State of the Cat Report (~60,000 U.S. Households).*